

# Holistic Representation: Seeing the Whole Client

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# About MNCASA

MNCASA is a statewide coalition driving transformative culture change to address sexual violence through advocacy, prevention, racial justice, and systems change.

**We envision** a world free of sexual violence in which all human beings are treated with dignity and respect and communities are transformed through safety, healing, and partnerships.



# Our Work



## ADVOCACY

We provide leadership and resources to advocates in providing services to all victims/survivors in their communities.



## PREVENTION

We work to prevent harm and address root causes of sexual violence using an anti-oppression lens.



## RACIAL JUSTICE

We work toward a Minnesota where BIPOC survivors have access to safety, affirmation, and systems they can trust and use.



## SYSTEM CHANGE & POLICY

We invest in community-focused work alongside our efforts to transform systems, prioritizing underserved communities.

# Agenda



Holistic Representation & the Role of Advocates



Why Is Holistic Representation Important, and Where Is It Needed?



Practice Tips & Resources

# Holistic Representation & the Importance of Advocacy



# Holistic Representation

Holistic Representation/Advocacy combines aggressive advocacy with a broader recognition that for most people who are involved in the criminal justice system, the criminal case is not the only issue with which they struggle. This is true for victims/survivors of sexual violence just as much as for criminal defendants.



# Pillars of Holistic Representation

- **Seamless access to services that meet legal and social support needs**  
Commitment to addressing clients' most pressing legal and social support needs. Because the universe of these needs will vary from community to community, a holistic advocate must begin by identifying the full range of client needs.
- **Dynamic, interdisciplinary communication**  
A culture of open, frequent, and meaningful communication.
- **Advocates with an interdisciplinary skillset**  
A holistic advocate goes beyond zealous advocacy with an enhanced set of skills that are both client-centered and interdisciplinary.
- **A robust understanding of, and connection to, the community served**  
Recognizes that an advocate who is better able to relate to their client, by having spent time in their neighborhood and with members of their community, will be more likely to provide authentic and effective representation.

Credit: The Bronx Defenders, <https://www.bronxdefenders.org/holistic-defense/>

# Why Is Holistic Representation Important?



**EFFECTIVE  
SERVICES**



**SATISFIED CLIENTS**



**IMPROVED ACCESS  
TO JUSTICE**

# When May Holistic Advocacy Be Needed?

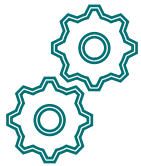


Victims/Survivors Charged with Crimes related or unrelated to their prior victimization.

Victims/Survivors who are further victimized in the midst of their involvement in the criminal justice or CPS systems.



Victims/Survivors involved with Child Protective Services, related or unrelated to prior victimization.

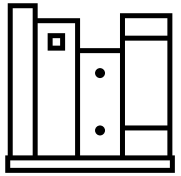


Victims/Survivors experiencing collateral consequences in housing, employment, healthcare, childcare.

# What Holistic Advocacy May Clients Need?

- Housing
- Chemical Dependency Treatment
- Chemical Dependency Harm Reduction
- Mental Health Services
- Medical Care
- Family Support
- Community Support
- Legal Assistance
- Dispositional Support
- Investigation Support
- Bail Support
- Pretrial Support
- Trial support
- Pre-Sentencing/Pre-Plea Investigation Support

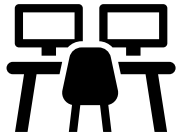
# How Does a Holistic Perspective Impact an Initial Interview?



Improves Preparation



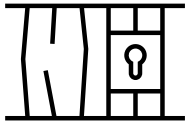
Builds Trust



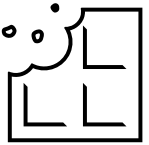
May Update Physical space/layout

# Holistic Practice In Action

# Calibrating Expectations



Do not overpromise.



Too many resources is overwhelming.



Clear Is Kind.

# Resources

- Holistic Representation
  - Bronx Defenders” <https://www.bronxdefenders.org/holistic-defense/>
- Minnesota Resources
  - MN State Public Defender: <https://www.pubdef.state.mn.us/>
  - MN Law Help: <https://mncourts.libguides.com/criminal-law/help>
  - Mitchell Hamline LAMP Clinic:  
<https://mitchellhamline.edu/clinics/lamp-legal-assistance-to-minnesota-prisoners/>



**Website: [www.mncasa.org](http://www.mncasa.org)**

**Instagram: @mncasa**

**Facebook: @MNCASAinfo**

**Twitter: @MNCASA1**



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