

# Meeting the Needs of Autistic Survivors

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# At the end of this webinar, you will know:

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- What barriers Autistic survivors face when seeking healing services
- How service providers can better meet the needs of Autistic survivors
- What types of accommodations are helpful for Autistic survivors
- What considerations to undertake when communicating with Autistic survivors

# First, a note on language...

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We are making the choice to use identity-first language in this webinar (Autistic survivors rather than survivors with Autism) – here's why!

# Let's start at the beginning!

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- We know that people with disabilities are victimized at rates much higher than people without disabilities.
- For example, people with intellectual disabilities (which sometimes includes Autistic people) are 7x more likely to be sexually assaulted
- No specific data on victimization of Autistic people

# General Considerations for Serving Survivors with Disabilities

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- Access
- Barriers
- Communication
- Staff comfort and capacity
- Accommodations

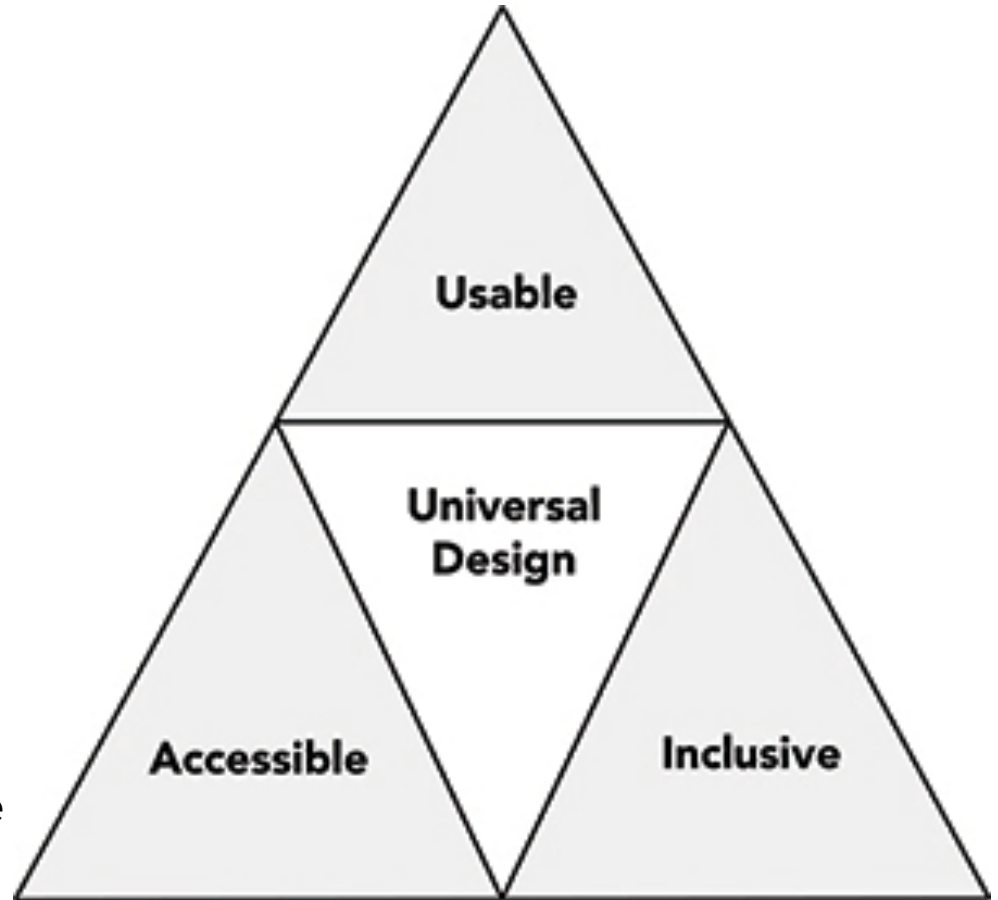
# Universal Design

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- Usable
- Accessible
- Inclusive

Universal design takes into consideration all needs, thus creating something accessible to most people.

Even if someone chooses not to disclose their disability or victimization, they will still receive accessible, safe, and comprehensive services.



# Considering Needs of Autistic Survivors

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- Communication
- Physical Environment
- Social Environment
- Stimming
- Accommodations
  - Social Stories
  - Visual Supports

# Effective Communication

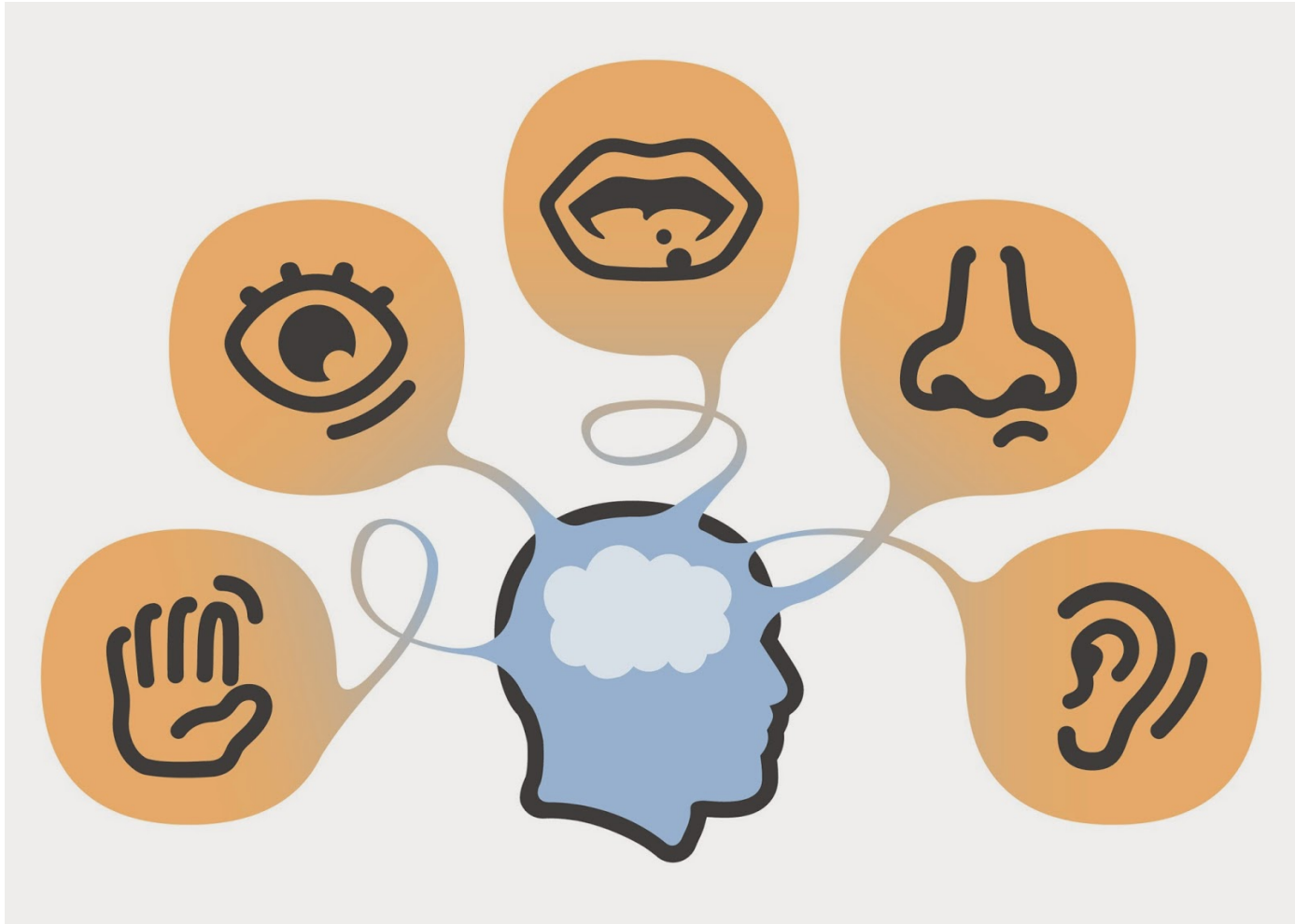
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- Clear
- No figures of speech
- Direct
- Plain language (in some cases)
- Visual prompts
- Definitions
- Numbered lists
- Expectations



# Environment

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# Masking and Implications

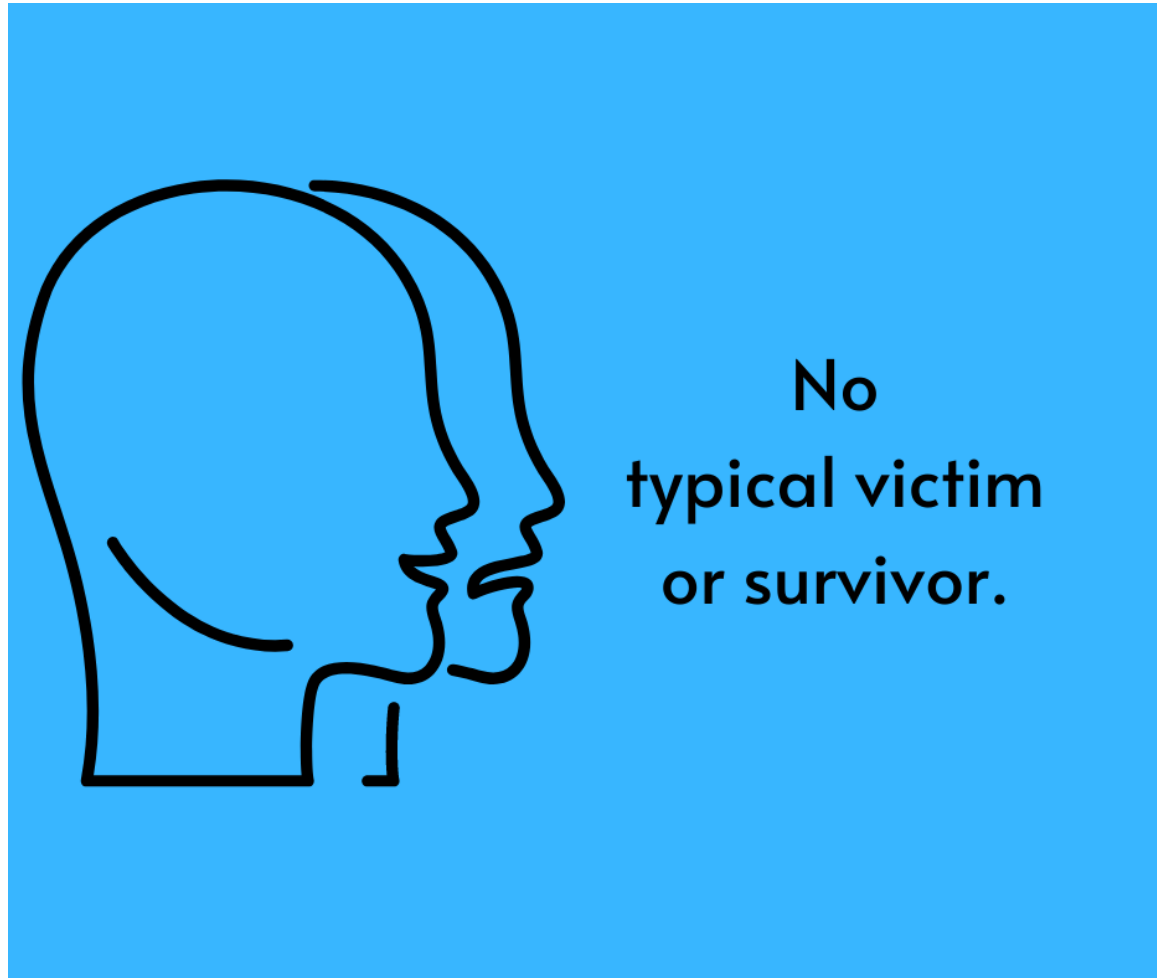
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*Masking (v.): artificially 'performing' social behavior that is deemed to be more 'neurotypical' or hiding behavior that might be viewed as socially unacceptable.*



# Trauma Response

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# Barriers Created by Service Providers

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- Inaccessible services
- Poor communication
- Assumptions
- Stigma

# Addressing Barriers

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- Materials in plain language
- Visual prompts
- Fidget and stim devices
- Low lighting
- Low distraction or distraction free
- Planned transitions
- Social stories
- Culturally responsive

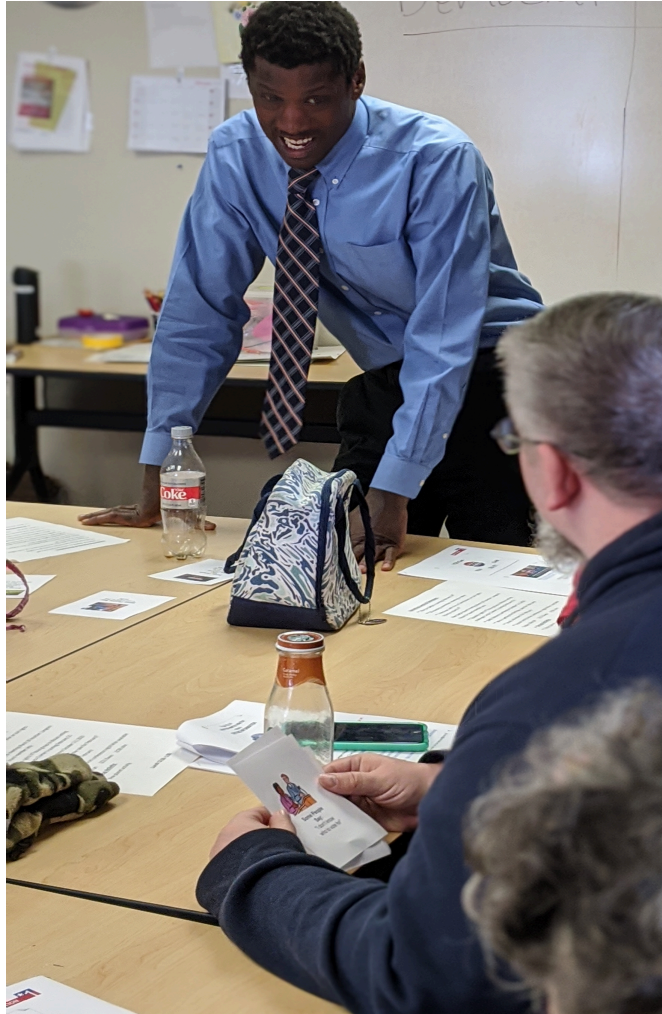
# Other Suggestions

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- Hire Autistic professionals
- Consult with Autistic led organizations and agencies
- Trauma-informed trainings for staff
- Evaluate barriers and accessibility
- Partner with other organizations to coordinate services

# Interview with Max

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# Questions?

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# Survey

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Please take a few minutes to complete a survey on your experience.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SG377YS>