



Name: Audace Garnett (she/her)

Title: Safety Net Technology Safety Project Manager

Organization: National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)

Sidonia Cannon: Please tell us about yourself and what you do.

Audace Garnett: My name is Audace Garnett. Advocate and technology safety project manager at the National Network to End Domestic Violence. I am part of a team called Safety Net where we focus on the intersection between abuse and technology.

Sidonia Cannon: How did you first become involved in Safety Net and researching technology abuse?

Audace Garnett: I first became involved at Safety Net and doing technology abuse work when I presented at their National Tech Summit in San Francisco. I was there doing a presentation for my then-organization Day One, which is an organization based out of New York City that works primarily with young people, ages 24 and under, experiencing dating abuse, sexual assault, and sex trafficking. I went to the National Tech Summit to present on the impact of technology on youth experiencing dating violence. Shortly after that experience, an opportunity to join the team opened up. I got an interview and then I got hired, and I've been here for six years.

Sidonia Cannon: How did you hear about the Tahirih Justice Center, and what brought you to the Forced Marriage Working Group?

Audace Garnett: The National Network to End Domestic Violence has worked closely with the Tahirih Justice Center for several years. Tahirih has worked with us in several capacities including being a presenter at several of our tech summits. Tahirih has shared impactful presentations and knowledge around immigrant survivors impacted by

technology, the harms that survivors from that population face and how service providers can support them.

When the opportunity to join the Forced Marriage Working Group arose, I took it. I joined because this was a population I'd often heard about throughout my career of providing direct services, and I wanted to learn more about how they were being impacted by technology abuse. I also wanted to see how Safety Net could provide our expertise and be a resource in this space because tech misuse impacts every community.

Sidonia Cannon: *We understand that not all individuals who work in this space work directly with survivors, but we know all efforts are meaningful to support survivor needs. Your work with technology abuse and safety planning is especially helpful for those facing gender-based violence including forced marriages. How have you seen technology abuse changing throughout the years, and how can survivors and advocates adapt?*

Audace Garnett: Although the National Network to End Domestic Violence does not work directly with survivors, we work with advocates who work with survivors. We provide advocates with direct technical assistance and training on how technology is misused and provide guidance on how they can support survivors. We also train attorneys, judges and various professionals on topics such as confidentiality, safety planning, tech misuse and much more.

Often, these conversations start out by blaming technology for all the harmful things that can be done with it. I would like to start by sharing that technology can be a tool of empowerment for survivors who experience forced marriage; it can enhance and maintain their safety. Survivors can use technology to connect with an advocate, and to contact law enforcement (if that is an option they are interested in or feel safe doing). They can share their location with family members and friends through apps, and they can use technology to collect evidence. They can also use technology to decrease their isolation. Isolation is one of the main tactics abusers use to control survivors. Survivors can use the technology to find online groups and to find other means of support. They can share their stories and reconnect with family and friends and find community. Survivors can do so much with technology, so it is important that we educate and inform survivors about the ways they can use it for empowerment.

When it comes to financial abuse, survivors can use technology to find employment. Maybe they want to be a gig worker where they secure temporary or flexible work such as childcare, pet sitting, house cleaning, furniture assembly, grocery shopping and more through apps and online platforms. Survivors can also use technology to sell different products that they create. Survivors can use technology to network and put themselves out there to make connections.

Technology in general is not a bad tool, but rather it is the misuse of technology that is the problem. Abusers can use it to stalk, harass, threaten, and humiliate survivors. It is not about technology; it is about the abusive behaviors. Technology is also a tool that can support survivors experiencing various types of abuse through chat, text and video. Technology is a tool that is constantly changing, and we can all use it in numerous ways to support survivors.

Sidonia Cannon: *What challenges have you experienced in your work? Have you had to adapt your own approach over time?*

Audace Garnett: At Safety Net, we try to make our content as user friendly as possible. We are not techy people; we are advocates at the core. I have experienced a few challenges in my work. Technology is constantly evolving, so it can be difficult to keep up with every new shiny thing that comes out. Learning about technology as fast as it's being developed is also challenging, but it's not as important when working with survivors. What's important is having safety planning skills, working from a survivor centered approach, where you allow the survivor to lead, as well as honoring confidentiality obligations

In order to keep up with new technology, you have to stay in the know, subscribe to tech magazines, browse YouTube, search topics on Google, have conversations with your colleagues and partner with other local programs and coalitions. Learning about tech is the easiest part; being survivor centered and not victim blaming is the real skill.

I am in no way minimizing the complexity of technology, but we all have some tech knowledge. Everyone uses some form of technology, so we can build off that. We cannot run from technology because it is intertwined into almost every area of our lives. Be patient with yourself and always ask questions. Safety Net is glad to provide technical assistance (TA) and training to advocates and service providers. For more

information, you can reach us at safetynet@nnev.org.

Sidonia Cannon: *Are there any last details or information you would like to add outside of the questions I have asked?*

Audace Garnett: To learn more about our content, including our Tech Summit, please visit our website is techsafety.org. We also have several [toolkits](#), a [tech safety app](#) and many other great resources on our website.