**Background**

- The CASEY (Child Abuse, Stress, and the Early Years) Collaboration developed and piloted a psychoeducation intervention with pregnant women who experienced childhood abuse in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia.
- The intervention is titled “The Survivor Mom's Companion”.
- Pilot studies showed positive outcomes including improved PTSD symptom management, labor experience, and perception of maternity care.
- Feedback from recruiters and diminished enrollment suggested the title did not resonate with women outside the US.

**Methods**

- Telephone and Skype interviews were conducted with midwives, mental health providers, and women's advocates in Australia (n=12) and the UK (n=7).
- We asked participants about language used to describe 1) women who experienced childhood abuse and 2) the process of recovery from such trauma.

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"Parents want to engage in something that’s not focused on their history of abuse, but more on the future...women don’t necessarily [want to be] ‘survivors.’ This can be a stigmatizing term; women want to do more than just survive.”

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**“Growing Forward”**

**The Roles of Place and Language in a Maternal Health Intervention**

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**Results**

- Participants hesitated to use labels of “survivor” or “victim” to describe their clients due to perceived stigma.
- Participants reported:
  - Some women feel they have not yet “survived” childhood abuse.
  - Other women express desire for programs focused on their futures rather than histories of abuse.
- Participants framed trauma recovery as a life-long process.
- Participants discussed “tools” needed to support new mothers.

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**Discussion**

- Both “victim” and “survivor” discourses of childhood abuse have been criticized as potentially stigmatizing and essentializing.
- Our qualitative investigation unveiled discourses of childhood abuse and trauma recovery in Australia and the UK that mirror the “narrative of transcendence”.
- We recommended the intervention title be changed to “Growing Forward: Tools for Mothering after Childhood Abuse.”
- The CASEY Collaboration is continuing to pilot the intervention with promising results. Conversations about officially changing the intervention name are ongoing.

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**References**