

2021 NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK THEME VIDEO—TRANSCRIPT

ADVOCATE: *National Domestic Violence Hotline. Are you in a safe place to talk?*

KATIE RAY-JONES, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE:

We're such a critical resource. We know from what we hear from the people who use our services that the hotline itself is a lifesaver.

CARLOS ALCARAZ, DEPUTY PROJECT DIRECTOR, JBS INTERNATIONAL: Building trust is incredibly important when working with child victims of crime. Meaningful supports allow for children and families to come together in a safe environment.

JANELLE MELOHN, DIRECTOR, CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE DIVISION, OFFICE OF THE IOWA ATTORNEY GENERAL: The collaboration between programs and our agency is so crucial. We do just about everything we can to make sure that people are aware of victims' rights and especially the right to compensation.

ADVOCATE: What we know about abuse is, abuse is about power and control.

KATIE RAY-JONES: The National Domestic Violence Hotline is the only 24/7 hotline specifically dedicated to serving victims and survivors of domestic violence.

ADVOCATE: *Do you think you'd have like, say, 20 minutes to do an intake with them, or do you think he'll back by then?*

KATIE RAY-JONES: We had been on a trajectory with technology for the last several years to begin to move all of our platforms into the cloud. The pandemic accelerated all of that, and who knew we could pull it off in 3 days? But we did. And we moved nearly 200 staff members out to remote status without missing a beat.

ADVOCATE: *Would you like to maybe get connected to a local program or resource in your area that could offer some further support? I can definitely do that.*

KATIE RAY-JONES: And that is the beauty of the domestic violence services field. They're doing this work because they make a difference. The hotline could not exist without the local shelter, without the counseling services, the legal advocacy.

ADVOCATE: *So, how can I assist you?*

KATIE RAY-JONES: Together is how we create a journey that is a life that is free of violence for survivors.

ADVOCATE: *What do you have?*

OFFICER: *So, we have a family in need. It looks like the family has some substance abuse issues.*

CARLOS ALCARAZ: For the past 5 or 6 years, communities have been engaged in addressing the opioid crisis and addressing overdose, and yet there's a great need to expand the lens of these support services to include the children and families who have also been impacted by addiction.

WOMAN: *The kids were very frightened all night, just because there were so many officers in the house.*

CARLOS ALCARAZ: When we think about things like abuse and neglect, you know, these are the very real crimes that the children that we work with every day are being impacted by. And we also recognize that crime does create trauma for many young people and many families, and that that trauma can have impacts beyond the life of a single child and onto the lives of their children.

THERAPIST: *How do you feel today?*

CARLOS ALCARAZ: Family Service of Rhode Island is a great example of a community-based organization that is looking at trauma-informed care to maximize therapy and other support services to children.

THERAPIST: *So, you use a toy when you feel angry?*

CHILD: *Yeah.*

CARLOS ALCARAZ: The inclusion of the therapy boxes has really enhanced their ability to get them active as part of their recovery and healing process.

THERAPIST: *You have also magnets for your emotions and your daily activities.*

CARLOS ALCARAZ: I feel it's important for folks to have compassion for these families and for these parents and children, and then to provide meaningful support for them as well.

JANELLE MELOHN: Crime victim compensation can really be a game changer in someone's life. *We figured it out pretty quickly, and we've done it in a way that hasn't jeopardized confidentiality in the least.* When victims get connected to the Crime Victim Compensation Program, they're engaging with a compensation specialist who will be assigned to their claim forever.

SURVIVOR: The biggest thing that survivors are looking for is we're looking for safety.

JANELLE MELOHN: Those individuals are trained on victim-centered principles, and most importantly on the understanding of trauma and how it affects crime victims, so that when they

engage with individuals, it's always in a way that causes the least amount of possible re-traumatization to the victim.

SURVIVOR: I felt validated. I remember finding out that I got approved for it and just crying and telling my family that finally, somebody's believed me.

JANELLE MELOHN: One of the biggest barriers to accessing our program is just the knowledge that we exist. We have turnover in the field with law enforcement, with victim advocates, prosecutors, and so we've created a robust outreach, marketing, and training plan to make sure that survivors know that we exist. Our ability to put the money back in their pockets quickly can make all the difference in the world.

CARLOS ALCARAZ: As someone who really cares about children and young people who have been impacted by the opioid crisis, I feel it's important to realize that there are a number of needs, very complex needs, related to this issue, and then how do we as a multidisciplinary group of stakeholders in our community work to address those needs?

ADVOCATE: *We're open 24/7. Have you called the shelter in Detroit already?*

KATIE RAY-JONES: It'll be incredibly important for us to ensure that survivors can access services as well as economic justice resources.

JANELLE MELOHN: The ability to access a trusted advocate in the community is huge.`