



Introductory Workshop Participant Manual

A component of the project

Victims of Crime: A Social Work Response **Building Skills To Strengthen Survivors**

University of Missouri–Columbia
School of Social Work
National Association of Social Workers/Texas

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Workshop Agenda

Section I: Welcome and Introduction

Workshop Goal and Objectives

Section II: Biopsychosocial Effects of Violent Crime

Services for Crime Victims

Resiliency Issues

Issues for Special Populations

Section III: Crime Victims' Rights

Brief History of the Victim Assistance Movement

What Are the Rights of Crime Victims?

Crime Victim Compensation

Victim Impact Statements

Video: *New Directions from the Field*, Section 1

Section IV: Next Steps for Social Work

NASW Crime Victim Assistance Social Policy Statement

Section V: Summary and Wrap-Up

Section I: Welcome and Introduction

Workshop Goal and Objectives

Goal

To enhance professional social workers' capacity to respond to adult victims and survivors of violent crime.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to—

- Describe biopsychosocial effects of violent crime.
- Describe services available to victims and survivors of violent crime.
- Identify crime victims' rights.
- Understand the role of victim impact statements (VISs).

Section II: Biopsychosocial Effects of Violent Crime

Victims' Common Reactions to Crime

During the event, victims often—

- Feel violated.
- Are terrified.
- Feel shocked.
- Are anxiety ridden.
- Are physiologically aroused.
- Feel helpless.
- Are angry.
- Experience the fight, flight, or freeze response.

After the event, victims often—

- Blame themselves.
- Feel violated, unclean.
- Lose their "fair world view."
- Cannot concentrate.
- Have an increased risk of posttraumatic stress syndrome.
- Have an increased risk of other health problems.

Crisis Intervention Issues

Victims need to feel safe

- Reassure victims of their safety and express your concern.
- Ask simple questions to help victims reassert themselves and gain control of their lives.
- Address physical injuries first

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- Mobilize victims' support systems.
 - Provide safety planning.

Victims need to express their emotions

- Allow victims to tell their story.
- Be aware of victims' emotions and body language.
- Assure victims that their emotional reactions are normal.
- Counter any self-blame: for example, "You did not do anything wrong. This is not your fault."

Victims need to know what comes next

- Briefly explain law enforcement investigation procedures.
- Describe the medical forensic exam.
- Discuss trauma symptoms, such as lapses of concentration, memory loss, depression, physical ailments.
- Encourage the victim to reestablish normal routines.
- Make the victim aware of the potential for PTSD reactions.

Victims need to be aware of secondary victimization issues

- Cost of replacing stolen items.
- Medical bills.
- Cost of safety devices.
- Lost wages from missing work.
- Increase in health insurance costs.
- Initial contact with criminal justice system.
- May no longer feel safe in own home.

Source: National Sheriffs' Association, 2001, *First Response to Victims of Crime*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. Web site: www.sheriffs.org/prog-victim-fr-shtml.

Help Wanted: Social Workers

Help wanted for fast-paced work in the victim assistance field. Need social workers with—

- Knowledge of crisis intervention theories and techniques.
- Skill in discussing sensitive emotional subjects in a nonthreatening manner.
- Ability to function under stress.
- Strong commitment to high standards of personal and professional conduct.
- Willingness to keep personal feelings and needs separate from professional relationships.
- Respect for confidentiality of relationships with clients.

DSM–IV Diagnostic Criteria for 309.81 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

A. The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present:

- The person has experienced, witnessed, or been confronted with an event or events that involve actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.
- The person’s response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. Note: In children, it may be expressed instead by disorganized or agitated behavior.

B. The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced in one or more of the following ways:

- Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts, or perceptions. Note: In young children, repetitive play may occur in which themes or aspects of the trauma are expressed.
- Recurrent distressing dreams of the event. Note: In children, there may be frightening dreams without recognizable content.
- Acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (includes a sense of reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur upon awakening or when intoxicated). Note: In young children, trauma-specific reenactment may occur.
- Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.
- Physiological reactivity upon exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.

C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness (not present before the trauma), as indicated by three (or more) of the following:

- Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma.
- Efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma.
- Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma.
- Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities.
- Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others.
- Restricted range of affect (e.g., unable to have loving feelings).
- Sense of a foreshortened future (e.g., does not expect to have a career, marriage, children, or a normal lifespan).

D. Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (not present before the trauma), as indicated by two (or more) of the following:

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep.

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- Irritability or outbursts of anger.
 - Difficulty concentrating.
 - Hypervigilance.
 - Exaggerated startle response.

E. Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in criteria B, C, and D) is more than 1 month.

F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

Specify if—

Acute: if duration of symptoms is less than 3 months.

Chronic: if duration of symptoms is 3 months or more.

Specify if—

Delayed onset: If onset of symptoms is at least 6 months after the stressor.

Source: American Psychiatric Association, 2000. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition, Text Revision. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc.

Victim Assistance Programs Provide an Array of Services to Crime Victims

The victim assistance field is an emerging field of practice and many social workers have found work with victims of crime both professionally challenging and satisfying. The National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) has divided the services that victims/survivors need into the following eight stages:

Stage 1: Emergency response

Victim assistance providers offer crisis intervention and emotional first aid and conduct trauma assessments at crime scenes or wherever the first contact with the victim/survivor is made.

Stage 2: Victim stabilization

Victim stabilization typically occurs within the first 48 hours of the crime report. Victim assistance providers conduct stabilizing interviews; provide crisis intervention; give orientations to the criminal justice system; arrange for shelter, transportation, or protection and other referrals; and assist the family and friends of victims and survivors.

Stage 3: Resource mobilization

Victim assistance providers mobilize resources for the victim until the victimization experience is resolved. Victim service providers may conduct followup and visit victims and survivors; provide supportive counseling, information, and referrals; assist victims in getting property returned; help victims file crime victim compensation claims; request emergency aid; assist with crime prevention; help victims with rent, credit, and employment issues; and continue services to family and friends.

Stage 4: After the arrest

Victims and survivors may need assistance, such as crisis intervention and other services, after an arrest is made in their case. Prosecutors may consult victims on decisions such as which charges to file, conditions of release, case scheduling, and diversion of youth offenders from the juvenile justice system. Victims may need information on intimidation reports, relocation, protective orders, and restitution. Victim assistance providers may offer ongoing supportive counseling, help victims deal with the media, and provide information about the next steps in the process.

Stage 5: Precourt appearances

Precourt appearances may take place any time before a scheduled court appearance. Victim assistance providers help with orientation to court procedures, contacts with the media, developing victim impact statements, obtaining transportation and childcare, and dealing with employers. Orientations also may be provided for family and friends who will support the victim in the courtroom.

Stage 6: Court appearances

The day of the hearing or trial may trigger traumatic responses for victims. Victims need protection from intimidation and media intrusion, consultation on unexpected events, and assistance with transportation, childcare, and creditors. Victim assistance providers also may offer information to victims/survivors, family, and friends about court processes.

Stage 7: Before case disposition

After a verdict or an entry of a guilty plea, victim assistance providers may offer support to victims and survivors when the time comes to enter or read their victim impact statement. Providers may consult on restitution, provide emotional support for court, and supply information on probation and civil entitlement issues.

Stage 8: After case disposition

After the disposition of the case, victims/survivors need services such as notification of parole hearings, support in testifying at parole hearings, notification of and assistance at revocation of probation hearings, and restitution collection.

Source: National Organization for Victim Assistance, Courthouse Square, 510 King Street, Suite 424, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-535-NOVA; 703-535-5500 (fax); Web site: www.trynova.org.

Resiliency Issues

Victim and survivor resiliency is affected by—

- Previous victimization.
- Preexisting vulnerabilities.
- Timing and duration of the crime event.
- Location of the crime event.
- Physical threats or moral dilemmas.
- Availability of resources after the crime event.

Cultural norms vary for—

- Trauma.
- Suffering.
- Recovery.
- Healing.

Victim assistance providers should be responsive to—

- Different roles of families.
- Religious issues.
- Immigrant or refugee status.
- Language barriers.
- Gender roles.
- Attitudes toward death and grieving.

Violent Crime and Special Populations

Hate crime victims may—

- Fear involvement in the criminal justice.
- Fear retaliation by offenders.
- Fear unwanted publicity.
- Not want to reveal their sexual orientation.
- Be suspicious of offers to help by police or prosecutors if the victims are persons of color.

Persons with disabilities—

- May feel trapped by abusive caretakers.
- Are more likely to be victimized.
- Suffer high levels of domestic and sexual abuse by partners or caretakers.

Women may—

- Feel personally shamed by physical or sexual assault.
- Be reluctant to report crime.
- Not realize that physical or sexual abuse by a partner is a crime.
- Be economically dependent on the abuser.

Elderly persons may—

- Be reluctant to report crimes.
- Fear reprisals from the offender.
- Fear the criminal justice system.
- Alter lifestyles and limit outings.
- Not consider abuse by a family member a crime.

Victims in rural and remote communities may—

- Not have access to local law enforcement.
- Have to rely on state troopers to respond.
- Need informal support networks.

Gay women and men—

- May not be eligible for crime victim compensation benefits as same-sex partners.

Immigrants may—

- Fear police.
- Fear deportation.

Section III: Crime Victims' Rights

Crime Victims' Rights

Although the rights of crime victims vary from state to state, the following rights are the most common. Crime victims usually have the right to—

- Attend and participate in criminal justice proceedings.
- Notification of the stages/proceedings in the criminal justice process.
- Notification of other legal remedies.
- Protection from intimidation and harassment.
- Confidentiality of records.
- Speedy trial provisions.
- Prompt return of the victim's personal property seized as evidence from the offender.
- Availability of the offender's profits from the sale of stories of their crimes.
- Victim compensation and restitution.
- Have their safety and the safety of their family considered when bail is set.
- Provide information to the probation department conducting a presentence investigation on the impact of the crime.
- Reimbursement by a law enforcement agency for medical examinations for victims of sexual assault, counseling on AIDS and HIV infection, and testing for sexual assault victims.
- Notification of parole proceedings by the victim services section of the pardons and parole agency.
- Submit a victim impact statement.
- Notification of the offender's release.

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- A safe waiting area before and during court proceedings.

Source: National Center for Victims of Crime, 2000 M Street NW., Suite 480, Washington, DC 20036; 202-467-8700; 202-467-8701 (fax); Web site: www.ncvc.org.

In Texas

“There is no shortage of challenges. There has never come a day when I feel like we have achieved our goals and there is nothing but maintenance of the status quo to do. Sometimes the challenge is in helping an individual victim cope with the trauma of the crime; sometimes it is helping a victim cope with the reality of the criminal justice system. I am included in policy decisions within the department that, without my input, victims would have no voice or consideration in. There is a lot of room for improvement of the criminal justice system itself, and in service delivery and availability. Laws need to be changed, improved, modified. Pick your arena!”

Derrylynn Perryman, M.S.W.
Victim Assistance Coordinator
Arlington, Texas, Police Department

What crime victim policies and initiatives exist in Texas?

- Bill of Rights for Texas Crime Victims.
- Crime Victims’ Compensation Fund.
- Crime Victims’ Institute.
- Victim assistance coordinator. (All prosecutors and law enforcement agencies must have a victim assistance coordinator.)

Who is eligible for victim compensation in Texas?

- Victims who suffer bodily injury, death, or emotional harm.
- U.S. residents who become victims of crime in Texas and Texas residents who become victims of crime in a state or country without comparable compensation.
- Family members of victims.
- People who legally or voluntarily assume expenses related to the crime.
- Peace officers and firefighters who are injured or their families if they are killed during a crime.

What costs may be compensated in Texas?

- Medical, prescription, and rehabilitation expenses.
- Lost wages and travel costs incurred during the justice process and when receiving medical treatment.

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- Mental health counseling for victims and family members.
 - Funeral expenses.
 - Loss of earnings or support.
 - Child or dependent care.
 - Attorney fees for legal assistance in filing the application and in obtaining benefits.
 - Crime scene cleanup.
 - Replacement costs for items taken as evidence or made unusable as a result of the criminal investigation.
 - Relocation costs for victims of domestic violence.

Victim Impact Statements

- The “voice of the victim” is heard in court.
- Medical, financial, and emotional injuries are presented to the court.
- The probation officer includes a VIS in the presentencing packet.
- The judge has discretion on how much weight to give a VIS.
- State courts permit VISs; Federal Courts require them.

Section IV: Next Steps for Social Work

NASW Crime Victim Assistance Social Policy Statement

- Practice universal screening.
- Advocate for and use policies and services to help victims.
- Support increased funding for programs.
- Learn about victims' rights and services.
- Support education, training, and research through workshops, conferences, the *NASW News*, and chapter newsletters.
- Be sensitive to the needs of special populations and underserved groups.

Section V: Summary and Wrap-Up

- All social workers come into contact with crime victims.
- Help is available for victims.
- Victim assistance is an emerging field of practice.

Annotated Bibliography

Andrews, A.B. 1992. *Victimization and Survivor Services: A Guide to Victim Assistance*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company. Written by a social worker, this book is a clear guide for victim assistance, with topics ranging from the psychological effects of victimization to community survivor services and issues.

Boles, A.B., and J.C. Patterson. 1997. *Improving Community Response to Victims of Crime: An Eight-Stage Model for Developing Protocols*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Outlines a step-by-step procedure to create a community response to crime victims from establishing an interagency council, inventorying existing services, and conducting a community needs assessment to writing and implementing protocols and evaluation.

Brown, S.L. 1991. *Counseling Victims of Violence*. Alexandria, VA: American Association for Counseling and Development. Explores the psychodynamics of trauma and effective therapies for trauma victims, particularly victims of robbery, assault, elder abuse, ethnic violence, hate/gay violence, domestic violence, sexual trauma, rape, incest, murder, and cult, satanic, and ritual crimes.

Davis, R.C., A.J. Lurigio, and W.G. Skogan, eds. 1997. *Victims of Crime*. 2d ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Explores specific crime victim issues, such as sexual assault, domestic violence, victimization of youth, death of a loved one, international concerns, restitution policies, victim services, hate crimes, and psychological consequences.

Herman, J.L. 1992. *Trauma and Recovery*. New York, NY: Basic Books. Discusses the psychological aftermath of violence, ranging from traumatic disorders to the stages of recovery; an excellent source for one-on-one intervention with crime victims.

Kilpatrick, D.G., D. Beatty, and S.S. Howley. 1998. *The Rights of Crime Victims: Does Legal Protection Make a Difference?* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. Discusses research findings regarding the effectiveness of state constitutional amendments and other legal measures.

Lamb, S., ed. 1999. *New Versions of Victims: Feminists Struggle with the Concept*. New York, NY: New York University Press. A controversial, philosophical book that examines the unintended consequences of feminism and its relation to the victims' rights movement.

Mawby, R.I., and S. Walklate. 1994. *Critical Victimology: International Perspectives*. London: Sage Publications. Addresses the role of the victim in the criminal justice system and ensuring justice for victims while preserving the rights of defendants.

National Victim Center, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and American Prosecutors Research Institute. 1994. *Victim Impact Statements: A Victim's Right to Speak . . . A Nation's Responsibility to Listen*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. Written by crime victim advocate groups, this book details victims' responses to crime, including explanations and suggestions for writing victim impact statements, and

recommendations based on findings. Web site:
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/infores/impact/welcome.html.

Office for Victims of Crime. 1998. *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice. A comprehensive book that details the future directions of victims' rights, criminal and juvenile justice, victim assistance and allied professionals, financial recovery, child victims, and international victim assistance (NCJ 170600). Web site: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/new/directions/pdf/txt/direct.pdf.

Ogawa, B.K. 1999. *Color of Justice: Culturally Sensitive Treatment of Minority Crime Victims*. 2d ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. Explains how crime victim assistance organizations can become more culturally sensitive, the impact of crime on minority groups, the link between racism and violent hate crimes, and improvements for both the criminal justice and victim service systems.

Ruback, R.B., and M.P. Thompson. 2001. *Social and Psychological Consequences of Violent Victimization*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Examines the impact of crime on individuals, families, and communities.

Scott, E.L., V.M. Shamsid-Deen, and A. Black-Wade. 2000. *Minority Community Victim Assistance: A Handbook*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. An excellent guide to working with minority crime victim communities that details how to break down barriers, get involved, help special needs victims, and organize community resources (NCJ 170148).

Viano, E.C. ed. 1990. *The Victimology Handbook: Research Findings, Treatment, and Public Policy*. New York, NY: Garland Publishing. Provides an overview of victimology with varied examples and articles on topics ranging from rape victims, family murder, and arson to crime prevention and social support services.

Victim Services. 1998. *From Pain to Power: Crime Victims Take Action*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. An overview of crime victim activism with details of its history, barriers, caveats, recommendations, and the benefits of community involvement, including several practical examples (NCJ 166604).

Wilson, K.J. 1997. *When Violence Begins at Home: A Comprehensive Guide To Understanding and Ending Domestic Abuse*. Alameda, CA: Hunter House, Inc. Emphasizes both policy and practice issues, including dynamics, effects on children, teen dating violence, legal issues, the workplace, substance abuse, coordinated response, cultural sensitivity, and intervention strategies, and provides a historical overview of violence against women.

Resources

Web Sites

CAVNET: Communities Against Violence Network	www.cavnet2.org
Crime Victims for a Just Society	www.crimevictims.net
Family Violence Prevention Fund	www.fvpf.org
International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies	www.istss.org
Joint Center on Violence and Victim Studies, Washburn University	www.washburn.edu/ce/jcvvs
Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse	www.mincava.umn.edu
Mothers Against Drunk Driving	www.madd.org
National Association of Social Workers	www.naswdc.org
National Center on Elder Abuse	www.elderabusecenter.org
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children	www.missingkids.com
National Center for Victims of Crime	www.nvcv.org
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence	www.ncadv.org
National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse	www.childabuse.org
National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center	www.musc.edu/cvc
National Criminal Justice Reference Service	www.ncjrs.gov
National MultiCultural Institute	www.nmci.org
National Organization for Victim Assistance	www.try-nova.org
National Sexual Violence Resource Center	www.nsvrc.org
Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center, U.S. Department of Justice	www.ovc.gov
Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice	www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo
Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network	www.rainn.org
Victim Assistance Online	www.vaonline.org
Victims' Assistance Legal Organization (VALOR)	www.valor-national.org
World Society of Victimology	www.fh-niederrhein.de/fb06/victimology

Toll Free and Other Numbers

National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards	703-780-3200
National Center on Elder Abuse	202-898-2586
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children	800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)
National Center for Victims of Crime	800-FYI-CALL (800-394-2255)
National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information	800-394-3366

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence	303-839-1852
National Criminal Justice Reference Service	800-851-3420, TTY 877-712-9279
National Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-SAFE (800-799-7233)
National Organization for Victim Assistance	800-TRY-NOVA (800-879-6682)
National Sexual Assault Hotline; Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network	800-656-HOPE (800-656-4673)
National Sexual Violence Resource Center	877-739-3895
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence	800-537-2238
Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center, U.S. Department of Justice	800-851-3420, TTY 877-712-9279
Parents of Murdered Children	888-818-7662

Videotapes

The following videotapes are available for free or a nominal cost from the OVC Resource Center. Order online from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (www.ncjrs.gov) or by calling 800-851-3420.

Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Crime Victims (NCJ 167235). This video presents a panel discussion of issues related to the need for and provision of mental health services for crime victims.

New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century (18 min., NCJ 178283). Reviews the current state of crime victims' rights, describes promising practices, and offers 250 recommendations for pursuing state, local, and community-based initiatives on behalf of crime victims.

Promising Practices: Community Partnerships Helping Victims (22 min., NCJ 167243). Using portrayals of program activities and comments by program participants, this video profiles various programs across the country that provide services to crime victims in general and to various types of crime victims.

Through My Eyes (9 min., NCJ 178229). The first video in a five-part series, displays the artwork and writings of children who have experienced violence in their homes and on the streets, accompanied by their comments on how the violence has affected them and commentary by experts in child development and mental health services.