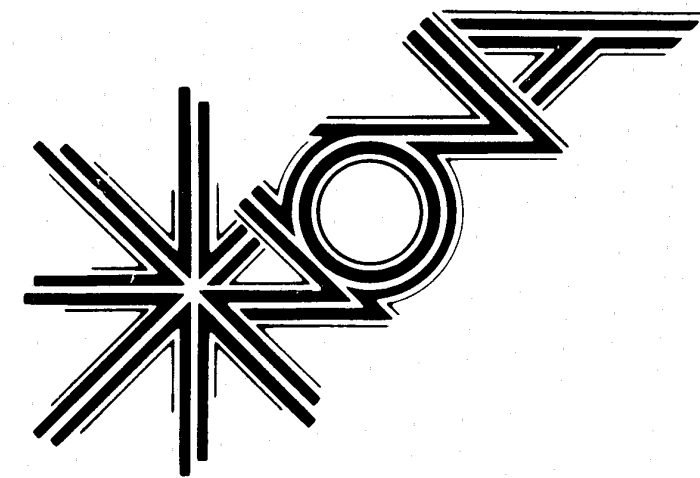
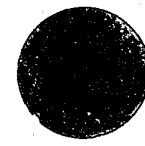


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CAMPAIGN FOR VICTIM RIGHTS A PRACTICAL GUIDE: 1985

CAMPAIGN FOR VICTIMS RIGHTS PRACTICAL GUIDE: 1985

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U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE

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CAMPAIGN FOR VICTIM RIGHTS PRACTICAL GUIDE: 1985

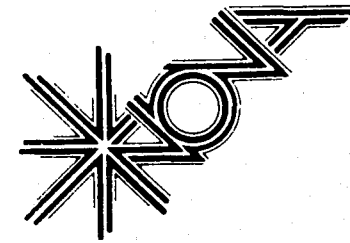
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ACQUISITIONS



THEMES FOR VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK, 1985

Victims Rights Week in 1985 will be held on April 15-20. Many states have commemorated this week for a number of years and selected new themes by which to plan their activities. This year Victim Rights Week will focus on the following theme and subthemes:

AFTERMATH OF CRIME

Crisis Intervention
Victims Services
Chronic Trauma

New Brochures have been enclosed in this folder to read about these themes. Brochures on other possible themes are available from NOVA by Special Order. (See enclosed order blanks)

The focus of 1985's Victim Rights Week is reflected in national activities this year through a national conference entitled: SHARE: A Conference of Self-Help Associations Relating Experiences. That conference will include in its agenda the Fourth Annual National Victim Rights Forum.

The choice of emphasis on Self-Help groups reflects NOVA's position that such groups have a major impact on the mental health of crime victims and the emotional aftermath of crime. Workshops will stress not only the themes of this year's Victim Rights Week but also the development of organizational skills for Self-Help group leaders.

Topics will be clustered in the following tracks:

1. The Emotional Aftermath of Crime: "The Crisis Reaction"; "Chronic Trauma"; "Self-Help and other Tools of Victim Support".
2. Program Management: "Resource Development"; "Fiscal Responsibilities"; "Working with Volunteers".
3. Public Relations and Advocacy: "Public Relations"; "Media: Your Friends, Your Enemies"; "Legislative Advocates".
4. Leadership Training: "Sustaining Chapters"; "Working with Your Board and Membership"; "Stress and Burn-Out".

The National Victim Rights Forum will address critical public policy issues facing the victims' movement in the hope of developing a national agenda for a coordinated effort over the next decade.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE FOR STATE AND LOCAL VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK

Sunday, April 14 thru Saturday, April 20, 1985

**Sunday,
April 14**

Theme: Victory for Victims: A Review of This Year's Accomplishments

Hold a press conference to Kick-off the Week.

Sunday is an excellent time to hold a press conference because it is generally a slow news day. The press conference should emphasize this year's accomplishments in the victims rights field. For example, the press conference could focus on legislative victories, both within your state and on the national level. 1984's national victory in victims rights was the October 12th passage of the Victims of Crime Act, (VOCA). Victim Rights Week may be an appropriate time to announce the expected amount of funding for your state or to announce new programs resulting from VOCA.

Suggested Speakers:

1) Try to line up local or state officials to sponsor the press conference and to make statements in support of victims rights. Suggested officials might be state representatives or senators who have been supportive of victims legislation on the state level. Encourage the official to endorse critical victims legislation pending in the state legislature. This will give added incentive for the press to give good news coverage to the press conference.

2) Identify a local victim advocate to review your community's recent accomplishments in victim services, such as the expansion of local programs or the establishment of new services.

3) This year's Victim Rights Week theme, the emotional aftermath of crime, creates an excellent opportunity to begin networking victim service providers and mental health professionals. Try to get a mental health professional or a crisis intervention counselor to present a short overview of various aspects of the emotional trauma of the victim. Stress that to meet the emotional needs of the victim, comprehensive counseling services must be available. This is a good way to bring an emotional close to the press conference as well as to underscore the general theme of Victim Rights Week.

Other Points:

1) Be sure to announce the dates and specific times of the events you will hold throughout the week.

2) Distribute a press kit at the press conference. We have enclosed a sample press kit in this year's Victim Rights Week folder. This can be used as a guideline for preparing your own press kit.

**Monday,
April 15**

Theme: The Emotional Trauma of the Victim

Suggestions:

1) Arrange a meeting of individuals and agencies who provide victim counseling services. These individuals include: victim service providers, social workers, and counselors who work with crisis intervention, short-term counseling, and long-term trauma.

2) Hold a networking workshop to give victim service providers and mental health professionals ideas on how to open up communication, arrange referrals, and provide feedback on referrals.

3) Panel Presentation: Hold panel discussion on emotional trauma. Members can present a brief overview of crisis intervention techniques, short-term counseling skills, and long-term post-traumatic stress counseling.

4) Distribute brochures and other information on the emotional trauma of the victim. Be sure to arrange for information brochures to be passed out at prominent places throughout the community. Suggestions might include: hospitals, mental health centers, schools and universities, shopping centers, city hall, police stations and courts.

5) Close the days activities with a special dinner, maybe a pot-luck, spaghetti or a barbeque. Afterwards hold a candlelight vigil for victims outside of city hall, a local monument or a high visibility area. This will help bring participants closer together and will help generate enthusiasm for the week's activities, both for the participants and the media.

**Tuesday,
April 16**

Theme: Crisis Intervention

Suggestions:

1) Hold a public seminar on the emotional shock of victimization and how crisis intervention tries to stabilize the victim. Possible speakers may include:
crisis intervenors, who can describe the goal of crisis intervention and the critical aspects of meeting the victim's emotional needs in the immediate aftermath of the crime.
victims, who can describe the emotional shock of victimization and tell how crisis intervention helped them cope with their problems.

2) Organize a working lunch to bring together crisis counselors to discuss various crisis intervention techniques. Include representatives from mental health centers, crisis lines, hospitals, law enforcement, and other direct victim service programs.

**Wednesday,
April 17**

Theme: How Services Help Meet Counseling Needs/ Solving Problems Assist in Solving Crisis

Suggestions:

1) Organize a network meeting of the wide range of groups that provide victim services. Encourage each group representative to make a short presentation on the techniques they find most effective in meeting the needs of victims in short-term counseling. These groups include:

- community mental health centers
- victim service providers
- rape crisis centers
- domestic violence shelters
- social workers and psychologists
- law enforcement officers
- crime prevention/probation programs

2) Hold a discussion of the different counseling techniques which are used to overcome chronic trauma. In addition, present the various types of self-help groups that are available in your area. Examples might be Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Parents of Murdered Children, and Homicide Survivors.

3) Invite victims and survivors to meet in working groups to discuss setting up self-help groups. Try to find enough facilitators for small groups so that different kinds of victimizations can be separated and grouped together.

Friday,
April 19

Theme: Victim Rights Legislation

Suggestions:

- 1) Hold a public hearing on proposed legislation in the state. Make sure the press is aware of any proposed legislation. Try to get legislative sponsors to attend the hearings.
- 2) Discuss the new federal Victims of Crime Act of 1984 and the ramifications for victims compensation and service programs in your state. Pass a resolution thanking your national senators and representatives for supporting the Act. (Be sure beforehand that they voted in favor of it). Tell the press that you plan to pass this resolution, it may help to get press coverage.
- 3) Hold a panel discussion on how to propose and pass state legislation. Invite victim advocates with first-hand experience to participate. In addition, invite state representatives and their staff members who can discuss the effects of such advocacy on them.
- 4) Develop a legislative agenda for your state in the 1985-86 legislative year. Try to pass key resolutions to encourage lawmakers to support these goals. Example of legislative goals are: passing or amending a victims compensation bill or passing a bill of rights for victims. Again, make sure the press receives copies of these resolutions.
- 5) Try to get a key legislator to lead one of the legislative events. They can provide a stimulus for debate in addition to providing an insiders perspective on chances for legislative success. Don't assume they won't show—community events are always good for public relations, even in non-election years.

Saturday,
April 20th

Theme: Victims Services: Funding and Resources in 1985

- 1) The last day of Victim Rights Week is a good time to stage a community fair to help raise funds for local programs and to pass out information on victims services throughout the community. In order to hold a community fair you must find a school or other facility with a large auditorium and spacious grounds. Once again, make sure that information booths are on hand. Look into the various plays and other theatre productions which have been used with victims, such as plays or films teaching children about child abuse. You can also hold a film festival using films on family violence, victim issues, and special victim services. In order to raise funds for victims services, make a booth that focuses on the funding needs of local programs and ask for donations or in-kind assistance. You can also hold a silent auction for benefit of local programs or a white elephant sale. Make sure that you have a place where people can sign up as volunteers or pledge donations.
- 2) A final banquet, where Victim Rights Week awards may be presented, is a good way to wind down the week's festivities. You can hold either a public dinner for fundraising or a private banquet to honor your volunteers and contributors.



THE AFTERMATH OF CRIME FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND:

Throughout the last decade society has begun to recognize and respond to the physical and financial problems victims suffer as a result of their victimization. Perhaps the most serious injury is the emotional trauma which all victims face:

"After having been raped, I felt filthy. I thought everyone was looking at me. Did people think I let this happen to me? Is there someone out there who will believe my story? Is there someone I can talk to, somewhere I can go, where people won't prejudge me?"

A sexual assault victim

"I'm having a hard time feeling like I'm alone, that there isn't another presence [here]...I've never felt so devastated. My house is not someplace I can go for security anymore."

A burglary victim

"I'm afraid to go outside. Afraid to even go grocery shopping. I was knocked down in the middle of the day. I lost my purse, and much worse, my independence."

An elderly pursesnatch victim

"Every morning when I awake, I feel the pain. It is like a knot, a cancer inside me. There is no place to hide and no one to talk to. Even though I love my other children I can't look at them. Everything and everyone reminds me of Bobby. I don't know how long I can live this way. But I don't know how to get help."

The father of a murder victim

FACTS:

While research is still in early stages, experts are beginning to recognize the impact of emotional trauma.

"Crime traumatizes many of its victims and their families. Their emotional equilibrium may be crippled by the violation, and the financial and physical costs of the crime may further impair their recovery." Introductory statement to Consensus Statement developed by a national assessment panel at a colloquium on The Aftermath of Crime: A Mental Health Crisis.

"The exaggerated prominence given to physically violent crimes fosters a central misconception about the injuries that crime victims can suffer. The actual victims of real personal crime often suffer grievous and painful injuries that are not physical. They lose their capacity to trust people, they can be overwhelmed with guilt or shame, and their relations with their loved ones may suffer serious disruptions." Dr. Morton Bard, Professor of Psychology, City University of New York State.

"The most common [reaction], and debilitating, is intense feelings of helplessness....After a few hours or days, these reactions change. Typical now are mood swings, from sadness to elation, or from guilt and self-pity to a desire for retaliation. Many victims also suffer continuing symptoms such as severe depression; decreased interest in social and sexual relations; recurrent nightmares; drug abuse." Dr. Irene Hanson Frieze, University of Pittsburgh and Dr. Maureen C. McHugh, Allegheny Community College.



THE AFTERMATH OF CRIME FACT SHEET

NEW STEPS IN DEALING WITH TRAUMA:

Victim Compensation Programs

Today thirty-nine states and the Virgin Islands have established victim compensation programs to help cover the costs of medical expenses, lost wages, and funeral expenses. Pursuant to the new federal Victims of Crime Act, 1984, these states will be encouraged to include mental health counseling as a part of their benefits. Briefly, the Act requires that compensation programs cover victim's expenses for mental health counseling in order to qualify for federal funding.

Victim Services Programs

Currently there are victim service programs in all fifty states. 27 states now help fund general victim and witness assistance programs in local communities, 49 states have funding for domestic violence programs, and 34 states now have funding for sexual assault services. The Victims of Crime Act also encourages these programs to include crisis intervention in their array of services and encourages states to begin such programs where they do not exist.

Training for Mental Health Professionals

With the co-sponsorship of the National Institute of Mental Health, and the National Organization for Victim Assistance, a landmark gathering of professionals from mental health, criminal justice, social service, and health fields as well as victims met from February 28 until March 3, 1985 to discuss the mental health crisis of crime. The results of that meeting were presented in a consensus statement that defined a base of knowledge concerning the emotional consequences of crime and made seven recommendations calling for more research and training in crime victimization.

WHO CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIM IN THE AFTERMATH OF CRIME?

The Police

One of the first persons most victims come into contact with after the crime is a police officer.

Service Agencies

Victim Assistance Programs, Rape Crisis Centers, Domestic Violence Shelters, Peer Self-Help Groups, Crime Victims Compensation Boards, and Community Mental Health Centers.

Friends and Families

Much of the support crime victims receive should come from friends, relatives, and loved-ones.

Other Community Networks

Neighbors, landlords, teachers, employers and fellow employees, the clergy and religious groups, civic and professional groups.

Hospitals

Nurses, doctors, emergency room professionals.

Mental Health Professionals

Social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, other trained mental health therapists.

Legal System

Prosecutors, judges, probation and parole officers.



CRISIS INTERVENTION: AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO VICTIMIZATION FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND:

The victim of crime is a victim of sudden, intensive, trauma. The victim's reaction to trauma initially involves emotional shock, followed by feelings of helplessness, anger, fear, confusion, and chaos. Consider these crime victims' reactions:

"During the crime itself, I was frightened beyond anything I had ever known. I felt like I was in a fog."

A Robbery Victim

"At first, I tried to deny that it happened. I shut out others and avoided the subject. It was all an attempt to make myself believe it didn't happen."

A Sexual Assault Victim

"After I was assaulted I couldn't stop crying. I was afraid to talk to anyone or even answer my door. I was exhausted but I was too afraid to sleep."

A Victim of Catastrophic Physical Injury

THE EXPERTS SPEAK:

The most common problem victims experience, especially following a violent crime, is psychological disturbance. (Kenneth Freidman, *Victims and Helpers: Reaction to Crime*, 1982.)

Psychologist H. Halpern has found that if the psychological reaction is extreme, it may produce an emotional crisis, including feelings of helplessness, confusion, anxiety, exhaustion, and physical illness. (H. Halpern, "Crisis Theory: A Definitional Study", *Community Mental Health Journal*, 1973.)

Studies on victimization have also shown that individual reactions to crime are uniquely tailored to their personalities and past experiences. However, certain people may be more susceptible to shock following victimization. These people include; sexual assault victims, elderly victims, children, victims of anti-gay violence, homicide survivors, victims of catastrophic physical injury, residential burglary victims (with a property loss greater than \$500), victims of vandalism, and victims of intimidation. (Kenneth Freidman, *Victims and Helpers: Reaction to Crime*, 1982.)

Psychologists have also found that the amount of support or assistance which individuals receive as they begin to recover from their victimization often determines whether or not they avoid crisis. (Morton Bard, *The Crime Victims Handbook*, 1979.)



CRISIS INTERVENTION: RESPONDING IMMEDIATELY AFTER A CRIME

DO:

Make sure that all emergency medical needs have been met. Help the victim feel safe by allowing him/her a choice of where to go for a talk and ensuring adequate protection. Ask about how the victim is feeling and let him/her know that feelings such as anger, fear, guilt, confusion and such are normal.

Ask the victim to tell you in his/her own words what happened.

Assure the victim that s/he is not to blame. Crime is wrong and it is the criminal's responsibility.

Allow the victim to regain some type of control over his/her situation. Ask permission of the victim to do simple things. May we talk now? Would you like me to call you by your first name? All of these questions provoke decisions which, however small, help the victim reassert control.

Find out what is the most immediate problem facing the victim in the aftermath of the crime. Help the victim explore his/her options in solving the problem and let him/her decide what will be the best option.

Let the victim know what s/he can anticipate in the future—his/her emotional reaction, the involvement of the criminal justice system, and other concerns that might arise in the aftermath.

Let the victim know that someone will be in touch with him/her tomorrow or the next day to see how s/he is and to schedule another visit.

Dr. Martin Symonds, Deputy Chief, New York City Police Department, Director, Victim Treatment Center, Karen Horney Clinic, New York, summarized the following simple rules for crisis intervention. In dealing with the victim's acute emotional needs, the intervenor should stress the following:

"I'm sorry it happened."
"I'm glad you're all right."
"You did nothing wrong."

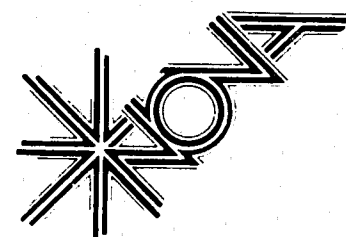
DON'T:

Ask questions that indicate the victim could be blamed for being attacked—Why did you leave your car unlocked? Why didn't you ask a friend to walk with you after dark?

Tell the victim that everything is all right when it isn't all right.

Touch or hold the victim unless he shows signs that such comfort is welcome.

Force him to tell details of the crime which he does not readily want to tell. You are not a police officer, you are a counselor.



HELPING THE VICTIM THROUGH SHORT-TERM EMOTIONAL TRAUMA FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND:

"I never could have made it without talking to Ginny, She's the one who called me the next day, and I guess I've talked to her ten times since then. She knows, you know what I mean? She helped me get the facts about rape. She helped me get over thinking the myths were true—myths like 'no woman can really be raped against her will' That's just not true at all."

A Victim of Sexual Assault

FACTS:

Short-term counseling and victim support services encourage the victim to talk about the crime, how it affected their values, and sense of self. It is aimed towards assisting the victim in his rethinking process as he to begins to pick up the pieces.

The Mental Health Consensus Statement developed at the landmark national colloquium on The Aftermath of Crime: A Mental Health Crisis summarized the progression of emotional responses to victimization:

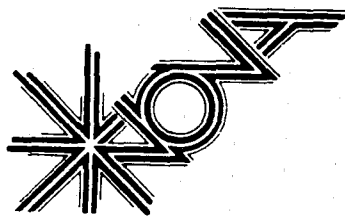
"Stage One represents the immediate, incredulous reaction to the crime. It may include feelings of shock, disbelief, denial, and temporary paralysis, accompanied by a mute, numb, mechanical withdrawal called "frozen fright", which can last from hours to days. Related emotions include a profound sense of loneliness, helplessness and despair. These paralyzing feelings may alternate with a sudden flooding of anger, confusion and anxiety....

"Stage Two represents the post-acute but short-term adjustments: agitation, restlessness, tremors, insomnia, uncontrollable crying, feelings of deprivation, rejection by others, humiliation, loss of identity and self-respect, and erosion of trust and autonomy....

"The inability to accept random violence or overpowering force leaves the victim with an open wound where there is a combined review of the victim's own behavior by a self-appointed punitive judge, a self-appointed punitive prosecutor, and no jury, and no defense."

"Stage Three constitutes the long-term reaction...Most victims, even those who have lost only property from a ramshackled dwelling, agree that their outlook on life—their sense of integrity, their privacy, and their self-control—are changed forever..."

In addition the Statement emphasized that "The mental health implications of victimization are inextricably linked to all other aspects of the experience, such as the financial, physical, social and legal ramifications. For example, access to adequate financial resources will determine whether needed, victim-oriented counseling and therapy will be obtained.



HELPING THE VICTIM THROUGH SHORT-TERM EMOTIONAL TRAUMA FACT SHEET

HOW TO RESPOND TO THE VICTIM'S SHORT-TERM EMOTIONAL TRAUMA

Try to contact the victim after the emergency response to see if the victim seems to need further reassurance or direct assistance. Even if the victim seemed stable at the time of the crime, it is important to call again.

Ask the victim if you can visit with him/her or help in anyway.

Meet with the victim if s/he wishes and talk about any problems or unusual feelings with which s/he may be coping.

Help him/her list the most important problems or feelings in order of importance, then talk about how they might be dealt with. If possible, map out an action plan to meet their needs.

Offer to help him/her get assistance such as applying for victims compensation, mental health counseling, interim financial assistance, property repairs, or other types of services.

Provide him/her with information on what to expect from the criminal justice system in the case of an arrest or if no arrest was made.

Provide him/her with crime prevention information and information on crime victims stress reactions. Let him/her know that the range of emotions s/he is feeling is normal.

Let the victim know that talking about the crime is okay and an important part of healing.

BE CAREFUL NOT TO RESPOND BY:

Insisting on visiting a victim against his/her will.

Imposing your perception of his/her problems on him/her.

Giving him/her advice on how to handle his/her problems. The victim needs to gain back some sense of control over his/her life.

Making judgments on how s/he should lead his/her life.

Promising services which you cannot deliver.

Imposing your religious or other philosophical beliefs.

Talking about your own problems.

Telling him/her you know how s/he feels.

Remember, there are an increasing number of different types of programs, services and treatments for victims of crime but no one perfect model. Each victim should be given the opportunity to make his/her own choice of kinds of services—self-help peer groups, crime specific services, generic victim services, community mental health centers, traditional mental health professionals, or other systems. **THE CHOICE OF THE TYPE OF RESPONSE TO SHORT-TERM EMOTIONAL TRAUMA SHOULD REMAIN WITH THE PERSON WITH THE CLEARER EXPERTISE IN THE MATTER—THE VICTIM.**



CHRONIC TRAUMA FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND:

Francine seemed to be alright in the days that followed her husband's violent robbery in his drug store. She visited him everyday in the hospital as he recovered from severe head injuries and nursed him back to health at home. When Sam returned to work a month later, Francine began to act strange. She lost her appetite and seemed uncommunicative. As the weeks went on, she suffered sleepless nights and was irritable most of the time. Sam sought professional counseling for Francine when his doctor suggested that she was probably suffering from a delayed reaction to the crime that surfaced when Sam went back to work. As long as Sam was in the hospital or at home, she knew he was safe. But, when he went back to the store she lost control and was overwhelmed with fear that this time, he might be killed. Fortunately, professional counseling helped Francine to eventually resolve her fears. (Morton Bard, *The Crime Victims Handbook*, 1979).

FACTS:

The Mental Health Consensus Statement developed at the landmark national colloquium on The Aftermath of Crime: A Mental Health Crisis addressed the problem of chronic trauma in crime victims in this way: "Delayed and long-term effects of victimization present several problems that tend to interfere with optimal services. Such problems include chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as well as confusional, depressive, self-destructive and explosive behaviors which may be mistaken for major mental illness and character disorders. The victim may be unaware of any connections between present problems and prior victimization. Caregivers may lack the knowledge or the sensitivity to establish those connections."

Because of the emphasis placed on post-traumatic stress disorder, it is important to know its characteristics as defined by the American Psychiatric Association in its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual published in 1980:

1. The existence of an external stressor that would evoke anxiety symptoms in anyone.
2. The re-experiencing of the traumatic event by recurrent and intrusive recollections of the event;
 - recurrent dreams of the event;
 - suddenly acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were occurring because of an association with an environmental stimulus.
3. The numbed responsiveness to or involvement with the external world, beginning some time after the traumatic event by:
 - markedly diminished interest in one or most significant activities; or feelings of detachment or estrangement from others.
4. At least two of the following symptoms in the victim's life that were not present prior to the traumatic event:
 - hyperalertness or exaggerated startle response;
 - initial, middle or terminal sleep disturbance;
 - guilt about surviving when others have not;
 - changes in eating patterns;
 - memory trouble or trouble concentrating;
 - avoidance of activities that arouse recollection of the traumatic event; or
 - intensification of symptoms by exposure to event that symbolizes or resemble the traumatic event.



CHRONIC TRAUMA FACT SHEET

DEALING WITH LONG-TERM EMOTIONAL TRAUMA:

While there is no set of guidelines for long-term counseling, the following resources have been employed to help individuals get over the effects of long-term stress:

Self-Help Organizations

Self-help groups are growing increasingly popular as a method of dealing with long-term effects of victimization. Victims often feel safer with other victims because there is no one there to blame them for their feelings or for how they reacted during the crime. There is no one who will sit in judgment. Further, crime victims often feel isolated. A crime victim in most cases is alone when the victimization or the discovery of victimization occurs—and he feels alone in dealing with its effects.

Mental Health Counseling

The mental health profession includes psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers trained in counseling and therapy. The professional counselors can be a fine resource to victims who have difficulty resolving their immediate crisis. However, there is evidence that such training in traditional modes has not included information concerning the specific traumatization which crime victims undergo.

The Mental Health Consensus Statement commented on the problem in this way: "Mental health professionals tend to focus attention on biochemical and psychodynamic concepts derived from traditional beliefs, including an emphasis on premorbid personality, masochism, free choice, and victim-initiated behavior. There has been an apparent reluctance to acknowledge victimization or external trauma as a valid basis for continuing distress. This so-called conspiracy of silence among helping professionals contributes to the victim's sense of alienation, inadequacy, guilt, badness, and sense of craziness, opening the secondary wound rather than emphasizing strengths, offering hope, and providing trauma-specific modalities of treatment."

Following that statement, the group indicated "While there should be wide flexibility of allowable duration of treatment, there should be regular reviews of progress toward negotiated goals, with restructuring of treatment as needed to support progress and to avoid stagnation or dependence." However, the group cautioned that mental health professionals should be aware that there "should be no time limit or progress qualifications imposed on a client's choice to remain in self-help or peer advocacy groups."

Social Support: Friends and Families

Involving a whole family or special friends in counseling sessions with a victim has been used to impress the victim with family support and to reduce anxieties in reaction to the criminal attack. This method rests on the theory that significant others are often victimized indirectly by a criminal attack on their loved ones. They feel equally angry, fearful, and guilty—sometimes they can suffer even more stress than the actual victim. Dealing with the combined effects of individual stress and the family stress can be useful in defusing the situation.

Prosecution

Providing avenues through which victims can work out feelings of anger or hostility toward the system by constructive action can also work well. Victim advocates have realized intuitively that many victims feel better by prosecuting a case — even when they may not see a conviction.



SPEECHMAKING FOR THE CAMPAIGN FOR VICTIM RIGHTS

Most people who get involved in the Campaign for Victim Rights will find themselves called on to make speeches to help promote the victims movement. Such speeches may be designed to explain to the public what victim rights are. Others are designed to solicit funds. Still others focus on persuading people to become involved in changing public policy or proposing legislation.

Speeches are an essential tool for public relations. They can be used to reach four basic audiences. The first audience is the one most people think is the *only* audience—the people who hear the speech. The second audience is made of people who hear about the speech from the first audience. The second is extremely important in most communities—it is a key factor in conveying information by word of mouth. The third audience is the media that may use excerpts of the speech in news stories. And the fourth audience is that group of people who can be reached through distribution of copies of the speech.

Because of the widespread effect speechmaking can have, it is critical to spend ample time preparing some standard speeches which you can use and distribute on a regular basis. The following suggestions should help such preparation.

Know Your Subject Well

No matter how long you have worked in victim services, research will be necessary in preparing your speeches. You may have adequate knowledge about the problems of victims and the services which your program provides. But you will need to be well versed in the facts and figures concerning crime in your state, the criminal justice system, arguments surrounding victim rights issues, and possibly legislation in other states. A good speaker must be prepared for questions. They also should be able to illustrate their main points with facts—both numerical and anecdotal.

Learn About Your Audience

You may develop a standard speech which can be given almost anywhere. However you should be prepared to alter that speech to conform to different audiences. People need to be motivated to listen to speeches—even if they have voluntarily attended a speech-making event. Your challenge is to hold their attention. That will be difficult to do if you do not know what their interests are and you fail to tell them why they should be interested in your subject area.

Some questions you should ask about your audience include:

1. Who will be the audience?—students?, law enforcement officers?, medical personnel?, the general public?
 2. How many people will be there?—an audience of 10 should be approached differently than an audience of 200.
 3. Does your audience know anything about this subject?—An audience composed of victim service providers may be approached in a different manner than an audience of prosecutors.
 4. Why is the audience in attendance?—You may end up speaking to a group of people required to attend your speech by their supervisor. That kind of audience is more difficult to speak to than one which is there voluntarily.
 5. Does the audience have a related or special interest in the subject? Most criminal justice professionals have dealt with victims and have unique perspectives on victims treatment.
-

Decide Upon Your Goal in Making the Speech

While you write one basic speech which can be used for several different purposes, the purpose of any particular speech should be clear in your mind before its delivery.

If you are seeking to inform, you may want to structure your presentation with clear, concise language and accompanying the lecture with some visual aids. If you are seeking to persuade, your language may be rhetorical and elaborate. Many time visual aids detract from the persuasive strength of an oration. If you are seeking to solicit funds, you should include some very specific examples of what you need funds for, your budget, and your future funding goals.

Organizing The Speech

There are three essential elements in a good speech: organization, content, and delivery. While all are important, one cannot stress too strongly the need for a good organizational pattern. A well organized speech will ensure that your main point is heard by the audience. Beginning speakers, particularly, should spend time organizing their thoughts clearly.

The basic speech is made up of an introduction, the main body, and the conclusion. Each of these components have special functions.

Introduction

The introduction of the speech should do four things. It should capture the audience's attention. It should motivate the audience to continue to listen to you. It should orient the audience to the general subject matter. And it should outline briefly what you are going to say in the body of the speech.

Standard advice from professional speakers is to "Tell what your are going to say. Say it. Then tell what you said."

The following is an illustration of any introductory outline.

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. Good Morning. Acknowledgement of local dignitaries. Thanks to host. | This should be brief but should be included. |
| B. Story of a victim of crime and the impact of crime and its aftermath on the victim | Attention getting device |
| C. This victim represents only one of 57 million Americans who are victims of crime each year. You could be a crime victim too. Do you know your rights? | Motivational pitch. The audience should be concerned because they could be a victim (or they may have been one already). |
| D. Crime is on the increase in the United States. Violent crime has risen 5% a year for the last decade. In the same period, despite continuing concern for the accused there has been a growing outcry for better treatment of crime victims. | Orientation. Provides a background on crime and its relationship to victims. |

E. Today I would like to tell you a little bit about Victim Rights. First, I want to explain about the wrongs victims suffer. Second, I want to review the rights which many people are promoting. Third, I would like to ask you for your help and support in this year's state legislature.

Summary of what you intend to tell your audience in main body of the speech.

The Main Body

The main body of the speech should normally be divided into no more than three sections. It is difficult for people to listen and understand a complicated organizational pattern. The speaker should use the device of telling the audience what he is going to say, saying it, and summarizing for each of the three sections.

For example, in a section on the wrongs victims suffer, you may want to go through the financial losses, physical injuries, emotional trauma and the second injury from the criminal justice system. You should itemize these at the beginning of the section and then explaining each one further.

For each point that you make it is helpful to illustrate the point with both numerical data and anecdotal data. For instance, financial loss may be illustrated by the fact that residential burglary victims lose an average of \$500 in each incident. It may also be illustrated by a case story of a specific burglary victim.

If you are writing a short speech and do not have time for many examples, use an illustration of numerical data for one point and an anecdote for another. Or use both kinds of illustration but make them apply to the whole section of your speech.

When you finish a section, summarizing your points can help you make a smooth transition to the next section. "Having reviewed the financial, physical, emotional and social trauma a victim faces, let us look at what rights could be provided to alleviate some of these wrongs."

The Conclusion

The conclusion has two basic functions. First, it is a summary of the key sections of the main body.

Second, and most importantly, it is the place for the "call to action" if you are soliciting funds, persuading your audience, etc. (It should be noted that even "informational" speeches in the victim area need to be persuasive. You want people to learn about victim rights because you want their support for services and legal change.)

The conclusion should be written carefully and time should be spent developing appropriate language. The conclusion may parallel the introduction and use similar devices. You may wish to mention another anecdote about a crime victim. You may wish to remind the audience of the story and the facts you related in the introduction.

The conclusion should build to a persuasive climax. You should think about what your personal style is and decide how the final sentences should be phrased. Often the use of a quotation which applies to the subject is effective, but you must make sure the audience understands the connection.

All the examples of Victim Rights themes illustrated in poster and pamphlet form in the back of this guide are themes which were chosen, in part, because they are effective speech endings. Public relations experts will tell you that you can never say a slogan too often. Seeing the slogan on a poster, bumper sticker, and pamphlet and hearing it as an ending to a speech reinforces the message.

"And so, friends and neighbors, I am asking you to help us help victims. Contribute your dollars to Middletown's crime victim services program. Be a Good Samaritan and help victims of crime in this community."

"Help prevent crime in this neighborhood by supporting your local victim assistance program. Remember crime prevention is victim assistance."

"Today I am asking you to call your legislators, to write the governor, to make your voice known. For only when we all join in demanding that victim rights be heard—only then can we hope for justice for all . . . even the victim."

Delivery

In order to learn to deliver a speech well, one should practice over and over again. It is difficult to explain delivery techniques in writing, but some hints on practice can be shared.

Practicing a speech should include learning it well enough that you don't have to read it. Audiences are bored quickly with material that is being read. You should learn to liberate yourself from your text. It is helpful to prepare your final notes in outline form so that there is no temptation to read when you finally make your presentation.

It is often recommended that you practice in front of a mirror. This way you can monitor your own miscellaneous gestures and your posture. Gestures should not be used randomly but should relate to emphasis or specific points in the text. It is difficult to control random movement and drills in front of the mirror can be helpful.

Practice with friends and relatives. They are the hardest audience since they know you well. Let them critique you. If you can give a good speech in front of your siblings, you probably can do well in front of strangers.

Practice with a taperecorder. Most of us are not aware of the sound of our voice or the speed with which we speak. You will learn how to modulate your tones and to slow down or speed up with the help of a tape monitor.

The nature of learning is to practice. practice. practice.

Out There On Your Own

Speechmaking is not easy for most people. But we can all learn to do the job effectively. Remember if you make a mistake or get scared that it is normal. Most good speakers have stagefright and many have gone through the horrors of forgetting what they are saying, stammering, and drawing a blank. As victim advocates we have no choice but to speak out—and that means learning to speak well.



PUBLIC RELATIONS

Overview

Victim Rights Week is an occasion to educate the public both to the problems crime victims experience and to the rights and services needed to alleviate those problems. Gaining access to the general public for this educational purpose is what "public relations" is all about. One important vehicle for reaching the public audience is through the mass media. A related kind of access is available through the commemorative and ceremonial events that public officials help to stage. Finally there are individual activities which can be developed to involve students and lay citizens in their everyday life.

This chapter offers suggestions on how to get the victim rights message to the public through both means.

The Mass Media

The mass media include television, radio, newspapers, newsletters, and magazines. Virtually any public interest message will reach more people more efficiently through these media but there are problems in dealing with these message-carriers. First, they may not want your story. No matter how urgent it seems to you or how well it is written, the story may be refused.

When the media does include your story, it becomes "theirs". It may be rewritten, abbreviated, garbled, or distorted. It may be aired on the 1:00 a.m. broadcast or buried in the back of the paper. It may even be merged with another story. So be prepared for changes.

Don't count on one story to "make a difference" even if it gets good coverage. The public attention span is short and incomplete. The general audience may have found your message touching, but tomorrow there will be another touching story.

In addition, remember, media attention can sometimes do more harm than good. It can be a double-edged sword. Unless you approach the media carefully, you may provoke an inappropriate media response that may damage you, your program, or the victims you serve.

Despite all the disappointments, frustrations, and pitfalls that are inherent in trying to communicate your message through mass media, the concerns of victims and their consequent rights are issues to which the public will respond—and using mass media outlets can be one of the best methods of bringing those issues to your community. Do not let yourself be dissuaded from using mass media by the self-defeating myth that only a slick public relations firm or a high-powered politician can get the media to report their stories. They may have some advantages but others who do their homework can establish good media relations as well. So, with this as with the other activities of the Campaign for Victim Rights, be prepared to see your best efforts produce some discouraging results—and some gratifying successes.

The following material is designed to promote *your* success and mitigate your disappointments.

The Purpose of a Public Relations Program

A public relations campaign may be conducted for any of one of the following reasons:

1. To create a positive image of your agency/organization within your community/state.
2. To educate the public regarding the plight of victims of crime.
3. To educate the public as to the scope of the services your program provides.
4. To communicate to victim populations that are difficult to reach by other methods.
5. To fundraise for specific programs or the expansion of programs.
6. To develop awareness of and support for victim rights legislation.

Organizing a Public Relations Campaign

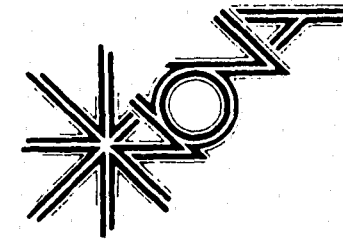
A public relations campaign is a planning map for promoting your ideas, your agency, or ideas you support in the collective mind of the "public". To do this, you must capture the attention of that amorphous body; keep the attention for long enough to make an impression; and then reiterate your message over and over again. Marketing specialists say that a name by itself must be heard at least three times to be recognized. An idea or program of ideas probably requires many times more.

In designing and implementing a public relations campaign, it is important to remember that the campaign is an activity you conduct over a long time and it will involve many different tasks. Conducting an effective public relations campaign is not the same as getting publicity for an isolated event which generally results in the placement of a story or two in newspapers or broadcast media.

A successful public relations campaign involves long-range research, planning, communicating and evaluating. In organizing such a campaign, it is important to research/review the following areas:

1. **Contact Responsibility**—It is critical to decide who should have responsibility for contacting the media within your program/agencies. There are several alternatives in establishing media contact responsibilities. Some programs have one individual in charge of all media contacts, both for substance and personal appearance. Others may wish to divide the responsibilities between three people: one person responsible for newspapers, one with radio and another with television. Another way of handling media is to assign all written contacts to someone who has strong writing skills and all personal contact to someone who is orally articulate. Still other programs may have a public relations "director" who orchestrates media contact while an official "spokesperson" provides written or spoken releases. Whatever method is used, it is important to let the media know whom they can contact for background information in their area and who is responsible for clearing a final story.
2. **Using Existing Resources**—Many resources may already exist within your own program/agency to aid in organizing a public relations program. If resources are not available internally, there are many outside resources that can help. For instance:
 - Public relations departments within local schools, colleges and universities.
 - Public relations departments within public offices, such as, your local police department or the Mayor's and District Attorney's Office.
 - Schools of communication or journalism within colleges and universities.
 - Local public relations firms.
 - Existing Public Affairs Directors of Non-Profit Organizations/Agencies.
 - National public relations organizations which may operate local chapters in your community.
 - Public Relations Society of America, 845 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10022.
 - International Association of Business Communicators, (IACB), 870 Market Street, Suite 940, San Francisco, CA, 94102.

The materials developed in this section incorporate information developed by the Public Relations Society of America, corporate public relations firms, and other proven public relations campaigns.



UNDERSTANDING THE MEDIA

Public relation campaigns depend on the mass media. The three primary types of media, newspapers, radio and television require an understanding of their respective formats. In planning your public relations campaign, you need to become familiar with each medium and its most effective uses.

NEWSPAPERS

Print Media Review

In planning a comprehensive public relations campaign, you should not overlook any of the diverse print media formats which are summarized below. After reviewing the formats of the local and regional newspapers, you should further review newspapers in your area. If you are unable to undertake the following steps in any detail, ask a public relations professional what his/her impressions are of the print media in your area. In reviewing the print media you should do the following:

1. Read all the newspapers in your locale. Familiarize yourself with the morning, afternoon, evening and weekend editions. The newspaper's editorial page should be analyzed to determine the editorial position of the paper. The editorial tone of the paper may help you determine the focus of your story.
2. Highlight the sections in each paper which may be appropriate to carry a Victim Rights Week story. Clip any articles about victims which may appear in your paper. These stories may help you understand what types of stories interest newspaper editors.
3. Make a "contact" list of names of editors and writers who regularly write about crime stories. (You may want to call the newspaper directly for this information.)

Newspapers reflect the communities in which they are published. In general, there are three types of newspapers which may cover a Victim Rights Week story. In most communities, there is a daily newspaper which covers international, national, and local news. There may be a daily community newspaper which focuses on state and local news. And, most areas have a weekly newspaper, often part of a network of weekly community newspapers, that carries only local news.

The interest in a story about victims and the amount of space an editor will allocate to stories about Victim Rights Week will be affected by:

1. Who is involved in your story or program;
2. The size of your program;
3. The size and scope of the newspaper you approach; and
4. The number of people the story will interest.

A Victim Rights Week Conference, for example, might warrant a half page in a weekly community newspaper and only a line in a large daily newspaper.

You need to be aware of the types of newspaper coverage as you plan your campaign. There are a number of ways to get your issue in print. Consider the following:

Editorial Page

In this section, the editor presents the opinions of the paper concerning all types of world and community issues. You should keep the editor informed of your special interests as they arise so s/he knows you are a resource when s/he decides to write such an opinion.

Letters to the Editor

This section contains letters from citizens who have written to the paper to express their opinions. While not all the letters are published, most papers try to publish a variety of viewpoints. If your first letter is not printed, try again. [Note: do not expect a long letter to be printed completely. Either write short letters or expect an edited version in the news.]

Op-Ed Articles

The op-ed page in the newspaper is the page opposite the editorial page. This page in the newspaper is typically reserved for articles by syndicated columnists, however most major newspapers accept articles by non-professional writers. The op-ed page may expose the reader to new ideas or a current analysis of problems facing our society. Opinion makers in your community read op-ed articles.

If you have time, this may be an effective way to respond to news stories or to the way news stories about victims are covered. For instance, a news story about an ex-husband being fined \$1,000 after murdering his ex-wife's boyfriend, may be an appropriate event for you to write an "op-ed" piece on the place of victims in our justice system or on the mythologies which accompany family violence.

Newspaper Supplements

These supplements include a wide variety of articles on subjects ranging from profiles of interesting people to community events. In many newspapers they are confined to "Sunday Supplements", but others have other daily supplements as well. The West Palm Beach Florida Victim Assistance Program uses the supplement to advertise crime prevention and victim services every year during Victim Rights Week. Your program may be doing something exciting or unusual that would fit into this format as well.

Photo Essays

Some pictures are so good that they tell the whole story with only a small caption. These give readers a break from the usual news stories. Print media needs and wants good photos so send them. However, remember, victims come first, so if a photo is used involving a victim, ask first.

RADIO

Radio stations seek to serve their local communities, both geographically and demographically. It may be easier to get a story on radio rather than television, especially if your campaign is in a larger television market. Radio stations serve particular segments of the listening public. People listen to country/western, classical music, all news, documentary, or mixes according to their tastes. A particular radio station may not highlight your program or event with as many people as newspapers, but radio is an influential medium. It is particularly helpful to be on radio during the "rush hours" before and after work. Some experts say that this "prime time" is more important than network television news. Research is necessary to determine which radio stations/programs to target for your public relations campaign. Consider the following sources:

1. Books, available in your local library, list all the radio stations and programs in the United States, along with a brief description of their content and the name of the contact person. If the library does not have these books, check with the advertising, marketing, public relations or business department of your local college.
2. Your local newspaper may publish a list of all the radio stations in an area and a brief description of their format.
3. The yellow pages will have a list of radio stations. If no published information is available, call the station and ask about their format. In many towns, for example, college radio stations reach a large community audience and may be more flexible in their programming than a national network affiliate.
4. Listen to the stations and programs which seem most appropriate for your campaign. A station that has regular interviews with local politicians, for example, may prove a better target for a Victim Rights Week Campaign than one which only plays music.
5. Listen to Public Service Announcements (PSA's). Some stations that, on first consideration, might seem an unlikely outlet, may be both "popular" with audiences and dedicated to PSA's.

6. Keep a contact list of radio programs, on-air personalities and reporters who feature subjects which may be related to victims.
7. Develop a catalog of all news/talk formats that are used by stations that might be sympathetic to victim issues.

Call-in Talk Programs

These programs are usually on "all talk" stations. The host announces a subject and people call the station to express their views on the air. Subjects usually cover local and national events or controversial social topics. Many times these programs will ask guests to talk to the "regular" host and allow the audience to talk to both. These programs are ideal for victim service directors to use to record their purposes and demonstrate their helpfulness.

Community Service Announcements/Calendar

Most radio stations run community service announcements. Community groups simply send the information about the time, place, and date of an event and the station will read it over the air for free. This is great exposure for your Victim Rights Week Campaign.

Editorials

Editorials run 30 or 60 seconds. In the same way that newspapers reflect the opinion of the editor, the radio station manager talks about the opinion of the station concerning a local or national issue.

Interview Talk Programs

The host interviews a guest who is an expert on a particular subject. These are different from call-in shows because the audience cannot participate directly. However, guests should be aware that most programs will allow a "tag-line". This announcement by the host will identify the guest's agency, address, and telephone number so that members of the public can get in touch.

News

All stations are interested in news that is important to their listeners. Don't overlook the news department if your story is timely. Send the radio similar news releases as other media. Radio is more likely to respond in many areas than are television or print media.

And, remember, radio is powerful.

TELEVISION

Of all the media, television is the most dramatic. The elements that make good television are the elements that make good theater: a highly visual situation which has strong emotional appeal. The same guidelines for researching radio shows apply to television. In addition, T.V. Guide and local program listings can be of help. The entertainment section of your newspaper may carry articles reviewing local "news magazine" type shows.

Local News Programs

All local news programs reserve time for community stories. Whether your story gets on the air will depend on:

1. Who you know at the station;
2. Whether there will be camera action;
3. Who the story involves in the community;
4. Whether the producer considers it important.

Local Talk Shows

These programs cover everything from sports to education and entertainment. Their audiences like to hear about things that are new and different. Don't forget cable networks; they are usually more accessible than large networks. Cable networks may be the news medium of the future.

Editorial Commentaries

These are usually given by the General Manager or Public Affairs Director on the opinions of the station concerning local political or social issues, or national events that affect your community. They are similar to radio or newspaper editorials.

Public Service Announcements

These are brief (10, 20 or 30 seconds) announcements to the public about events or services sponsored by non-profit organizations. Several such announcements are included in this manual.

Free Speech Announcements/Editorial Replies

These are usually programmed in reply to editorials. They parallel the "op-ed" page. A member of the community gets 30 to 60 seconds to deliver a personal opinion about an important local issue. A script in advance of the broadcast date is required in most instances.



NEWSWORTHY STORIES FOR VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK

Although the local media is always interested in new material, the information you prepare for print and broadcast media must have real news value. Local newspaper editors are constantly searching for newsworthy and interesting stories, particularly those dealing with people from their circulation area. However, not all stories are newsworthy. There are a few simple guidelines to decide if you have a newsworthy story:

1. The story needs a "news hook." That means the story should be new, unique, or convey an unusual twist. A new story is one that has not been published or broadcast before—even though it may be aired at the same time in all media. A story is unique if it is the first of its kind. However, if it is the first in the country or has an impact on history, it is of national importance. If it is the first in the community, the story is local. A story may have an unusual twist if you can define it. For example, an "ordinary conference" may not be newsworthy unless, perhaps, it focuses on the media's violation of the victims' rights of privacy or some other provocative issue.
2. The story should be prepared well. The audience should be entertained, interested, or need this information.
3. The story should appeal to everyone's interest in ordinary values and other people's behavior.
4. The story could be controversial or relate to current events. If so, those controversies and events should be clear.
5. The story could relate to community issues. If so, those issues should be clear.

KEY ELEMENTS OF A VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK STORY

Newspaper

The key elements for newspaper coverage are:

1. Good photo possibilities.
2. Appeal to a local audience.
3. Involvement of students or children.
4. Relationship to a local news item.
5. Sufficient background information and statistics.
6. Educational and/or entertaining to the reader.

Radio

Radio coverage is more likely if the story:

1. Stirs listener emotions.
2. Includes a lively, articulate guest who captures the listener's attention.
3. Is told in visual, descriptive words.
4. Has extra appeal or controversy to make people listen.
5. Includes issues familiar to the audience.
6. Does not include too many facts and figures.
7. Asks the public to take action.

Television

Capturing a spot on television is difficult. The story must be:

1. Highly visual.
2. Interesting to a wide audience.
3. Dramatic.
4. Action oriented.
5. Very current and immediate.



COMMUNICATING

After you know you have a story to tell, it's time to obtain media coverage for your event or program.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Your first contact with any media should be in writing. This is the best way to introduce yourself and to provide a basis for a follow-up phone call. The most important ways to make that contact are through a news release, a public service announcement, or an introductory letter.

The News Release

The news release is the single most important form of communication between an organization and the media. News releases account for 70 percent of all communication between the public relations departments of every kind of organization and news editors.

Purpose

The three purposes of a news release are: to announce an upcoming event and invite the press to cover it; to issue a statement or take a stand on a news development or issue; and to provide background information or supplement late-breaking news.

Form

There are established conventions of organizing and writing a news release. Practically everyone in the media prefers it when you observe the following guidelines:

1. Always type the release. Double space the text with wide margins and use only one side of the paper.
2. The best news releases are no more than one page long. If your story is really compelling, you may go to two pages, but more than two generally won't be read by the editor.
3. It is preferable to use letterhead or paper with a heading. Whatever you use, put at the top of the page:
 - a. The organization's name and address;
 - b. The name of the contact person;
 - c. The phone number where that person can be reached;
 - d. The release date (i.e., for immediate release or for release after a certain date and time).
4. Just below this information, put a headline if you like. Headlines are optional. Some professionals feel this is the editor's responsibility and others feel that this may catch the eye of the editor and induce him to cover the story. If you don't use a headline, skip two inches between the release line and the rest of the copy so the editor can insert the desired headline.
5. At the end of the release, type either one of the two symbols: -30- or ###, centered and several lines below the last sentence. These symbols indicate the conclusion.
6. Send your press release in enough time to allow the reporter or editor time to follow up on the release. You should phone the local media and find out the best time to deliver releases.

Style

Use a summary lead (who, what, when, where, why) whenever possible. Short, precise sentences with active verbs are preferable. In addition, the lead should be quotable and convince editors to cover the story.

The release should be tailored for its medium. For example, write terse, short releases for radio. For newspapers, you should write in a style similar to that which you read. The editor will be more inclined to run your release as if it is written in the form of a news story.

For newspaper releases, the Public Relations Society of America provides the following reminders designed to make your written communications clearly understandable to your reader:

Know What is to be Communicated: Know what you want to say precisely. Question the pertinence of other ideas, topics and material and make deletions if necessary.

Think About Your Language: Serious subjects merit serious language. Manners and literary style should be appropriate to the occasion.

Be Conservative: Avoid adjectives and adverbs that do not contribute to the communication of exact meaning. Avoid over-worded intensives such as wonderful and fantastic.

Get to the Point: Don't be pretentious about your subject. If background information is necessary, keep it at a minimum and introduce it after your reader knows why you are providing it. (You can supply additional background information with a news release but not in it.)

Use Proper Diction: Choose the most appropriate words possible to carry out the communication. Use of vocabulary is a critical element in effective communication.

Be Natural: Use phrases, sentence patterns and vocabulary that "fit" you, the subject and any other people involved in the story.

Be Readable: Keep your sentences short (17 words or less) and use simple, straight forward words as much as possible. Keep your paragraphs brief. Organize your thoughts before you write and adhere to that organization.

Releases for TV and radio should be written in conversational style and at broadcast length — short and to the point. The "shelf life" for the broadcast news is very brief, so call the news department with "spot news" updates.

Always try to include a photograph, chart or illustration in releases for the print media. A routine story may get used when accompanied by an excellent photo, while a better story may be refused because there is no visual interest.

Never tell the editor or your media contact how to do his job. Never suggest length, position, or timing of a news release. You write it. They edit and publish it. [A sample news release is included in this manual.]

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Radio and television stations are required by the Federal Communication Commission to allot some air time for programming in the public interest. This free air time is available to any worthwhile non-profit organization for their public service message. Caution: in some areas most of the free air time is already "spoken for", while in others it is relatively easy to get consideration.

Purpose

There are three primary purposes of a public service announcement (PSA). These purposes are:

1. To inform or educate the viewer or listener about an issue or service.
2. To get the viewer or listener to share your point of view.
3. To solicit funds or assistance for your program.

Form

A script is needed for a public service announcement. You will find sample public service announcements scripts for Victim Rights Week in the last section of this packet.

The format for public service announcements depends upon the broadcast medium.

General Criteria for Acceptance

To be accepted for airing, a program must:

1. Be non-profit and tax exempt.
2. Offer a needed service to the community.
3. Be capable of servicing a sizeable portion of the community.
4. Be a local organization or chapter of a national organization and be located within and service their viewing area; or, be a national organization not located in the viewing area but one which offers information of interest in the area of services that are easily and readily accessible to those in the area.

Cover Letters and Background Information

A cover letter should always accompany the script for a PSA. The letter should be on organization letterhead, should include the organization address and telephone number, and should be dated.

When requesting the production of announcements, include in the package the following information:

1. A copy of your Internal Revenue Service Tax Exemption Certificate.
2. Background information on your organization or the program to be featured in your announcement. This may simply be provided through your brochure or through copies of your press kit.
3. A list of your Board of Directors or Administrators.
4. If your announcement is to raise funds, send information on your organization's funding sources and a copy of your latest financial statement.

General Information

Whenever possible, materials should be sent in at least two to three months prior to when you want them to start airing. Most stations have tight scheduling for PSA production.

Generally, announcements are used for a period of 6-9 months unless you indicate a specific campaign period or unless they are seasonal announcements.

After the PSA's are sent, advise the station of:

1. Any major changes in the structure, goal, or purpose of your organization.
2. Any change in Executive Director, President or Public Relations Officer.
3. Any change in address or telephone number.
4. Any person featured in your announcement running for political office during election years.
5. Any limitations on the length of time your announcement can be aired.
6. Any other changes that would affect the usage of your announcement.

Radio PSA's

Radio stations seek to serve their local communities, both geographically and demographically. It may be easier to get broadcast on radio rather than TV, especially if your campaign is in a larger TV market. Radio stations serve a particular segment of the listening public. The most efficient way to produce the PSA's is to script them yourself and have the radio station produce them in their production facilities. Recording the spots yourself is difficult if you don't have the proper equipment to produce quality tapes.

The following tips incorporate information developed through NOVA's previous public relations campaigns and from *A Guide to Public Relations for Nonprofit Organizations and Public Agencies*:

1. Identify the stations you want to approach. The only way to do that is to take some time to listen to them. It can help to know who their public service directors are and who their audiences are.
2. Avoid sending the same PSA's to all media. Try to tailor the materials—if only with a cover letter—to the interests of a particular station.
3. Find out the name of the person to contact for public service announcements.
4. Pay particular attention to the length of PSA which a certain station prefers. At one time, 60 seconds was standard. More recently 30 seconds has become the norm. So, if you are producing your own spots and can only do one, check with the stations in your area and tailor the length to their preference. The best thing you can do is to provide a complete range of times: 60, 30, 20 and 10 second broadcasts.
5. Find out whether the station prefers "live" copy (ready for recording by the station) or already-produced spots. Such preferences may determine whether or not your spot gets aired.
6. Even if you rent a tape, it is advisable also to include a transcript since all PSA's are auditioned by stations. Frequently, the transcript becomes the basis for the audition and the decision to accept or reject the spot for airing.

7. After your spot or campaign has been accepted by a station, find out how long it will run and when it is scheduled for airing. Then listen for your spot. When you hear it, let your station contact know. If, after reasonable time, you haven't heard it, let him or her know that, too. Try to bear in mind, though, that not all public service spots run when, or as often as scheduled. Many stations will provide a statement of "invoice" of spots broadcast on your behalf. If a station doesn't furnish invoices, the public service director will usually give a rough accounting of the number of times your spot ran, if you ask for it. If you are satisfied with the reception your campaign received, thank the station's staff in writing. And don't just write to the staff who programmed the spot. Thank the general manager or the owner as well.

Television PSA's

The national networks and most TV stations have guidelines for PSAs airing and production. You should check with the stations in which you plan to air the announcement.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER/PITCH LETTER

An introductory letter is as important as a news release or a public service announcement. Its purpose is to:

1. Interest an editor in doing a feature story.
2. Interest a talk show host in your story.
3. Present you as a potential talk show guest.

An introductory letter should be sent to a specific media contact, for example, a radio talk show host with whom you would like to appear. The letter should explain your story and why you think your ideas would be interesting to other people. Background materials (statistics, photos, etc.) should be enclosed with the letter.

A variation on the introductory letter is a written invitation. This is a simple and informal note to a media contact arranging a meeting at a specific date and time.

The written invitation should be used to invite an editor, reporter, host or producer to visit your program. This arouses their interest in the issues surrounding victims and can lead to future news stories.

Telephone Follow-Up

No matter what your written contact is, you should follow-up with a phone call. Many news releases never get read by the media unless someone calls their attention to it. The call and its degree of effectiveness can mean the difference between success or failure in your public relations campaign.

You should call people at the "desks" to which you have sent the release. And, when you call, it is your job to let them know what is going on. It is their job to decide whether it's important.

In preparing to make the call, always put the media release in front of you and practice the call with a colleague or in your head before dialing. If you are calling to check on the use of the release material, avoid being pushy or condescending.

Start out by identifying yourself, your title and agency. The next line is crucial. Your opening should be straightforward and succinct, similar to the lead in a news release. Envision your pitch as you would a newspaper story: What is the headline? Successfully re-worded, it can be your opening line. In one, but no more than two sentences, the basic who, what, when, where and why of the story needs to be told as efficiently as possible.

Photographs should be used for what they are—an economical, effective means of reporting a story, and of getting your story told in the media.

The following are seven guidelines in making a photograph that is most useful to the press:

1. Shoot in black and white unless someone requests a color photograph.
2. Group shots should contain no more than four people. Too many people will make the picture caption too long and the faces may be indistinguishable.
3. Try different angles on group shots. Most shots are taken face forward and thus do not attract viewer interest.
4. If possible, take and send both a horizontal and vertical shot. This will give editors a better chance of using your picture.
5. Editors prefer candid shots. Even if you are posing the shot, try to urge your subjects to avoid looking straight at the camera.
6. All photos must be properly captioned. Everyone in the photo must be identified. Be sure to include in parentheses—(left or right) the order in which the persons appear on the photograph. Photo identification should also include addresses and organizational affiliations. The photo caption should be glued or taped to the photo so that it will not be separated. A photo without a caption is of no use to anyone.
7. Take more photographs than you need. You never know when someone will blink or squint at the wrong time.

Press Kits

The press kits are needed if you intend to hold a press conference, a special event, or simply want to acquaint the press with an issue about which they are likely to know very little.

The contents of the kit will always depend on the particular purpose and circumstance of the press conference. But some of all of the following will usually be included:

1. An agenda of the event.
2. A guest list, if possible.
3. Updated news releases, new features, and other new material describing the highlights of the conference.
4. Texts of major speeches to be delivered at the conference, along with news summarizing the high points of each speech.
5. Brief fact sheets including: data about the organization; victim services; and biographies of important people, particularly those who are to speak and those responsible for the news event.
6. Existing literature on victim issues that may be useful or interesting.
7. Copies of scripts of any special demonstrations, films or audio visual presentations.
8. Photos, with captions, of important speakers, officers, or other attendees.

Feature Articles

Feature articles can present important issues for victim rights. A feature story is not a news story because it interprets and creates a mood rather than merely presenting information.

Although it is somewhat difficult to persuade a newspaper to prepare a feature story, the Victim Rights Week Campaign has good feature potential because it is a national story that can be tied to local events. The best method of approaching a reporter in order to get him/her to write a feature is by writing what is known as a *pitch letter*.

The *pitch letter* can be sent to interest the media to write a feature, broadcast a news series or public service announcement or to provide editorial coverage for a specific issue. The letter requesting a feature should include suggestions outlined in diminishing order of importance. Your lead should be eye catching and prompt the staff reporter to do a feature. The closing should convey your intention to follow up by phone.

A press kit should be included with your letter if you have not already sent one. If no press kits are available, enclose written materials such as brochures, and other informational guides. These are important because the "background" (on say, local victims services programs) is often as prominent as the "foreground", for example, what happened to a certain victim, in a feature story.

The following "Do's and Don'ts" may be helpful in the follow-up:

Don't say "I think you'll find this newsworthy" OR "I'm sure your audience/readers will find this interesting."

Your role is not to tell someone what has news value or speak for the audience. Let the information stand on its own.

Do concisely explain the news value. Many media people will simple ask . . . "Why should I attend?" or "Why would I want to cover this event?" The pressure is now on. Be direct. Present your angle. Highlight your guest speaker:

"Ms. X is one of the leading experts in treating child victims of sexual assault. She will address the current problems of child sexual and physical abuse in day care centers. She will be available for an interview before the conference or after her opening remarks if you would like to schedule something."

Don't risk losing the reporter's interest by rambling on about peripheral concerns. They are looking for a "newshook"—and your primary effort should be to make that a newsworthy aspect of your story.

Do raise background ideas, embellishments and other issues, once the newsworthy part of your story is understood.

Don't fake information when you don't know.

Do offer to call back with the information. Your respect and reputation with the media as a legitimate news source are on the line. Have all your facts right.

As you conclude your pitch, you may also want to inquire if there is any additional information that can be sent. If you are told that the newspaper/station will not cover the event or run a story, you may inquire about what other stories may be of interest to the reporter.

One follow-up may not be enough. Remember to call in any last minute news that might not be in the release, e.g., "Celebrity X will be joining personalities," any photo possibilities, or whatever news may have happened.

Follow up your release with a telephone call between two and five business hours before the actual event or the news happening.

Be persistent. Even if you've been put on hold, or told to call back, etc., keep trying. Kindly decline offers from intermediaries to take messages. Find out when the best time is to call back. However, don't call TV media during the hour before airtime; likewise newspaper people before their deadlines. The best time to call is soon after they arrive, e.g., TV news: 3:30 p.m., or between newscasts. Call talk shows producers after the show. No matter how bad the reactions to your previous media calls have been, including being put on "permanent" hold after identifying yourself, remember they want you to call.

NEWS RELEASE CAVEAT: NEVER CALL AN EDITOR TO ASK IF HE INTENDS TO USE YOUR STORY. ONLY CALL AN EDITOR WITH MAJOR CHANGES OR IF YOU HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE HE MAY NOT HAVE RECEIVED YOUR STORY.

OTHER MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

Photographs

A photograph is increasingly valuable in news and feature stories. Quite often, the photograph is, in itself, the news. The matte-finish still picture or one- to two-minute film clip is almost a must for television news. TV is primarily a visual medium, so that TV releases call for pictures, photographs, screen slides, and videotapes. Photos for TV use should be horizontal and in the ratio of four units of width to three units of height, since this is the shape in which TV information is transmitted.

Editorials

Editorials and letters to the editor are different from the press release or the public service announcement in that they seek to persuade and inform the reader or viewer of a position on an issue. In some areas, polls indicate that the "letters to the editor" section is read more than any other. A campaign of letters can be an effective way to spotlight victim rights during the commemorative week.

An editorial should be no longer than a few hundred words. It should state your opinion clearly at the outset and then provide arguments that support your position. Counter-arguments should be anticipated and refuted. The final paragraph should be a restatement of your position and a summary of your major arguments.

GETTING THE RELEASE TO THE MEDIA

One key to good media coverage is a good mailing list. It should be extensive, covering all media and appropriate reporters in the area. Some cities have media guides, often published by the local public relations association. You can learn about the existence of a guide by calling the local association or a local public relations firm.

Never send a release to more than one person at the same newspaper. Nothing makes enemies faster than having two editors plan to use the same story in different sections of one day's paper.

When sending releases to media without a contact person, the following contact points are generally safe bets:

1. "City Desk"—daily newspapers.
2. "News Assignment Desk"—radio and television
3. "Local News Desk"—wire services and periodicals
4. "Editor"—weeklies

Mailing a release too early is worse than mailing it too late. If it comes too far in advance, it will be shunted aside and forgotten. If you have a last-minute story, you can always phone it in. Check with local editors and reporters about proper timing in your areas.

Deadlines and Lead Time

Much of the information in this guide has concentrated on the basis of news dissemination—the communication process itself. When working with the media, it is important to be sensitive to deadlines as well as formats. The entire news gathering business is structured by deadlines: the tempo of work, the flow of information, the level of activity, and the detail of the story. For print media, know the deadlines for each edition of the newspaper, and for electronic media know the broadcast deadlines. Ask your media contact what his/her special needs are and confirm deadlines so that your story gets the best possible coverage.

Deadlines are the internal clock that drives the news media. The lead time is the amount of time needed to schedule a news or feature story, from the date of the first contact to the appearance story. The following lead time guidelines are recommended by media professionals:

Newspapers

Feature Articles—Lead Time: 2 or 3 weeks
Editorial Page—Lead Time: Immediate
Letters to the Editor—Lead Time: Immediate
Op-Ed Page—Lead Time: 1 or 2 weeks
Photo Essay—Lead Time: 1 week

Radio

Talk Show Guest—Lead Time: 3—4 weeks
Talk Show Call In—Lead Time: Immediate
Public Service Announcement—Lead Time: 3 or 4 weeks

Television

Public Affairs Program—Lead Time: 4—6 weeks
News and Feature Program—Lead Time: 4—6 weeks
Talk Show - Lead Time: 4—6 weeks
PSA/Free Speech/Editorial Reply—Lead Time: 4—6 weeks

A Word of Thanks

In dealing with newspaper editors, radio talk show hosts or television producers, it is important to maintain contact with them after your public relations program is completed. It is a good idea to send your contact a thank you letter. Such expressions strengthen relationships and enhance your chances of coverage in the future.

HOSTING THE MEDIA AT A SPECIAL EVENT

Events and activities during Victim Rights Week should be designed to attract media attention—to make them newsworthy. To this end, a coordinator should be designated to be in charge of both soliciting press involvement and providing assistance to them at the event. That coordinator should not be the spokesperson, although s/he should be prepared and authorized to make statements should the spokesperson be unavailable.

In hosting the press, the coordinator should stand ready to provide them with all reasonable services. The following should be helpful for accomplishing this:

1. Give every reporter a press kit and have extras on hand in case they want more than one.
2. Greet the press at the door. Take their names and affiliation and provide them with special press badges.
3. Make sure the reporters know who the coordinator is and that he or she is the person who can help them.
4. Distribute a list of "newsworthy" or "important" people who will be in attendance so that the press may schedule interviews or seek reactions and comment on your program. If you plan to have a major speaker or an out-of-town guest, prepare short biographies for the press.
5. Make sure that technical arrangements are adequate:
 - a. Know where the electrical outlets and fuses are.
 - b. Position cameras so that they do not obstruct the audience's view but provide a good shot of the event.
 - c. Have working microphones—particularly if you are holding a press conference.
 - d. Have a working electric typewriter available in case a reporter wants to use it at the scene.
 - e. Arrange for photocopying on the spot, and where that is difficult, promise to deliver it within two hours.
6. Have assistants or volunteers stand ready to help the coordinator. The coordinator should not leave the event. Others should be available if there is a need to deliver or retrieve something for the event.
7. Make sure the spokesperson or the chair of the event knows where to go and what to do. Have a full briefing with him or her prior to the event itself.

Planning and Organizing a Press Conference

The purpose of a conference should be to make an important announcement or major statement of policy. Don't make the mistake of planning a press conference without an important purpose. You will either not get anyone to attend or, if they do, they will not attend a second time. A conference advisory notice is included in this guide.

One of two things is necessary for a good press conference: a "name" speaker or a "package".

A name speaker is someone who is well-known and in whom the public is interested. A package involves a number of individuals who have a special interest or outlook on an issue. They may be "experts" in the field, volunteers or grassroots representatives, or victims themselves. For Victim Rights Week, it is often very effective to hold a press conference in which victims of crime provide the primary statements. [Note: remember that confidentiality and privacy are impor-

tant to many victims, so make sure that any victim who wishes to be involved in a public statement fully understands the visibility which such involvement will give to him or her.]

Distribute an agenda for the press conference and make the program clear. Along with the agenda, distribute press kits and a prepared statement from the major speaker(s). The statement should not exceed two or three pages. Have enough kits and statements for everyone.

It is best to begin the conference with one or two minor or introductory speakers. This allows for late arrivals both of media representatives and possibly the major speaker herself. Start on time. Media persons have deadlines and you should be conscious of them as well. In that regard, it is best to hold the press conference in the morning.

Do not give individual interviews before you start, but arrange for them if reporters want to talk to you after the event.

Have supporting documents such as letters, reports, etc., available after the conference.

In arranging the logistics for the conference, be aware of media needs. Choose a practical place, easily accessible to the press. Do not pick a larger room than your expected crowd. Too small is better than too big. Make sure the room can accommodate lighting and sound equipment. Set up the room so that reporters can sit close and cameras can shoot over heads. The panel or speakers should sit together behind a long desk and face the audience. Leave space for cameras and standing cameramen behind the desk.

RESPONDING TO PRESS INQUIRIES

With all the recent national attention on victim's issue, local programs and interested individuals are more likely to receive calls from representatives of the press in search of a story. While most people worry about how to answer questions from the press, some emphasis should be placed on the kinds of questions you should ask.

1. *Who is the person calling you?* It is important to find out the paper or station that is being represented, the name and title of the caller, and the purpose of the call.
2. *Do you want to respond?* If you do not know the publication or program for which the caller works, you may want to check it out before you answer questions. Some media specialize in sensationalism and may be looking for a way to distort or misrepresent you. Second, the reporter may be asking for information which you should not divulge. Just because you are called by the media does not mean you have to respond.
3. *Is it appropriate for you to respond?* If you are not the designated public relations officer or the director of your program, you probably should avoid responding to the press. Ask them to call back another time when the appropriate person is available.
4. *Are you ready to answer the questions?* Do not answer questions when you do not have the right information or are unprepared. Even if the reporter is on a deadline, you should arrange to call him back. It is better to miss the interview than to give out erroneous information.
5. *Do you have all the information you need from the reporter?* You need some vital information as you try to answer the questions. When is his deadline? If you cannot answer at this time you need to know when you can get back to him. You should know clearly whether the interview is on or off the record. Are you the only one being interviewed about the subject or will your comments be used in a story with other people's opinions? How much time will the interview take? Finally, will you get a chance to read the story before it is printed. This last question can be vital if your subject is complicated and if you are worried about possible misrepresentation.

THE MEDIA INTERVIEW

If your role during Victim Rights Week includes being a spokesperson for your campaign, you should refine your skills to prepare for interviews.

Analyzing An Interview Format

Reporters strongly rely on interviews as a basic tool of news gathering. Complex subjects require an expert to concisely translate pertinent information for public consumption through mass

media. The protocol of an interview should be understood by the interviewee. An interview is not an informal conversation between reporter and the subject. It is more similar to a formal debate during which the interviewer represents the public and your responses are directed to the public through the news media.

You should remember that the reporter wants news. The interviewer will not necessarily be interested in whether you, your program, or victims rights are perceived in a positive or negative image.

Preparing For An Interview

Guidelines for interview preparation include the following steps:

1. Take the time to prepare. Under pressure you may not remember what you want to say or make all of your major points. You should prepare your comments with a particular emphasis on current events and how they affect your program and victims' issues.
2. Study specific interview styles by listening to broadcast news reporters. Listen to interviewers who are skilled at fielding reporter's questions.
3. Anticipate questions. Before the interview, you may have the opportunity to ask the reporter the types of topics—but not specific questions—he or she may touch on. In preparation for the interview, review areas of potential interest, controversy, or current issues relating to your subject.
4. Frame your answers from the public's point of view. Use language that the public can understand. Professional jargon or abbreviations will not be clearly understood.
5. Rehearse an interview with a friend or professional associate. Practice your diction. Time your answers. Broadcast interviews are typically brief and succinct answers are critical. Tape or videotape the mock interview to further refine your content and style.
6. In a taped interview, if you seriously stumble over your words, remember that the story will be edited. If you are concerned about your performance, ask the reporter if you could start over again. However, be sensitive to reporters deadlines.
7. If a particular question makes you angry, avoid abrasive responses. Do not argue with the reporter. You do not have editorial control and your remarks, out of context, may appear in print or be broadcast. Your argument may make better news than your "real" point.
8. You may want to rephrase a specific question in order to highlight an important issue. Challenge any effort to put words in your mouth. Correct any misleading questions. However, be careful not to appear evasive. An astute reporter will further challenge you or develop an impression that you have something to hide.
9. Prepare answers in advance to specific questions. The most important aspect of successful interviewing is "spontaneously" responding with quotable quotes or phrases that present your reply in a memorable way.

If a reporter requests an interview, pertinent questions to ask in advance of the interview include:

1. What is the time and location and the length of the interview itself?
2. Is the interview live or taped and when will it appear in print or be broadcast?
3. What type of story (a news or feature piece) is the reporter interested in doing?
4. How much space or air time will be committed to the story?

In addition, make sure the reporter gets the spelling and pronunciation of your name correct. Make sure your title and the name of your program, organization and/or affiliation are correct.

The Interview Process

The following guidelines should be helpful during the interview process:

1. You can set the tone and pace of the interview. Stop and think before you answer questions. Many interview subjects rush through their comments because of nervousness.
2. Deliver your quotable quotes and answers to anticipated questions. Use brief illustrations or anecdotes where possible.
3. If you do not know the answer to a question, state that you do not know and offer to get back to the reporter. Your credibility as a news source is at stake.

4. Be sensitive to colleagues in the victim's field. Do not attack other organizations. This is counter-productive and your controversial remarks may become the focus of the interview. Be positive, not defensive.
5. If the interview is live, the pace of the interview is more significant. If you are being interrupted, wait your turn and answer the question. Resist any temptation to interrupt other interviewees or the reporter.
6. When you are asked a series of questions, restate the question you are responding to in your answer.
7. Close to the end of the interview, mentally review your major points and summarize in your concluding remarks. You may have time to make a specific point by using any of the following phrases:
 - a. "I would like to make one specific point..."
 - b. "I would like to add..."
 - c. "I would like to go back to a specific question/answer"

This technique will round-out your interview and emphasize a point which was not stressed or may have been neglected entirely.

OTHER PUBLIC RELATIONS

While use of the media is the most visible kind of public relations, victim advocates should be aware that they can help to generate public interest by asking public officials and prominent community leaders to become involved with victim rights.

Each year NOVA writes a letter to all the governors asking that they proclaim Victim Rights Week in their state. However, some states have a policy that governors will not issue such a proclamation unless it is requested by a resident of the state. To ensure that all states commemorate the week, you should help by writing a personal letter to the governor of your state and enclosing a sample proclamation. A sample letter and proclamation are included.

In addition to obtaining gubernatorial involvement, victim advocates should seek city and county proclamations from local officials. A similar letter should be addressed to those leaders.

In some states, there may be a desire to seek a legislative proclamation of Victim Rights Week in addition to the gubernatorial proclamation. This may be useful in states where the majority party in the legislature is different from the party represented in the executive mansion. It may also be a way to interest legislators in the issue.

If you are able to get public officials to make a proclamation or support Victim Rights Week, do not overlook the obvious: proclamations should receive media attention and you should take on the responsibility for arranging for a public ceremony to acknowledge the proclamation. If you do not pursue this, it may be that the governor proclaims a Victim Rights Week but only you and the governor know.

In some states, the governor will simply sign a proclamation in response to a request and send a copy to the person who requested it. You should follow up a request with an offer to help coordinate a press conference around the signing ceremony, or at least help to arrange for a photographer so that you can distribute photographs.

Finally, you should approach civic groups and other community organizations to issue their own statements on Victim Rights Week. Local and state chapters of unions, the chamber of commerce, senior citizens groups, service clubs, and a host of others, may all get involved through resolutions and proclamations. Remember, if you promote such statements widely, you may be able to issue a follow-up story after Victim Rights Week on the number of groups and individuals which joined in support of the week. This can also be helpful to you throughout the year in funding battles and legislative advocacy.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

In addition to the Victim Rights Week program schedule which addresses staging events throughout the week, you may want to encourage people to participate in the week through individual activities.

Some jurisdictions have had annual poster contests on such themes as crime prevention, victim rights, law enforcement, etc. In 1981, then Denver District Attorney Dale Tooley, coordinated a student crime prevention poster competition and attracted more than 10,000 entries. Sixty of those were selected for display and final judging during Victim Rights Week. In 1984, Pinellas Coalition for Victim Rights sponsored a similar competition with a microcomputer as a prize.

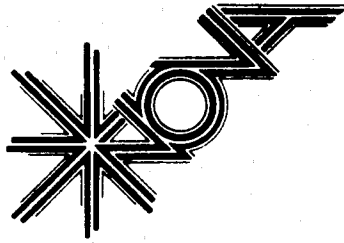
Other programs have convinced local colleges or universities to host accredited seminars or classes that focus on the criminal justice system, crime victimization and victim services.

In some communities participation is promoted through the sale of bumper stickers or the use of theme posters. Have a printer enlarge the "bill of rights" for victims, or develop your own theme for the week and design a standard poster. Put them up in stores, schools, police departments, etc. — and maybe the courthouse: ironically, some programs have had problems in putting such posters up in courthouses, because their judges have felt that a statement of victim rights might bias jurors against the defendant.

We have included sample pamphlets in this kit. Although they are only samples, they have been developed as camera-ready copy so that you can reproduce them for your Victim Rights Week.



SAMPLE MATERIALS



EQUAL JUSTICE FOR ALL: THE CONTINUING CAMPAIGN FOR VICTIM RIGHTS

The following is an edited text of a speech given by Marlene A. Young during Victim Rights Week, 1983. It provides an overview which may be useful to victim advocates making Victim Rights Week presentations in 1984. The speech has been updated to reflect legislative changes since April, 1983. Case histories summarized in the text are all true; the names of the victims, however, have all been changed.

In the spring of 1975, the Philadelphia District Attorney's new victim/witness program organized several days of events under the banner of "Victim Rights Week." Nine years later, that local experiment has been transformed into a national institution. Rising public concern over the treatment of crime victims was highlighted in April of 1983 when the President of the United States, for the third year in a row, pronounced National Crime Victims Week, this time in a Rose Garden ceremony before representatives of the victims movement from across the United States. That ceremony was a symbol of the astounding progress which has been made on behalf of victims over the last decade:

- In 1973, there were only a handful of state victim compensation programs. Today there are thirty-nine states plus the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands which have established such programs.
- In 1973, there were only a handful of victim assistance programs of any type. Today, there are victim assistance programs in all fifty states. Seventeen states now help to fund general victim and witness assistance programs in their localities; state funding for domestic violence programs is provided in 40 states; and some 15 states now provide funding for rape crisis centers.
- In 1973, the idea of allowing a victim to provide information for a judge's consideration at sentencing was only an emerging idea in the mind of James Rowland, Chief Probation Officer in Fresno County, California. Today a Victim Impact Statement is mandated in fourteen states and is practiced in many more.
- In 1973, a larger claim of rights for victims had yet to be conceived, much less voiced. Today bills of rights for victims have been passed in eleven states.
- In addition, the federal government has taken up a leadership role in terms of victim issues through:
 - The enactment of the Victim and Witness Protection Act of 1982;
 - The enactment of the Missing Children's Act of 1982;
 - The establishment and the Report of the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime.

These indications of recent progress are extraordinary and they hold out the promise of an even better future. But our sense of accomplishment should not blind us to present realities. The brutal fact is that crime is still rampant around us, its casualties grow in number, and only a few of them are accorded the compassion and justice due them from their fellow citizens and their institutions of democratic government.

For these facts remain part of the social landscape of this country:

- Every minute there are fifty thefts.
- Every minute there are thirteen burglaries.
- Every minute there are nine assaults.

And these are indicators of the state of our union today:

- Every day there are fourteen hundred children abused.
- Every day there are four hundred and eight women raped.
- Every day there are fifty-five people murdered.

And this is what we Americans have come to:

- Every year one in three American households is victimized by serious crime, and over \$75 billion is bled from the national economy by the predations of crime.

These statistics are a disgrace to a good and generous people. Yet the sheer volume of these numbers tends to hide the personal tragedies which are crime's true story. Tragedies such as happened to:

Marie Sands, a five-year-old girl who was kidnapped and sexually abused over a period of a week before she was released—a child who now wakes up with nightmares every night, who is afraid to go out of the house, whose friends made fun of her and won't play with her any more. Marie's tragedy is more than an integer in our national statistics.

John Keith, who was shot in an armed attack on his drug store—a man who is now partially paralyzed and blind in one eye—a family breadwinner who had to give up his business and now lives on welfare. John's tragedy is more than an integer in our national statistics.

And Caroline Stanton, whose daughter was raped, beaten, and murdered—a mother who has been robbed of a life she valued more than her own—a grief-stricken woman who watched the man who killed her daughter receive a sentence normally given to a thief, not a murderer. Caroline's tragedy is also more than an integer in our national statistics.

These tragedies and hundreds of thousands like them lead me to think that while we have had some success, we have nothing yet to celebrate. Where services exist, they are fortuitous privileges. Where rights have been designated, they have yet to be enforced. And the sad truth is that the victims in most of our communities have neither services that reach out to help them nor rights for them to invoke.

Hence, Victim Rights Week is still a time to speak out on the essentials: to review the injuries which victims suffer, to proclaim the rights which they deserve, and to voice the victims' hopes for the future.

All victims of crime suffer one, two, or all three primary injuries: financial injury, physical injury, and emotional injury. While many of us have endured one or another of these without lasting harm, and others who have escaped victimization are confident they understand what victims go through, most of us are actually quite ignorant of how grave the injuries are for many victims.

We think we know what financial loss is. It is expressed as a number whose relative value we can all weigh. So we say that a loss of \$1000 is, for most of us, a serious if not devastating loss, but surely more serious than a loss of \$50. That has about it the ring of objective truth. To the victim, however, the subjective reality may be far different.

For Joe Burton, a victim of casual vandalism—a misdemeanor—the loss involved more than the destruction of a piece of the fence in his front yard, more than the \$85 it cost to be repaired. For his terrier got loose when the fence was down and was hit by a car. The little dog lived, but he was crippled for life, and Joe faced nearly \$200 in veterinarian bills.

Friends told Ann and Tom Huntemann, victims of burglary, that they had little to worry about. Their insurance would replace their belongings. But the Huntemanns found out that the insurance paid only the market value of their possessions—only about 15% of their replacement costs.

We think we can understand physical injury. It can be objectively understood in terms of the speed of the healing process, and the relative absence of pain. Thus, a broken arm is surely less serious than a broken back.

But the consequences of physical injury crimes rarely lend themselves to such objectivity. I think that a rape, any rape, is a grave physical injury, yet there are victims of rape who show no cuts, or scrapes, or surface bruises after the attack. Hence, there are still people who argue that such an assault is not a crime of physical injury. I do not mean to condemn them for their lack of empathy, for I confess that I still cannot truly comprehend what it is like, for example, to be mutilated or paralyzed. Yet all of us should be able to understand the rape victim who says, in effect, that if her leg had been broken by the malevolent violence of another, that injury may heal—but when the identity of the victim was the target of the violence, how is that injury to be treated?

And then there is murder, the ultimate crime of violence. The victim is dead, and death, as we know, is a subject we are conditioned to shun. What we can do—but don't—is at least recognize the consequences of the murder for the *other* victims: the family and friends who survive the dead victim. Again, we may not be able to fairly measure the pain which this form of criminal violence causes, but we can certainly acknowledge that murder is a crime that produces years and years of heartache.

The specter of that rage and anguish introduces the third kind of injury that all kinds of crime victims face—emotional trauma. Paradoxically, the emotional injuries may well be the ones that are most easily understood but they are also the most frightening, and so we willingly choose not to face that which we can most readily understand.

Those who are breaking these habits of self-imposed ignorance discover a pattern of emotional reactions to crime which seems to be common, though in different degrees of severity, across all crime categories. The cycle involves an initial stage of shock and disbelief. That stage is followed by, or is sometimes coincidental with, a surge of several kinds of emotions: anger, fear, frustration, sorrow, and self-blame.

This emotional turmoil is a natural result of an effort to make sense out of a world thrown out of order by the unexpected criminal attack. The turmoil may last for minutes, days, or years—normally waxing and waning in intensity. In the more serious cases, victims suffering what is called post-traumatic stress experience sleeplessness, nightmares, flashbacks, and intensified startle reactions.

The real-life consequences of the victim's trauma often go unseen, or if they are perceived, outsiders rarely connect the victim's problems back to the crime. So people never know that a neighbor moved away to avoid the memories of an earlier burglary; friends don't understand that a rape victim's marriage ended partly because of difficulties the couple had in their marital relations; an employer may only know that a once-productive employee now cannot seem to get his work done (not since that night he was robbed); and the once-close family helplessly watches itself disintegrate in anger and alienation after one of its members became a homicide victim.

If these not-so-obvious injuries—financial, physical, and emotional—constitute the direct harm that criminals cause, we should remember that the injuries are often compounded by what is called the second injury. That injury is often inflicted by the criminal justice system—through its indifference to the victim's fear of retaliation or the victim's requests to be kept fully informed and consulted on major decisions—through the system's bureaucratic indignities, such as a rape examination, or the requirement that a burglary victim be fingerprinted—and through the system's inefficiencies, resulting in days of wasted time in the courthouse, and lost wages, even in loss of employment.

One can explain these injustices by saying they merely reflect the ways in which society at large tends to isolate victims, even to blame and stigmatize them. But that explanation, while accurate, is no longer an acceptable excuse for our public servants in the criminal justice system. We know that they can all behave better because many of them are proving that it can be done.

And so this week, we remember the plight of victims, but this is not an occasion to commemorate victim rights, for no such rights exist for the vast majority of victims we seek to serve.

I believe we have an obligation to change that.

First, I believe that victims should have the right to protection from intimidation and harassment from the time a crime has been committed until after a sentence has been imposed—protections such as bail conditions which prohibit a defendant's contact with the victim, such as escort and relocation services, and the use of separate waiting rooms for defense and prosecution witnesses.

A Wisconsin woman recently told me about her daughter, Jane, who had been the victim of rape. Jane had reported the crime and was the key prosecution witness. The accused rapist was released on bail and every work day, from the time of the release until the trial, he and his friends followed Jane from her home to the restaurant where she worked. They lingered around the restaurant, often making obscene gestures. When Jane reported it to the police, she was told there was nothing that could be done because they had not overtly threatened her.

In most jurisdictions there is no protection. The accused will likely be released pre-trial if it is expected that he will remain in the jurisdiction until the next hearing or trial. And, while bail may be conditioned upon the defendant's staying away from the victim, such conditions are rarely imposed and even more rarely enforced. Worse, the separate crime of tampering with a witness, as it is called, is treated as a legal nullity in most jurisdictions—even though that crime strikes at the integrity of the justice system itself.

Second, I believe that victims should have a right to accurate information about their case—information on whether there is an arrest, what charges have been filed, when there are hearings to be held, when the trial will take place, what the sentence is, and so on.

While there are victim and witness assistance units which keep prosecution witnesses advised about the status of their case, the fact remains that such units have been established in fewer than 20% of the prosecutors' offices in this country.

Elaine Montgomery was a pursesnatch victim who suffered a broken hip and permanent injuries in the attack. While she was recovering, the offender was prosecuted and permitted to plead guilty to a lesser charge. Elaine found out about these proceedings only when she received a letter informing her that the sentencing judge had ordered the offender to pay \$320 restitution to her. Where that figure came from, no one could say—Elaine had over \$11,000 in medical bills as a result of the crime!

Third, I believe that victims should have a right to counsel—such as emotional support to help deal with the crisis of the crime itself, consultation on key decisions such as the use of diversion programs, charging, and plea bargains, and representation in court when a victim's credibility is questioned.

Yet in most jurisdictions there is little such assistance. Less than 10% of all police jurisdictions have access to crisis services for most crime victims. Prosecutors rarely make it a policy to talk to the victim about charges or pleas. And the victim seems to be the only witness in the courtroom who is presumed guilty rather than innocent—particularly in cases of sexual assault.

Until 1982, when a new prosecutor was elected in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, all rape victims were required to pass a lie-detector test before charges would be brought.

In another jurisdiction, a victim of an attack in which the offender killed her daughter, sexually assaulted and attempted to murder her as well, talks of the worst experience she had in the criminal justice system—being forced to take a psychiatric examination to verify her sanity and her capacity to testify.

These are examples of the kind of indignities which uncounseled victims must still endure.

Fourth, I believe that victims have a right to reparations—to receive financial assistance for their medical and associated expenses in crimes causing physical injury, and to receive restitution from offenders in all crimes that result in conviction.

Even though thirty-nine states have established victim compensation programs, most of those programs are narrowly limited in scope. Many have restrictions which make family members ineligible to receive benefits, such that children whose parents have been killed by a relative are disqualified, as are children who have been abused by a parent—even when they have been removed from the home. Many compensation programs have deductibles which effectively exclude a rape victim from recovering the cost of the rape examination which is required of all rape victims willing to cooperate with law enforcement agencies. Others have limits on maximum dollar amounts recoverable (Iowa's is the smallest maximum at \$2,000) and still others limit recovery only to state residents.

And even though restitution is a legitimate sentencing option in every jurisdiction, it is rarely used. In addition, because only 20% of suspected offenders are apprehended, 10% prosecuted, and 3% convicted, even where restitution is used, it can be applied in relatively few cases.

Fifth, I believe that victims have a right to their property and to maintenance of their employment.

That sounds like an obvious requirement of justice, but it is not. In most jurisdictions, property which is recovered by the police, even when identified, is held for months on end until a trial or even until appeals are exhausted. And sometimes the results are horrifying. In one case, the body of a murder victim has been held over ten years while the appeals process goes on. When will the anguish of that case be over for the parents of the victim?

And what about employment? In most jurisdictions jurors are protected by statute from reprisal by an employer because of the employee's enforced absence from the job. But witnesses are rarely granted those protections. Thus, a rape victim in Kansas reported that she lost her job after spending three days at trial. Her employer gave her two reasons for her "termination": she had taken unexcused leave, and as a rape victim, she was an embarrassment to his business.

Sixth, I believe that victims have a right to due process—a right to have procedural safeguards similar to those we give the accused.

The justice system was designed to protect the rights of the innocent and the falsely-accused, and justifiably so. Our forefathers faced malicious prosecution throughout Europe, and many fled in fear of their lives in the face of unjust accusations. The constitutional protections we created for the defendant were not designed to persecute but to protect; the victim can be offered similar safeguards without destroying any that are afforded the criminal.

For example, the Constitution gives the defendant a right to a speedy trial, not to an "unspeedy," endlessly-postponed trial. To ease the pain of victims waiting for the wheels of justice to turn, why isn't the victim given a right to an expeditious proceeding?

Similarly, if the offender has a right to present evidence pertaining to his physical, financial, and emotional circumstances at the time of sentencing, why doesn't the victim also have a right to discuss the impact of the crime upon his life?

So too, if the defendant has a right to confront his accuser, why doesn't the victim have a right to confront his assailant?

Such questions do not lend themselves to easy answers, nor have they been dealt with frivolously. But surely they are worthwhile issues for discussion and resolution.

Seventh and finally, I believe that all victims have a right to be treated with dignity and compassion.

That is what every one of these other rights contributes to: the recognition that victims are human with human strengths and frailties and sufferings. It is the restoration of their dignity that is the primary goal of all the rights and services we are trying to create. But something must be said about our slow progress in establishing that network of compassion: it has so far been especially weak in aiding certain vulnerable populations, like minorities, rural residents, children, and families and friends.

And so, is Victim Rights Week an occasion for celebration?

No. There is hope but little reality.

Hope is found in the legislation I spoke of earlier. It is found in the recommendations of the President's Task Force on Crime Victims. It is found in the newly-proposed federal legislation which would provide subsidies to state compensation programs and local victim assistance programs. And hope is found in people like you.

There are those who tell me that I am too serious about this issue, that I should be more light-hearted. I wish it were otherwise, but I cannot be light-hearted about the victims I know—Marie and John and Carolee and literally hundreds of others. Their pains weigh too heavily on me.

Others who have heard my heavy-hearted messages have argued that victims should have no rights because it would destroy our adversarial system, confuse the court process, and interfere with the rights of the accused.

To them I answer that victims deserve rights because they are a part of the adversarial process—that a justice system that cannot accommodate all parties before it fails in its mission—and that it is because I believe strongly in protecting the rights of the accused that I believe so strongly that equal rights are due to the victim.

Still others have told me that victims have had no rights because they have no lobby—they don't care enough to take action.

To them I say that the challenge to create a more just society does not belong to the injured, or the maimed, or those who grieve the murdered. Though there are fewer and fewer silent victims among us, the challenge and the responsibility belongs to all of us: to act, to fight for, and to demand a new future for justice.

Freedom without justice is the breeding ground for criminal tyranny. It is time for us to rebel against that tyranny and to create a society truly based on justice for all—even the victim.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 14, 1985**

CONTACT:

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

VICTORY FOR VICTIMS — NATIONAL VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK KICKS OFF TOMORROW

"AS THE 1970's WAS THE DECADE FOR AWAKENING TO THE NEEDS OF CRIME VICTIMS, THE 1980's SHOULD BE A DECADE OF ACTION — ACTION WHICH GUARANTEES THAT SERVICES ARE EXPANDED TO HELP EVEN MORE CRIME VICTIMS." (Statement by: Jane Citizen)

TOMORROW KICKS OFF THE NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK. PRESIDENT REAGAN HAS COMMEMERATED IT WITH A PROCLAMATION FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR. AGAIN THIS YEAR GOVERNOR _____ ALONG WITH THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND OTHER NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS JOIN IN THIS CELEBRATION.

VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES START SUNDAY AFTERNOON WITH A PUBLIC RALLY AND PRESS CONFERENCE ENTITLED — VICTORY FOR VICTIMS: A REVIEW OF THIS YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS. EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK WILL ADDRESS CRISIS INTERVENTION, VICTIM SERVICES, AND CHRONIC TRAUMA.

AMONG THE ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE WEEK'S CELEBRATIONS INCLUDE, A PRESS CONFERENCE, WORKSHOPS, PANEL DISCUSSIONS, FILMS, AND TOURS OF LOCAL CRISIS COUNSELING CENTERS.

FOR A COMPLETE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT _____

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SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Broadcast Copy (Radio and Television)

START: April 14, 1985
STOP: April 20, 1985

10 SECONDS:

CRIME VICTIMS AND WITNESSES ARE INJURED BY CRIME AND THEN FACE A SECOND INJURY. THEY ARE STIGMATIZED, IGNORED AND FORGOTTEN. VICTIMS DESERVE BETTER. IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS HELP, CALL: (Local program name and telephone).

10 SECONDS:

NATIONAL VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK IS A TIME FOR ALL OF US TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE EMOTIONAL AFTERMATH OF CRIME AND TO FIND WAYS TO HELP THE VICTIMS WHO SURVIVE THE ATTACK. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: (Local program name and telephone).

20 SECONDS:

A CHILD IS CRYING TODAY. HE WAS A VICTIM OF CRIME. HE SUFFERED MORE THAN FEAR. HE WEPT FOR THE PAIN. HE LOST HIS TRUST IN THE WORLD. HOW CAN YOU HELP THE CHILDREN WHO ARE CASUALTIES OF CRIME. CALL (Local program name and telephone), or WRITE THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE, 1757 PARK ROAD, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20010.

20 SECONDS:

CRIME VICTIMS SUFFER FINANCIAL, PHYSICAL, AND EMOTIONAL INJURIES. VICTIMIZATION IS NOT AN ILLNESS. IT IS A FACT OF AMERICAN LIFE, AND IT IS NOT THE VICTIMS FAULT. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF CRIME AND HOW YOU CAN HELP ITS VICTIMS. WRITE THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE, 1757 PARK ROAD, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20010.

30 SECONDS:

THIS IS NATIONAL VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK, WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF A CONCERNED PUBLIC, THE RIGHTS OF CRIME VICTIMS AND WITNESSES CAN BE FORGOTTEN. DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WOULD DO IF YOU WERE A VICTIM? JOIN THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND (name of Local Program) IN WORKING TO ESTABLISH JUSTICE FOR ALL...EVEN THE VICTIM. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON HOW TO BE INVOLVED, CALL: (Local Program Name and Telephone or NOVA Name and Telephone).

30 SECONDS:

FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF CRIME VICTIMS ARE VICTIMS TOO. A FATHER OF A RAPE VICTIM OFTEN SUFFERS SHOCK, DISBELIEF AND SORROW IN RESPONSE TO THE PAIN OF HIS DAUGHTER.

PARENTS OF A MURDERED CHILD OFTEN FEEL THEIR LIVES WERE BURIED WITH THEIR CHILD. THIS YEAR VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK IS DEDICATED TO THE EMOTIONAL AFTERMATH OF CRIME FOR THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS. IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO, WRITE THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE, 1757 PARK ROAD, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20010.

SAMPLE BROADCAST EDITORIAL

THE EMOTIONAL AFTERMATH OF CRIME

Broadcast: 4/14/85; Repeats 4/16/85, 4/18/85

The Department of Justice states that 37 million people are victimized every year by violent crime. Those numbers are more than statistics, each one represents an individual tragedy. Some victims suffer financial loss. Some suffer physical injury. Most suffer emotional pain.

The aftermath of crime is characterized by shock, disbelief, anger, fear, confusion and countless other feelings. Victims often feel their lives have ended and there is nothing they can do.

Bob Stone was such a victim. His house was burglarized. He was considered a "lucky" victim. He wasn't hurt. At least he wasn't hurt physically. But, his heart was broken. His deceased wife's wedding ring had been taken by the criminals. He says he'll never be the same again.

Victims need assistance. Victim advocates understand that. They can make it a little easier for Bob Stone and other victims to deal with the anguish and injustices they may face. But victim advocates need your help. They can use volunteers, food, clothing, and donations.

The chances of being a violent crime victim is greater than the risk of being affected by divorce, being injured in an automobile accident, dying from cancer or heart disease, or death or injury from fire.

Are you prepared?

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (Local program name and telephone number) or WRITE THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE, 1757 PARK ROAD, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20010.



SOME IMPORTANT TIPS ON CREATING A PRESS KIT

Press kits are used as information tools for press conferences, special events, or for just building general media knowledge about your organization.

For Victim Rights week, press kits should be distributed at the opening day's press conference to all media representatives present. In addition, press kits should be mailed to all local media (newspaper, radio, and television) unable to attend the event.

This year NOVA is providing the basis for a sample Press Kit which can be used as a basis for developing your more individualized Press Kits.

The items provided by NOVA include:

- 1) A sample news release
- 2) Fact sheets on four themes: The Aftermath of Crime, Crisis Intervention, Victim Services, and Chronic Trauma.
- 3) Four general brochures on the themes listed above.

In addition to this material your press kit should include the following information on your own victim rights week celebration:

- 1) Brief fact sheets including: data about your organization; services; and biographies of important people, particularly those who are to speak and those responsible for news events. Don't forget to include your own biography.
- 2) Updated news features articles, and other new material describing the highlights of the conference.
- 3) Any existing literature on victims that may be useful or interesting (booklets, data sheets, pamphlets, etc.)
- 4) Texts of all speeches to be delivered at the conference, along with news summarizing the high points of each speech.
- 5) An agenda of the press conference and of your victims rights week activities.
- 6) A guest list, if possible.
- 7) Copies of scripts of any special demonstration, films or audio/visual presentations.
- 8) Photos-with-captions-of important speakers, officers, etc.

END