

Unit 5: Robbery



Time Required: 2.5 hours

Resources Needed

- OVC *Listen and Learn* DVD (clip: Robbery/Jim)
- *Participant Workbook*
- TV and DVD player
- Chalkboard or tear sheets

Prior to the Session

- Consider gathering local and state statistics and/or newspaper or article clippings for the discussion about robbery trends.
- Research your state's statutes related to robbery; be prepared to provide information to participants about these statutes.

Objectives

- Define **robbery**.
- Provide examples of types of robbery.
- Describe current trends for robbery crimes.
- Explain the impact of robbery on victims.
- Discuss thoughts and feelings about being held accountable for robbery crimes.



Facilitator Tip

Watch for rationalizations that robberies are justifiable for financial gain. Keep the focus on the victim.

What Is Robbery?

Robbery is the taking or attempting to take anything of value (actual or perceived) from another person by force or threat of force. Because robbery is face-to-face, it is considered a violent crime. Victims of robbery, unlike property crime victims, are directly threatened by their offenders. Robbery may be committed with or without a weapon and with or without physical injury. It is not uncommon for victims to be assaulted, to have obscenities shouted at them, or to be threatened with weapons. Robbers may make victims kneel or lie face down; they may tie victims up or lock them in a room—all adding to their fear and anxiety. Violence can easily escalate during a robbery, resulting in serious injury or even murder.





Have participants read the “Words To Know” aloud.

Delivery options include reading words aloud yourself, writing the words on a chalkboard or tear sheet, selecting participants to read words aloud, or dividing participants into small groups or pairs and having them discuss the terms among themselves. For all delivery options, survey participants to ensure that they understand the terms before moving on.



Words To Know

Anxiety: Feeling of fear, unease, apprehension, or worry.

Armed robbery: Displaying a weapon during a robbery.

Coercion: Forcing a person to do something against his or her will.

Robbery: Taking or attempting to take anything of value from a person or persons by force, threat of force or violence, and/ or putting the victim in danger.

Vulnerability: A feeling of being at risk for physical or emotional injury.



In the News: Robbery Trends

This section offers recent statistics about robbery. If you have gathered local and state statistics and/or newspaper or magazine articles relevant to assault, integrate them into your discussion on robbery trends.

When discussing robbery trends:

- Select participants to read aloud the robbery trends.
- Use local news articles, reviewing them carefully to avoid overly complex issues. Make sure that articles do not identify offenders in your facility or victims in your community.
- Have participants discuss how the robbery trends make them feel.
- Come up with additional questions, if desired.

Examples of Robbery

The *Participant Workbook* provides definitions and examples of robbery; consider asking participants to substitute names of their family members or friends in the scenarios. You can also share any state-specific statutes related to robbery with participants in this section.

Delivery options include taking turns with the participants in reading scenarios aloud; selecting participants to read scenarios (be mindful of reading abilities); and dividing participants into small groups or pairs to discuss scenarios. Refer back to “Words To Know” as they appear in the scenarios. Solicit feedback by asking the following questions: “Who was the primary victim?” “Who else may have been harmed by the offender?” “How was the victim harmed?” and “What do you think the victim is experiencing?” Add details to the scenarios. Encourage note taking.



Triad Session

Have participants write down their answers to the questions under each example of robbery. Then, in groups of three, have participants share their responses with one another and offer feedback.

What Is the Impact of Robbery

Criminal behaviors such as robbery create a ripple effect throughout several areas in victims' lives: financial, physical, emotional, and religious/spiritual.

Chalkboard Exercise

Have participants take turns reading from the areas of impact lists. Solicit additional examples from the group, looking for the following:

<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to work • Counseling costs • Medical costs • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises • Cuts and abrasions • Ulcers • Broken bones • Broken teeth • _____
<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guilt • Nightmares • Depression • Paranoia • Inability to sleep • _____ • _____ 	<p>Religious/Spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning of one's faith • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____

Facilitator Tip



If participants say they have never committed robbery, ask them whether they or someone they know was ever a victim of robbery and what the impact of that robbery was.

OVC Listen and Learn DVD

Jim was the victim of a physical assault and robbery.

Consider stopping and starting the video to reinforce key points and then initiate discussion at the end. Possible discussion questions and answers include the following:

- What were Jim's reactions?
 - Suffered sleeplessness.
 - Felt thankful to be safe and alive.

- Afraid to call his parents, and very saddened by their highly emotional reaction.
- Became less trusting.
- Changed his habits (e.g., not walking after dark, taking cabs instead of walking).
- What were Jim's parent's emotions?
 - Fearfulness
 - Crying
 - Extreme sadness
 - Anger
- How was Jim harmed?
 - His sense of personal safety was threatened.
 - His sense of safety in his neighborhood and community was shaken.
 - Ability to trust others was weakened.
 - He was forced to make changes in his lifestyle to feel safer after the crime.
- How does Jim think these offenders could be held accountable for the harm they caused?
 - Pay restitution.
 - Take responsibility for their actions.
 - Not commit a crime again.



Being Accountable for Your Crimes

Robbery is a violent crime that has a serious financial and emotional impact on its victims. Victims of robbery suffer a loss of security and are left feeling fearful and vulnerable. **Remind participants that no one has the right to commit a violent crime against another person, regardless of the circumstances.**



Group Discussion

Have participants read the accountability statements and share their thoughts with the group. How do they think victims' families would respond to these statements?

Additional Activities

If time permits after covering the material in this unit, you may conduct the additional activities listed on the next few pages before debriefing participants. You may also want to schedule a guest victim/survivor speaker.

Activity A – Jim's Impact Statement

Objective: Participants focus on how a victim's life is changed by a robbery.

Participants have already watched the video clip on "Jim" and answered the discussion questions. Replay the video, stopping and pausing if necessary. Stop the video and leave Jim's face on the screen.

Have participants write an impact statement as if they were Jim and then have them present their statements to the class. Encourage feedback.

Activity B – Bonnie

Objective: Participants learn to identify the impact of robberies on key life areas. Read the following:

Bonnie, age 32, is walking to her car in a supermarket parking lot as a car slowly drives by. She is carrying her groceries and purse in one arm and her infant daughter, Katie, in the other. She feels a tug on her purse and thinks that her purse strap has snagged on the car's side view mirror. She turns to see a woman in the car pointing a gun at her as her purse is ripped from her arm.

Have the participants complete the "Bonnie" worksheet at the end of the unit in their workbooks, using specific examples of the physical, emotional, financial, and religious/spiritual harm that Bonnie may experience.

Activity C – What Do You Think or Feel

Objective: Make victimization more personal to participants.

Have participants pick a comment, robbery trend, or scenario from this chapter and discuss/write what they think or feel. Helpful prompts:

- What did you learn?
- How would you feel if you were one of the victims?
- How would you feel if someone you knew was the example in the workbook?
- What do you think the victim experienced after the robbery?
- Does robbery cost victims very much financially?

Activity D – Miguel

Objective: Participants understand how crime affects victims.

Have participants discuss/write down the difficulties victims may have when interacting with police, media, medical personnel, employers, and the insurance company. Next, divide participants into groups and assign each group to represent one of the following areas: police, media, medical personnel, employer, or insurance company. Read the following scenario:

Miguel has been working at his uncle's convenience store for 2 weeks and is trying hard to please his uncle. His uncle is allowing Miguel to work for him even though Miguel is not a U.S. resident. The store is located in a high-crime area.

Miguel has just helped a customer find his favorite brand of orange juice and is alone in the store. Two men enter the store and walk around for a few minutes. One of the robbers is high on drugs. He points a gun at Miguel's head and the other robber jumps over the counter. Miguel feels a sharp pain in his chest. The robbers yell at Miguel, "Don't hit the alarm and don't try to call the police!"

The man with the gun guards the door while the other robber tries to open the cash register. Miguel inches toward his cell phone on the counter, dials the police, and moves away from the phone. The robbers are unaware the police have been called.

Miguel continues to feel sharp pains in his chest and thinks he is going to have a heart attack. One of the robbers forces Miguel to open the cash register and takes \$500. The robber hits Miguel in the head, knocks him unconscious, and both robbers leave the store.

The police take more than 20 minutes to respond. In the meantime, Miguel has had a mild heart attack but is still alive. The emergency personnel take 30 minutes to respond and have to wait to find out which hospital is willing to treat Miguel, who has no insurance. A television news crew happens to be in the area and they begin broadcasting live from the scene. Miguel's uncle and the rest of the family are at home watching the news.

Recommended Speaker

Have a speaker address the class on the topic of robbery. Listening to victim/survivor speakers may be uncomfortable for offenders. Make sure to instruct participants beforehand about appropriate behavior during the speaker's presentation. (See "Implementing the Curriculum" for information about recruiting, selecting, and screening speakers and on how to prepare both speakers and participants for the experience.)



Discussion/Wrap-Up

Discuss what participants learned in the Robbery unit. Address any questions they may have.

Unit 5 Participant Worksheet

Activity B – Bonnie

Bonnie, age 32, is walking to her car in a supermarket parking lot as a car slowly drives by. She is carrying her groceries and purse in one arm and her infant daughter, Katie, in the other. She feels a tug on her purse and thinks that her purse strap got snagged on the car’s side view mirror. She turns to see a woman in the car pointing a gun at her as her purse is ripped from her arm.

What may Bonnie specifically experience as a robbery victim?

<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____
<p>Emotional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<p>Religious/Spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____

How would you feel if Bonnie were your mother, sister, aunt, or niece?
