

Providing Care and Support for Victims of Crime



Ground Rules

- Self-Care
- Participation
- Respectful Communication
- Confidentiality
- Sharing
- Individual Questions

Integrate Crime Victims' Issues Into University and College Curricula

The project is designed to:

- Broaden college and university students' awareness of crime victims' issues and knowledge of appropriate responses.
- Increase the number and diversity of students exposed to and educated in crime victims' issues.
- Give victim issues a new level of prominence in university and college curricula.

Resources for Students

Campus resources to list typically include:

- Counseling.
- Health services.
- College chaplain/Faith community.
- Dean of students.
- Women's centers.
- Campus police.

Resources for Students

Local community resources to list typically include:

- Rape crisis center.
- Domestic violence shelter agency.
- State or county victim-witness office (often a part of the prosecutor's office).

National Resource Information

National Resource Information

The Curriculum Kit Covers:

- General information on crime victimization.
- Tips for providing emotional support to crime victims.
- Helpful community resources that can be used to assist victims.

Have you or anybody that you care about ever been a victim of any of the following?

- Assault
- Sexual assault
- Theft
- Auto theft
- Cyber crime
- Identity theft / financial exploitation
- Other crime

The “Typical” Crime Victim

- What do they look like?
- Can we identify them by age, gender, race, religion, height, weight?

The “Typical” Crime Victim

- We cannot identify a victim of crime by appearance.
- We never know when we are in the presence of someone who has been adversely affected by criminal victimization.
- There is no way of telling who among us has been victimized by crime or psychologically impacted as the result of a crime.

The Realities of Crime

- Approximately 33% of American households will be a victim of at least one crime this year.
- Men are more likely to be a victim of a violent crime than women.
- Women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence.
- College students experience high rates of violent victimization – approximately 5% of college women experience a sexual victimization each year.

2010 Gallup Poll; Truman & Planty, 2012; Baum & Klaus, 2005; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner 2000.

The Realities of Crime, continued

- Although risk of victimization is higher for Native Americans and African Americans, no group is immune to the threat of being a crime victim.
- Unlike many other crimes, “new” crimes like cybercrime are on the rise.

2010 Gallup Poll; Truman & Planty, 2012; Baum & Klaus, 2005; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner 2000.

Statistics in Context

The 18.7 million victimizations in the U.S. in 2011 is equivalent to the number of Red Sox tickets sold for 500 games at Fenway Park (Boston, Massachusetts), which would take more than six seasons to do

The Effects of Crime Victimization

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Increased drug and alcohol abuse
- Self-blame or guilt
- Posttraumatic stress symptoms

National Crime Victimization Resource Center, www.ncvc.org

The Effects of Crime Victimization

- Crime victims are at a significantly increased risk of missing substantial time from work and school.
- Crime victims struggle with unexpected financial burdens related to missed work time, medical bills, lost or damaged property, and legal fees.

National Crime Victimization Resource Center, www.ncvc.org

Additional Material: Video Clips

- Provide students with resources for support.
- Let students know that these stories can be emotionally difficult to view.
- Be prepared with alternate options for students who feel watching these in class will be too emotionally difficult.
- Be prepared for student disclosures by reviewing the Teaching About Victimization materials provided along with this curriculum.

Under-Reporting of Crime

- Over 50% of crimes are never reported to the police.
- Thefts, assaults (without a weapon), and sexual assaults are among the most under-reported crimes.
- These are among the crimes that happen the most to college-aged students.

Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000

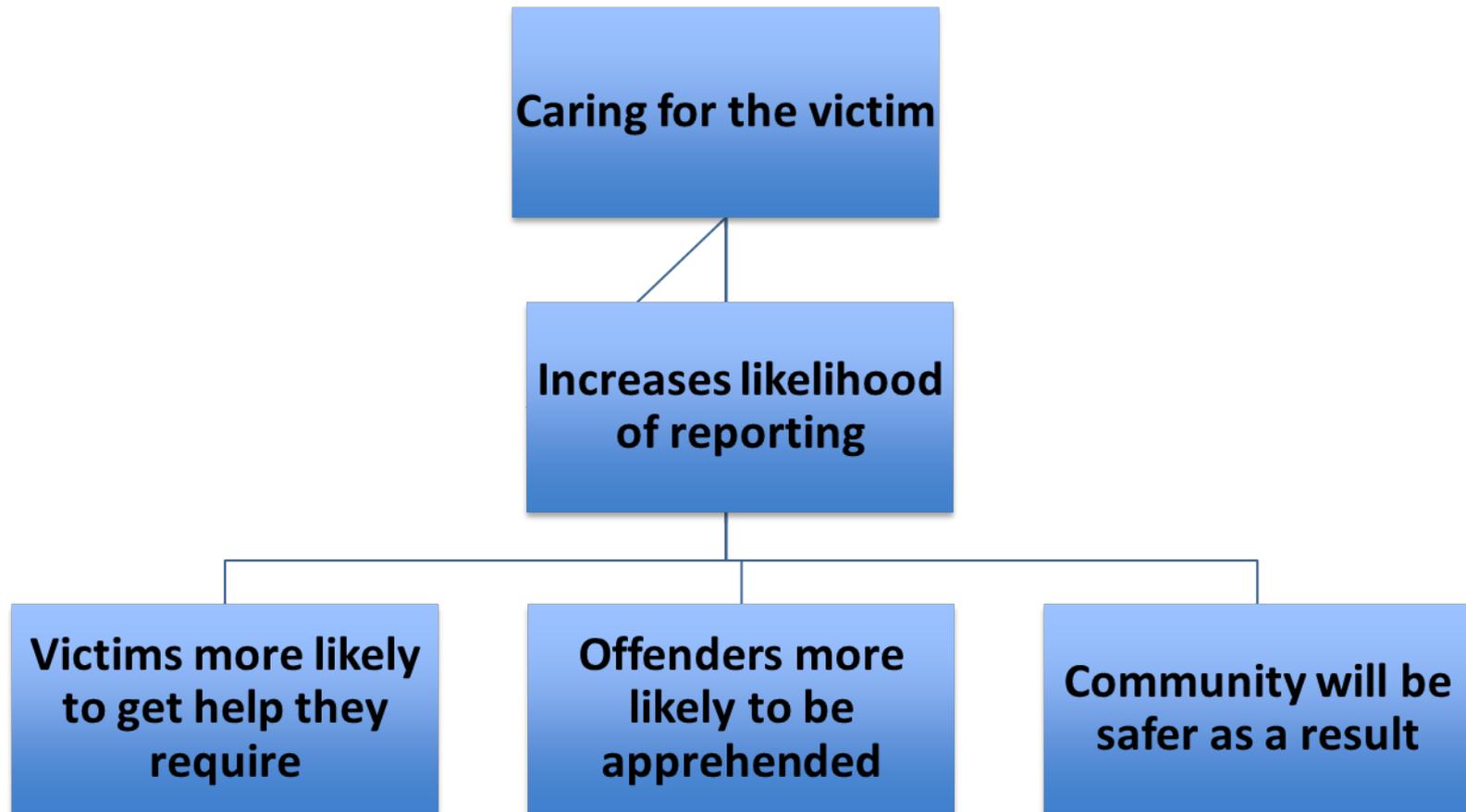
Under-Reporting of Crime

- College students are in one of the highest risk age groups for violent victimization.
- They also are among the least likely of any age group to report their victimization to authorities.

Creating a Safer Campus

- As members of the campus community, we all play a part in making our campus and our community safe.
- One way to make our presence known and to make our community safer is by learning some skills that will help us in responding to victims of crime.

The Importance of Crime Reporting



The Dynamics of Not Seeking Help

- What are some reasons why people may not report crimes to the police?”

Reasons People Do Not Seek Help

- They want to keep their victimization private.
- They do not believe the police or others can help.
- They believe it was a minor offense causing little or no harm.
- They want to avoid thinking about the crime.
- They are afraid of negative reactions or consequences, such as shame or victim blaming.
- They perceive a lack of proper resources and social support.

Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, Sefl 2007; Guay 2006; Kearns, Edwards, Calhoun, & Gidycz 2010; Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn 2010; Coyne & DeLongis 1986; Campbell 2005.

The Dynamics of Seeking Help

What are some reasons
people *choose to report* a crime
to the police?

Reasons That People Do Seek Help

- For justice to be served.
- To receive support and assistance from others.
- To alleviate psychological/emotional distress.
- To help deter future crimes against themselves and others.
- Because they are supported by those close to them (family, friends) whom they first tell about the crime.

Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, & Sefl 2007; Campbell 1999; Greenberg & Ruback 1992; Kearns, Edwards, Calhoun, & Gidycz 2010; Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn 2010.

We Are the First Responders

- At least 75% of crime victims report a crime to a close friend or relative before they report it to police or seek professional help to assist in their recovery.
- The support and care that crime victims receive from the first person they disclose to can have a tremendous impact on their getting the proper care they need.

Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, & Sefl 2007.

We Are the First Responders

A supportive response to a crime victim increases the likelihood that she or he will:

- Report the crime to the authorities.
- Seek legal and other types of help required.
- Begin the emotional and psychological process of recovery.

Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, & Sefl 2007;
Campbell 1999; Coyne & DeLongis 1986;
and Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn 2010

Being a First Responder

Caring for others

Providing

Resources

The CPR theme is just a simply approach to providing basic services to victims. In order to interact truly effectively with victims, you need additional knowledge and skills.

Caring For Others: Demonstrate Empathy

- Empathy is sharing the perceived emotion of the victim.
- Be sensitive to the fact that people process these situations in different ways. We vary tremendously in our response to stressors and trauma.

Caring For Others: Demonstrate Empathy

Allowing them to feel the emotion they are feeling even if it is not how you may respond in a similar situation:

- Listen.
- Show support.
- Demonstrate warmth.
- Be patient.

Rozin & Royzman, 2001

Caring For Others: Demonstrate Empathy

Avoid:

- Minimizing the concern of the victim.
- Making light of the situation.
- Telling the victim what she or he “should” do.
- Comparing the victim’s experience to your own.
- Changing the subject.

Instead:

- Reinforce that you hear their concerns and want to help.
- Treat the victim and the situation seriously.
- Ask how you can help.
- Listen and respond until the victim is done talking.

Sullivan, Schroeder, Dudley & Dixon, 2010

Caring For Others: Demonstrate Empathy

When victims feel blamed by others for the victimization, this increases their psychological distress and decreases the likelihood of their seeking help and reporting to police

Even well-intentioned questions or comments may be subtly blaming the victim, such as:

- *“Why did you leave your front door unlocked?”*
- *“The silver lining is now we know not to go drinking with people we don’t know.”*

Guay, 2006; Logan, Swanberg, & Macke, 2005

Caring For Others: Do Not Become the Investigator

It is natural to want to ask lots of information-gathering questions when someone we care about has been victimized. Avoid this temptation. Our role is to:

- Demonstrate caring.
- Provide referrals to resources.

Caring For Others: Empower the Victim

Instead of telling victims what they *should* do, provide options and support the victim in making his or her own choices.

Being victimized takes an individual's control out of his or her hands; allow the victim to have control of the aftermath of the situation.

Caring For Others: Empower the Victim

Help victims regain control by asking them what you can do to help:

- What do you need from me right now?
- Is there anything I can do to help?
- Is there anybody you would like me to call for you?
- Would it be helpful to talk about your options?
- What would be most helpful to you right now?

Caring For Others: Empower the Victim

First responders are always aware of appropriate resources so that they can support victims of crime in getting the information needed to make their own decisions.

Provide Resources

Remember you are not an expert – your role is to be caring and supportive, then provide referral to helpful resources:

- Thank you for sharing with me. I know that might have been hard. I want to help, but I do not know all of the options. I want you to get the right help if you need it, so can I share with you some referrals to resources that can help?

Providing Resources

- What are some specific resources available to crime victims?
- Whom can they call upon for help?

Available Resources

- 911 / Law enforcement
- Emergency medical services
- Victim services and social service agencies
- Health services
- Counseling / Mental health services
- Legal assistance
- Criminal justice system
- Others?

Provide Resources

First responders always have information on resources readily accessible to share with victims.

Taking the Message Home

YOU can make a difference by caring for crime victims by:

- Being an ally for crime victims.
- Speaking out against crime victimization.
- Being aware of and providing resources and information for crime victims.

Please take this message home with you and share it with others!