



Module 4

Impact of Crime on Victims



Office for Victims of Crime
OVC
"Putting Victims First"

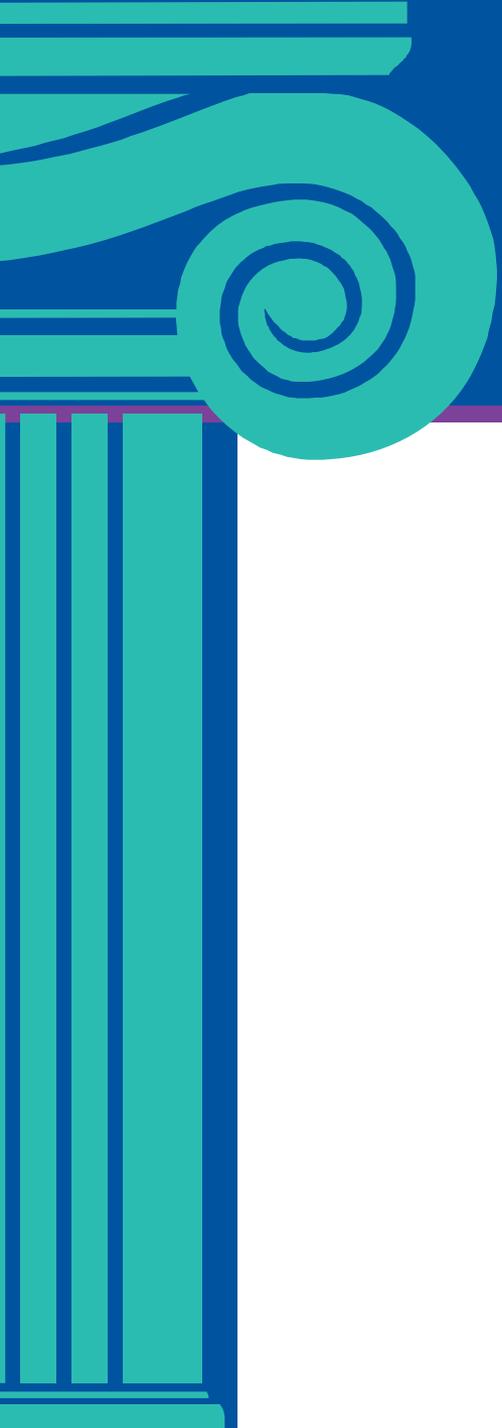


Learning Objectives

- ❖ Identify primary and secondary victims of crime.
- ❖ Recognize factors that influence a victim's ability to cope.
- ❖ Identify symptoms of trauma.
- ❖ Discuss possible physical, psychological/emotional, financial, and spiritual effects of crime on victims.



Who Is Affected by Crime?



Activity

Impact of Crime



Crime Trends and Rates



Definitions

- ❖ **Violent crime**
- ❖ **Rape**
- ❖ **Robbery**
- ❖ **Assault**
- ❖ **Homicide**

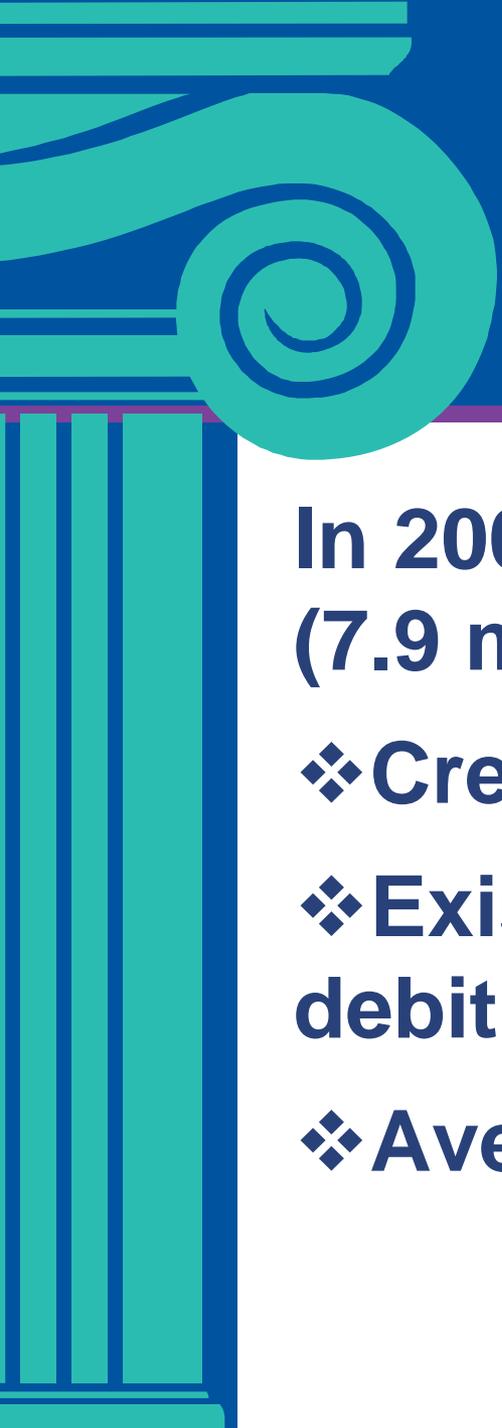


Overview of Crime

In 2009, U.S. residents age 12 or older experienced approximately 20 million crimes.

- ❖ 15.6 million property crimes**
- ❖ 4.3 million crimes of violence**
- ❖ 1.5 million serious violent crimes**
- ❖ 133,210 personal thefts**

National Crime Victimization Study



Overview of Crime

In 2007, 6.6% of all U.S. households (7.9 million) had an identity theft victim.

❖ Credit card.

❖ Existing account (bank, checking, debit, cell phone).

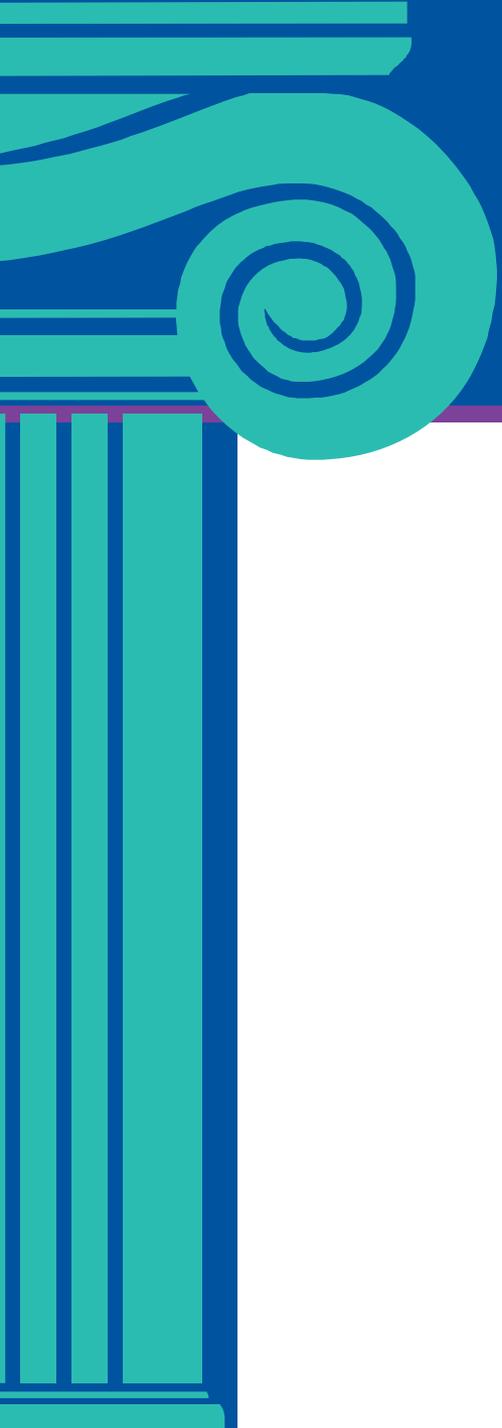
❖ Average financial loss was \$1,830.

National Crime Victimization Study



Overview of Crime

- ❖ Rates for every type of violent and property crime measured by NCVS declined from 2000 to 2009.
- ❖ About half (49%) of all violent crimes and about 40% of all property crimes were reported to the police in 2009.
- ❖ Violent crimes against females were more likely to be reported (53%) than violent crimes against males (45%).



Activity

Who Is the Victim?

Worksheet 4.1



Coping With the Impact of Crime

- ❖ **Prior victimization increases trauma.**
- ❖ **History of mental health problems.**
- ❖ **Degree of threat to life and physical injury.**

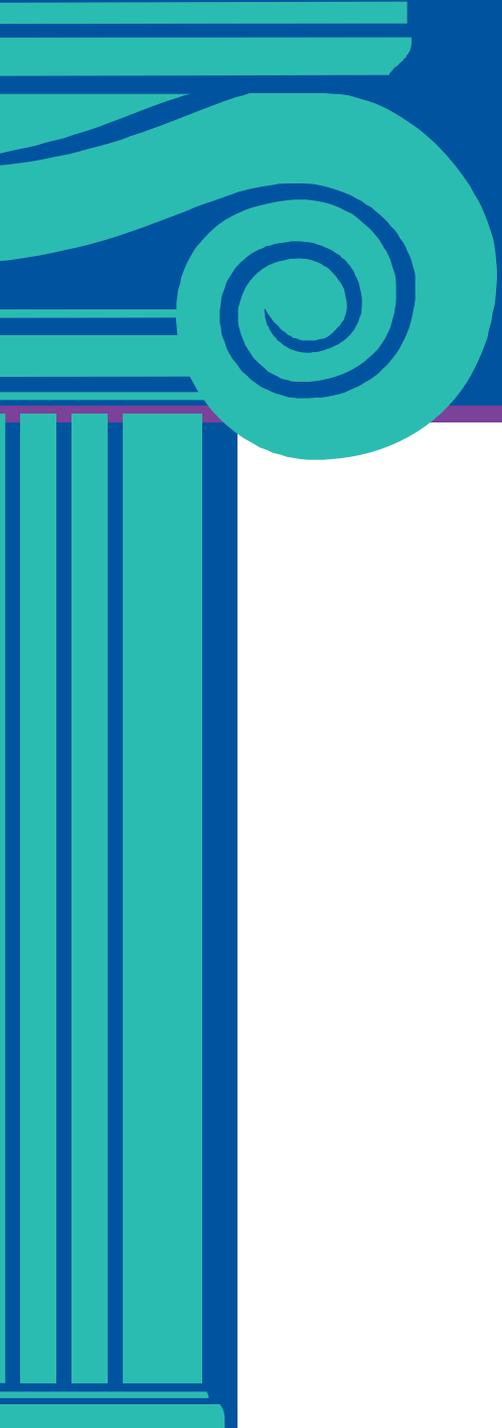


Coping With the Impact of Crime

- ❖ **Violent crime victims often have a more difficult time coping than property crime victims.**
- ❖ **Lack of or poor social support systems.**
- ❖ **Degree of exposure to the justice system.**



Immediate, Short-Term, and Long-Term Reactions



Activity

Victim Impact: Listen and Learn DVD



Emotional and Psychological Trauma

- ❖ **Unexpected.**
- ❖ **Victim was unprepared.**
- ❖ **Could not be prevented.**
- ❖ **Individual's experience of the event.**
- ❖ **Reaction is unpredictable.**

What Causes Emotional and Psychological Trauma?

Trauma changes the structure and function of the brain.





Immediate and Short-Term Trauma Reactions

- ❖ Reactions occur during or immediately after the crime until about 3 months post-crime.
- ❖ Most crime victims achieve considerable recovery sometime between 1 and 3 months after the crime.



Immediate and Short-Term Trauma Reactions

Flight or fight responses:

- ❖ Shock
- ❖ “This can’t be happening to me”
- ❖ Emotional problems
- ❖ Physiological anxiety
- ❖ Cognitive symptoms of anxiety



Trauma Reactions: Months After the Crime

- ❖ Fear, anxiety, generalized distress
- ❖ Preoccupation with the crime
- ❖ Concern about safety from attack
- ❖ Concern that other people will not believe them
- ❖ Negative changes in belief systems
- ❖ Worry about the next attack



Long-Term Trauma Reactions

- ❖ **Most victims of crime can cope with the trauma of victimization.**
- ❖ **Initial and short-term trauma reactions can turn into long-term trauma reactions.**



Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



PTSD Symptoms

- ❖ **Persistent re-experiencing of event**
- ❖ **Persistent avoidance of things associated with traumatic event**
- ❖ **Reduced ability to be close to other people and experience or sustain loving feelings**
- ❖ **Persistent symptoms of increased arousal**



Crime-Related PTSD

- ❖ **Rates of PTSD are higher among victims of violent crime than other traumatic events.**
- ❖ **Victims with physical injuries and who believed they might have been killed or seriously injured during the crime are more likely to suffer from PTSD.**



Crime-Related PTSD

- ❖ Rates of PTSD are higher among victims who report crimes to the justice system than among non-reporting victims.
- ❖ Many crime victims with PTSD do not spontaneously recover without treatment.



**Physical, Psychological/
Emotional, Financial, and
Spiritual Impact of Crime**



Activity

Possible Victim Reactions

Worksheet 4.2

- ❖ **Brainstorm possible impacts of crime in a specific area, e.g., physical, psychological/emotional, financial, spiritual.**



Cautions

- ❖ **Every victim is unique.**
- ❖ **Never make assumptions concerning how a victim will react.**
- ❖ **A person's reaction to his or her victimization will be influenced by a variety of factors.**



Review of Learning Objectives

- ❖ Identify primary and secondary victims of crime.
- ❖ Recognize factors that influence a victim's ability to cope.
- ❖ Identify symptoms of trauma.
- ❖ Discuss possible physical, psychological/emotional, financial, and spiritual effects of crime on victims.



Closing of Module 4

- ❖ **Questions?**
- ❖ **Comments?**