



## RESHAPING THE FUTURE HONORING THE PAST

CAP TIPS is a series of periodic messages to assist in the planning and implementation of NCVRW Community Awareness Projects. Please feel free to send your individual questions or requests for assistance to Anne Seymour at [annesey@atlantech.net](mailto:annesey@atlantech.net).

### CAP TIPS #3 *To Improve Public Awareness*

## Tips to Promote the 2011 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Theme "Reshaping the Future. Honoring the Past."

### Introduction

Each year, the National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) theme provides cohesiveness and inspiration to national, state and local efforts to promote rights and services for crime victims and survivors, and generate greatly needed public awareness about the plight of crime victims in America. The 2011 theme – *Reshaping the Future. Honoring the Past.* – actually offers *two* distinct opportunities for victim outreach and public awareness, focusing on a *hopeful future* that is built upon the *strong foundation of our field's history* created by victims, survivors, advocates, and justice professionals – the pioneers who provided the genesis for our field nearly 40 years ago.

### "Reshaping the Future"

The key to reflecting this portion of the 2011 NCVRW theme is to consider where your agency and/or jurisdiction are *today*, and where you want to be *in the future* (two years from now, five years from now, etc.). It's an opportunity to create a realistic vision for the future of crime victim/survivor services that is personalized to your community, with many avenues to develop such a vision:

- Include quotations from "Notable Quotables" (2011 CAP TIP #2) in your NCVRW outreach activities.
- Solicit input from key stakeholders about their vision for the future.
- Contribute to the national "Vision 21" initiative sponsored by the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Commit to strategic planning to improve victims' rights and services in your jurisdiction.

### Notable Quotables

The "Notable Quotables" contained in 2011 CAP TIP #2 can be used to emphasize the NCVRW theme, incorporating both the future and the past. Consider using them, as well as the 2011 NCVRW theme:

- In speeches prior to and during 2011 NCVRW.
- In media relations, such as press releases, public service announcements, opinion/editorial columns, blogs, etc.
- In social networking media, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.

- As a “temporary tag” on all emails that your agency or organization sends out prior to NCVRW.

### Solicit Input from Key Stakeholders

Prior to and during 2011 NCVRW, you’ll have many opportunities to seek and secure input from key stakeholders about how to create – individually and collectively – a future that is sensitive to victims’ and survivors’ rights and needs, and that proactively engages *everyone* in crime victim assistance, community and public safety, and crime prevention.

At the end of this CAP TIP, there is a half-page form that asks a basic, important question that can help you solicit input from key stakeholders:

“What is the **one most important thing** that our (jurisdiction/agency) can do to shape the future of America’s victims’ rights and victim assistance field?”

Once you tailor the form to indicate the specific jurisdiction (i.e., agency/organization, city, county, tribe, state, etc.), you can:

- Email it to key stakeholders in advance of 2011 NCVRW, and ask them to respond by Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup> (two weeks in advance of NCVRW).
- Email it or provide it to crime victims and survivors, who can anonymously use their “power of the personal story” to provide guidance and input to you.

Any responses received *in advance* of 2011 NCVRW can be:

- Used for media relations (such as press releases and opinion/editorial columns).
- Cut-and-pasted onto graphically-designed “suns” (reflecting the 2011 NCVRW artwork) and posted at the entrance to or inside your sponsored events, and/or at high-profile places such as courthouses and police departments, state legislatures, on trees outside high-profile sites, etc.
- Posted in victim assistance and allied professional agencies’ and organizations’ offices and waiting rooms.

You can also consider providing the half-page flyer at *all* 2011 NCVRW events, and ask participants to take a few minutes to fill it out. The flyers can then be posted or otherwise made available for public view at all events and activities that you sponsor during 2011 NCVRW, and throughout the year.

### Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services

The Office for Victims of Crime within the U.S. Department of Justice is sponsoring an important initiative that will, indeed, shape the future of crime victim and survivor assistance in America and around the world. The overarching goal of *Vision 21* is “to expand the vision and impact of the crime victim services field.”

This groundbreaking national initiative will assess the current state of our field through literature reviews, forum discussions and other methods of information gathering, resulting in comprehensive reports that address four key areas:

1. **The role of the crime victims’ field in the overall response to crime and delinquency in the United States.** This report will explore topics including current crime victimization, underserved and unserved communities, enhancing partnerships, and improving integration of crime victims’ rights in order to develop a new, more comprehensive vision of the role for the crime victim services field.

2. **Building capacity in the crime victims' field to better serve victims of crime.** This report will examine issues surrounding the ability of networks to meet current and future crime victim needs, availability of funding, organizational flexibility toward resource enhancement, diversity in staffing and leadership, and stronger collaborations to further crime victims' rights and services.
  
3. **Enduring challenges in the crime victims' field that are still being addressed.** This project will identify the challenges of serving diverse victims and find the commonalities that exist to support a strategy to better serve victims of crime. This report will explore barriers and issues that continue to challenge the victim services field, including:
  - Domestic violence.
  - Child abuse.
  - Sexual assault.
  - Elder abuse.
  - Victims in Indian Country.
  - Young African American male victims.
  - Victims with disabilities.
  
4. **Emerging challenges the crime victims' field has yet to address.** This report will incorporate information related to the field's response to new trends and issues into a framework to help prepare the field for new challenges, including:
  - The changing demographics in the United States.
  - Advances in technology and the subsequent increase in cybercrime.
  - A rise in environmental crimes.
  - The incorporation of direct services for human trafficking victims.
  - The growing impact of social media, and fully serving youth victims.
  
5. **A final synthesis report is the fifth project,** which will produce a document that analyzes the information from the four reports and synthesize it into a cohesive and comprehensive assessment of the current state of the victim services field in the United States. The report will provide a set of recommendations and a blueprint for a national demonstration project (or multiple demonstration projects) to implement those recommendations.

***You and Your Community Can “Reshape the Future” Through “Vision 21”***

One of the most exciting aspects of *Vision 21* is its “open invitation” to our field and, in particular, to crime victims and survivors to contribute to its four reports and final synthesis report. If you visit the *Vision 21* website at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/vision21/initiative.html> and click on “Share Your Vision,” you will see the opportunity to contribute comments and recommendations in the four issue areas (up to 2000 characters – approximately 400 words).

As a prelude to 2011 NCVRW, you can email your clients, colleagues and constituents, provide them with the *Vision 21* URL, and encourage them to provide their input in conjunction with 2011 NCVRW and reflecting its theme: “Reshaping the Future. Honoring the Past.” You can target specific populations within your state or jurisdiction, such as:

- Crime victims and survivors.
- Victim advocates.
- Criminal and juvenile justice professionals.

- State legislators and Executive Branch officials.
- Local community leaders and elected officials.
- Mental health and medical professionals.
- High school and higher education students.

While all submissions must be provided to *Vision 21* electronically through email, you can also consider developing a one-page *Vision 21* “Share Your Vision” flyer – utilizing the 2011 NCVRW artwork included in the OVC Resource Guide as the “header.” This can be made available to participants at any events you sponsor, offering them the opportunity to shape the future of our field. Once you collect all the “Share Your Vision” documents, you can have a volunteer or intern input the information from each flyer into the prescribed email format and submit them electronically to OVC.

Linking *Vision 21* to 2011 NCVRW will not only help OVC in its efforts to guide our field toward a productive and more effective future; it will also allow *your community* to be important contributors to this national effort.

**Vision 21**  
**Transforming Victim Services**  
<http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/vision21/initiative.html>

**Strategic Planning**

One of the most effective ways to “shape the future” of crime victims’ rights and services in your organization/agency, community or state is to commit to developing a strategic plan. Such a plan creates guiding statements – including values, vision and mission statements – goals and measurable objectives.

The Office for Victims of Crime has published its *Strategic Planning Toolkit*, which can help victim assistance entities prepare for, assess, create, implement, communicate and evaluate a strategic plan. The Toolkit is available online from the OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) at <https://www.ovcttac.gov/views/resources/dspStrategicPlan.cfm>.

In addition, OVC TTAC can provide funding support for consultants to help you develop a strategic plan. You can visit <https://www.ovcttac.gov/> for more information about how to receive training and/or technical assistance for strategic planning.

If developing a strategic plan is a good idea for your agency, organization or jurisdiction, you can “kick off” your planning effort during 2011 NCVRW, and promote the theme of “Shaping the Future.”

**“Honoring the Past”**

*“In proclaiming Crime Victims’ Week, I stated that our commitment to criminal justice goes far deeper than our desire to punish the guilty or to deter those considering a lawless course. Our laws represent the collective moral voice of a free society – a voice that articulates our shared beliefs about the roles of civilized behavior. Both the observance of Crime Victims’ Week and the creation of this Task Force are entirely consistent with principles that lie at the heart of*

*our nation's belief in freedom under law."*

President Ronald Reagan, April 23, 1982

On signing Executive Order 12360, establishing the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime

This quotation from President Ronald Reagan epitomizes the sense of commitment and unity that resulted from the creation of the 1982 President's Task Force on Victims of Crime; National Crime Victims' Rights Week itself; and countless victims' rights laws and innovative victim services that have emerged over the past four decades.

In every community and state, there are "stories to be told" that provide an important historical perspective to the early days of our field, encompassing local, state, national and Federal initiatives. What follows are tips to "honor the past" in your own jurisdiction during 2011 NCVRW.

### Office for Victims of Crime Oral History Project

#### ***"What Is Past Is Prologue."***

These five words inscribed on the National Archives building in Washington, DC represent the foundation of the landmark OVC Oral History Project.

OVC created the "Oral History of the Crime Victim Assistance Field" project to ensure that the "lessons learned" from the history of our field are fully understood and appreciated – the good, the bad, and the ugly! The Project:

- Conducted video interviews of over 60 pioneers of the victim assistance field.
- Documented an audiotaped interview of the surviving members of the 1982 President's Task Force on Victims of Crime.
- Solicited paper-based documents of landmark activities of our field (that are available on-site at the Project's host site, the University of Akron in Ohio).

Transcripts are available online for all interviews, and are searchable by both "interviewees" and "key words." There are countless insights, opinions and stories that resonate today, and that can be used to "Honor the Past" during 2011 NCVRW.

You can access the OVC Oral History Project online at: <http://vroh.uakron.edu/index.php>.

### Create Your OWN "Oral History"

While your planning and preparation time is somewhat limited, you can consider creating a "condensed version" of an Oral History Project for your jurisdiction. Key areas to focus on include, but are not limited to:

- The "power of the personal story" of crime victims and survivors who have contributed to the passage of new laws, or creation of new programs, policies and/or protocols that benefit crime victims and promote public safety.
- State, Federal and tribal laws that have promoted victims' rights throughout the criminal, juvenile and civil justice systems.
- Effective leadership – focusing on key individuals – that has promoted victims' rights and services.

Again, the OVC Oral History Project is a great resource to make creating your own oral history a bit easier. You can visit <http://vroh.uakron.edu/pdfs/StateOralHistoryGuide.pdf> for information about “How to Create an Oral History.” Of particular note are the “Interview Process and Questions,” which offer a good “starting point” for creating an oral history specific to your organization or jurisdiction.

### **Landmarks in Victims’ Rights and Services**

The 2011 NCVRW Resource Guide includes an excellent and informative document, “Landmarks in Victims’ Rights and Services.” This publication originated as a result of some of our field’s pioneers who, in the early 1990s, felt it was important to “capture” the history of our field, and document important activities that tell the story of a truly impressive grassroots movement in our Nation.

It’s a good idea to take time to review this document for its national, state and local perspectives. You can “compare” your state’s efforts to the “landmarks” included in this document, and see where you stand. You can also consider creating a “report card” of how your state compares to the landmark victims’ rights, services and policies that are described in this document.

### **For More Information**

Please contact National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Community Awareness Project Consultant Anne Seymour via email at [annese@atlantech.net](mailto:annese@atlantech.net); or by telephone at 202.547.1732.