



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 TIP #3**

### ***To Improve Public Awareness***

## **Tips to Promote the 2013 NCVRW Theme *New Challenges. New Solutions.***

### **Introduction**

The theme for 2013 National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) – ***New Challenges. New Solutions.*** – offers a unique opportunity to reflect on the barriers we face in providing comprehensive, quality services to *all* victims and survivors of crime; and on the many solutions that can help us meet such challenges.

The 2013 NCVRW *Resource Guide* will feature tips on promoting the 2013 theme. In addition, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) plans to publish its “*Vision 21*” report prior to 2013 NCVRW, which will highlight many challenges our field faces along with recommendations to address these challenges.

As you begin your planning efforts, the resources in this CAP TIP can help you develop a national perspective of challenges to and solutions for our field, along with insights about creating themes that are more specific to your state and jurisdiction.

### **A National Historical Perspective**

Throughout the history of the crime victim assistance field, OVC and leaders from the field have examined the many challenges we have faced at specific points in time; and the creative solutions that help us address and overcome such challenges. There are three key projects that can provide you with a national historical perspective on *challenges* – many of which have existed for decades – and *solutions*.

1. The landmark *President's Task Force on Victims of Crime Final Report* published in 1982 examined the status of victims' rights and services 30 years ago, and included over 60 recommendations for improvement. You can download this 115 page *Final Report* at

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/presdntstskforcrprt/welcome.html>

2. A more exhaustive examination of challenges to the field and recommendations for improvement was published by OVC in 1998. *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* offered hundreds of recommendations to strengthen victims' rights and services 15 years ago, and can be accessed at [https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc\\_archives/directions/welcome.html](https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/directions/welcome.html).
3. The *OVC Oral History Project* interviewed over 60 pioneers in the victim assistance field to document an historical perspective of our field since its inception in 1972. Among the questions asked of the interviewees that are relevant to the 2013 NCVRW theme are:
  - What was the greatest challenge you faced?
  - What is needed today to continue the growth and professionalism of our field?
  - What vision do you have for the future of our field?

The OVC Oral History Project website includes:

- Videotaped interviews of these pioneers
- Written transcripts of all interviews
- An excellent "History of the Crime Victims' Movement in the United States"
- "A Retrospective of the 1982 President's Task Force on Victims of Crime" that emerged from a group interview in 2002 of all surviving members of the Task Force

The OVC Oral History website can be accessed at <http://vroh.uakron.edu/index.php>.

## **Developing a Local Perspective on "Challenges" and "Solutions"**

*Every state and jurisdiction is **unique** in terms of its challenges and solutions!*

*And **challenges and solutions are also unique** to every victim-serving profession within a jurisdiction!*

As such, it's important to personalize the 2013 NCVRW theme to your state or community. Consider for a moment the range of agencies, organizations, individuals and professionals who assist victims of crime; for example:

- Crime victims and survivors
- Community-based victim assistance organizations
- Social service organizations
- Law enforcement
- Pre-trial and courts
- Prosecutors
- Community corrections
- Institutional corrections
- Appellate-level agencies
- Mental health
- Public health

- Schools
- Colleges/universities
- Multi-faith communities
- Organizations that assist traditionally-underserved populations
- Private sector/businesses
- Others

It's a good idea to actively reach out to these important constituents, and engage them in "defining the 2013 NCVRW theme" in a manner that personalizes it to your jurisdiction. [Here are two recommended approaches:](#)

1. Conduct direct outreach to crime victims and survivors to solicit their input, *based upon their personal experiences*.

The "sample worksheet to obtain input on the 2013 theme" included at the end of this CAP TIP can be adapted to conduct direct outreach to crime victims and survivors. You can ask victim advocates and allied professionals involved with your Planning Committee to email or "snail mail" survivors to seek their opinions about "challenges" and "solutions" based upon their personal experiences as victims of crime. Here's some sample language you can use:

Dear Friends:

National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) is scheduled for April 21-27, 2013. The theme for this year's commemoration is "New Challenges. New Solutions."

In order for us to be able to promote this theme during 2013 NCVRW, it's important for us to hear first-hand from crime victims and survivors. Based upon your personal experiences, what do you think are the *greatest challenges* we face in effectively serving victims; and what are some *solutions* we can enact to meet those challenges?

I am enclosing a response form for you to answer these two important questions. We'd like to use the responses we receive from crime victims and survivors to help articulate the 2013 theme in a way that personalizes it to our community. Your responses are confidential, and you will not be identified in any way as the source of the response.

Please return this form to me by (*means of return*) no later than (*day/date/year*). I appreciate your consideration of this important request, and thank you in advance for contributing to our promotion of 2013 National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

You can ask a volunteer or intern to compile the responses you receive into a centralized database for use in promoting NCVRW (see "How to Use the Theme Input You Receive" below).

2. Develop a brief online survey that solicits input on the theme of “challenges” and “solutions” (consider using free survey software such as *Survey Monkey* at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)). You can include a “demographic” check list (see above) about the profession of respondents, and provide a brief overview of why you are soliciting input and information about submitting the survey, for example:

National Crime Victims’ Rights Week is scheduled for April 21 to 27, 2013. The theme for 2013 is “*New Challenges. New Solutions.*”

It’s important for our *community/state* to be able to define the challenges we face in providing comprehensive services and support to victims of crime, and potential solutions to such challenges. We’d like you to take a few minutes to complete our online survey that will help us personalize the 2013 NCVRW theme to our *community/state*.

Please complete and return this survey by (*at least one month in advance of NCVRW*) so we can ensure that your input is included in our NCVRW victim/survivor outreach and public awareness activities.

Examples of survey topics to include in “challenges” include (but are not limited to, as *you should develop topics that are specific to your jurisdiction*) the following:

#### **GENERAL CHALLENGES**

- Encouraging victims and survivors to report crimes
- Encouraging victims and survivors (reporting and non-reporting) to seek supportive services
- Lack of collaboration among criminal and juvenile justice agencies
- Lack of policies and protocols for effective victim assistance
- Lack of evidence-based practices in crime victim services
- Impact of technology on crime and victimization
- Lack of victim awareness about victim services
- Lack of public awareness about the availability of victim services
- Need for more cultural sensitivity and diversity in victim service provision
- Need for more public funding for victim services
- Need for more private funding for victim services
- Other (*provide space for survey respondents to provide open-ended input*)

#### **TYPES OF VICTIMIZATION THAT MAY POSE CHALLENGES**

- Mass violence and victimization
- Domestic violence
- Technology-related crimes (identity theft, child pornography, stalking, etc.)
- Elder abuse and neglect
- Child abuse and neglect
- Crimes against LGBTQI persons
- Hate crimes
- Other (*provide space for survey respondents to provide open-ended input*)

For the “solutions” portion of the survey, it’s a good idea to have an open-ended question that solicits respondents’ creative ideas, for example:

Now that you’ve identified ‘challenges’ in providing comprehensive services and support to crime victims and survivors, please list three ‘solutions’ to these challenges:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### **How to Use the Theme Input You Receive**

Once you’ve framed your perspective of the theme, you can use the input you’ve received in a variety of ways, such as:

- Traditional media outreach (i.e., press releases, public service announcements, opinion/editorial columns, media interviews, etc.)
- Social media outreach (i.e., through Facebook, brief Twitter feeds, podcasts, etc.)
- Public presentations (i.e. featuring specific quotations on presentation slides about “challenges” and “solutions” from survivors, advocates, justice professionals and others)
- On posters (i.e., using specific quotations on posters that publicize NCVRW activities, and at your actual NCVRW events)

### **Other Sources to Identify “Challenges” and “Solutions”**

In many jurisdictions, there are ongoing strategic activities that help identify challenges and solutions. These include activities at the organizational, community and statewide levels, such as:

- Strategic planning
- Needs assessments
- Gap analyses
- Reports to granting authorities and private funders
- Surveys of survivors, victim assistance and allied professionals

It’s helpful to ask your Planning Committee members and others about any findings they may have obtained from the aforementioned activities, and incorporate them (with appropriate citations) into your 2013 NCVRW activities.

### **Promoting “Solutions” that *Work***

There is currently an emphasis on “evidence-based practices” (EBPs) in crime victim assistance and criminal justice practices. The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in the U.S. Department of Justice considers programs and practices to be evidence-based when their effectiveness has been demonstrated by causal evidence, generally obtained through high quality outcome evaluations.

In your jurisdiction, it's a good idea to identify any victim assistance practices that are EBPs and promote their efficacy as "solutions" for our field. You can also visit the U.S. Department of Justice Crime Solutions website ([www.crimesolutions.gov](http://www.crimesolutions.gov)) that provides overviews of program effectiveness in a number of justice-related areas – including victim services – and rates program modalities from being "effective," to "promising" to "no effects."

### Artwork to Visually Depict the 2012 NCVRW Theme

"Theme artwork" will be provided in the 2013 NCVRW *Resource Guide*. In the meantime, it's easy and fun to find artwork that visually depicts the NCVRW theme.

You can start by entering "Clipart, Challenges" and "Clipart, Solutions" into *any* Internet search engine, and you'll find a broad array of free clipart from which to choose.

Another great (and *free*) resource is the "clipart" provided within PowerPoint software (go to "insert" and then "clipart" within your PowerPoint program); for example, **there are over 80 clips for "challenges" .....**



**.....and over 70 clips for "solutions" .....**



### For More Information

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