



### Commemorative Calendar

Throughout 2005, there are numerous commemorative days, weeks and months that pay tribute to crime victims, and/or highlight important issues relevant to justice and public safety. Contact information is provided

for the sponsors of each observance, many of whom provide public awareness materials (similar to this Resource Guide) to help generate greater media and community awareness. The dates on the Commemorative Calendar are also incorporated into some of the artwork included in the “Camera-Ready Artwork” section of this Resource Guide.

### Notable Quotables

In keeping with the 2005 NCVRW theme, this year’s Notable Quotables focus on the combined themes of “justice” and “service,” and highlight the President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime. Included is a quotation from President Ronald Reagan about the inception of NCVRW; a quotation from OVC Director John W. Gillis about the purpose and importance of the President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime; insights from a 2003 “reunion” interview of members and staff of the President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime; and quotations from victims and survivors who testified at Task Force hearings across the country in 1982. These quotations offer a valuable perspective on the plight of victims 25 years ago, as well as the progress that has been made since then.

### Putting Victims First

The theme of the Office for Victims of Crime – “Putting Victims First” – challenges us to do what we can to make crime victims’ rights and services a *priority*. This document offers suggestions for victims’ family members and friends, victim service providers, justice officials, and community members to help them “put

victims first” in a manner that is sensitive and supportive. These concepts can be incorporated into virtually *all* of the suggested victim and public outreach activities included in this Resource Guide.

### Sample Proclamation

An excellent way to promote greater awareness of NCVRW is to seek public proclamations or resolutions from state and local governments (including Governors, Attorneys General, state legislatures, county boards of supervisors, mayors, and city or parish councils) that officially proclaim the week of April 10 to 16, 2005, to be “(State or Local) Crime Victims’ Rights Week.” The sample proclamation highlights this year’s theme and the many accomplishments of our field over the past 25 years, and should be personalized to reflect state and local interests, as well as state and local victims’ rights and services. Victim assistance organizations and coalitions should coordinate efforts to seek proclamations, and request multiple copies that can be “officially” presented to them. These proclamations can be framed and displayed in the offices of programs that co-sponsor 2005 NCVRW activities.

### Sample Speech

NCVRW provides excellent opportunities to deliver speeches and other presentations to crime victims and survivors, criminal and juvenile justice and allied professionals, civic organizations, public policy makers, institutions of higher education and schools, multi-faith entities, and community members about crime victims’ rights and needs. The sample speech provides a comprehensive overview of the many accomplishments of the victim assistance field since the first NCVRW commenced in 1981, and reflects the theme of the 25th anniversary of NCVRW. It also includes a quotation from President Reagan to provide a historical perspective of the inception of NCVRW, as well as the creation of his President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime that provided a foundation for victims’ rights and services as we know them today.

# Maximizing Communication and Awareness *(continued)*

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Other Resource Guide documents that can enhance speeches and other public presentations during NCVRW include:

- “A Crime Victim’s Experience: Then and Now.”
- “Crime Victims’ Rights in America: A Historical Overview.”
- “Paving the Path to Justice.”
- Statistical overviews (it is also helpful to include crime and victimization statistics relevant to your state or local jurisdiction).

## **Third Annual National Candlelight Observance**

The Third Annual National Candlelight Observance to commemorate the Silver Anniversary of NCVRW, and to pay tribute to crime victims and survivors and those who serve them, is scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2005, in Washington, D.C. (Additional information about the National Observance – including the time and location – will be available at OVC’s Web site: [www.ovc.gov/ncvrw2005/welcome.html](http://www.ovc.gov/ncvrw2005/welcome.html)). *All* are welcome and encouraged to attend this special event, which is the premiere national tribute to 2005 NCVRW and crime victims and survivors. If you are unable to attend the National Observance in Washington, D.C., you may wish to organize a similar event in your community on this day.

## **Tips for Outreach to and Collaboration with Multi-faith Communities**

Communities that represent various faiths in America are important partners in efforts to assist victims of crime, and to promote the availability of victims’ rights and services. Many crime victims and survivors turn to their spiritual advisors and communities for help to cope with the aftermath of crime. These tips can help engage multi-faith communities in efforts to create victim outreach and education efforts within their churches, synagogues, mosques and temples, and through their member activities, not only during 2005 NCVRW, but throughout the year.

## **Tips to Promote Victim and Community Awareness**

A unique feature of this year’s tips is 23 creative activities that were sponsored during 2004 NCVRW by programs and coalitions that received NCVRW funding support from the Office for Victims of Crime. These innovative initiatives included news media outreach, creative uses of the NCVRW Resource Guide camera-ready artwork, the creation of public memorials to honor victims, and outreach to traditionally underserved victim populations. More detailed information about each of these NCVRW projects is available from OVC by contacting [ovc.ncjrs.org/askovc](http://ovc.ncjrs.org/askovc).

In addition, this section includes “25 Rights and Services” that can be highlighted to commemorate the 25th anniversary of NCVRW, along with other tips that can help promote the 2005 NCVRW theme.

# 2005 Commemorative Calendar

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Please mark your calendars for the events listed below, and contact any of the listed telephone numbers or Web sites for additional information.

## **JANUARY**

### **CRIME STOPPERS MONTH**

Crime Stoppers International  
800.245.0009  
www.c-s-i.org

### **NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH**

MENTOR  
703.224.2200  
www.mentoring.org

### **NATIONAL STALKING AWARENESS MONTH**

U.S. Department of Justice,  
Office on Violence Against Women  
202.307.6026  
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo

## **APRIL**

### **NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

**April 10-16, 2005**

U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime  
800.851.3420 (OVC Resource Center)  
www.ovc.gov

### **NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE DAYS**

**April 15-17, 2005**

Youth Service America  
202.296.2992  
www.ysa.org

### **NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK**

**April 17-23, 2005**

Points of Light Foundation  
800.750.7653  
www.pointsoflight.org

### **NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

Prevent Child Abuse America  
312.663.3520  
www.preventchildabuse.org

### **NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH**

National Sexual Violence Resource Center  
717.909.0710  
717.909.0715 (TTY)  
www.nsvrc.org

## **MAY**

### **NATIONAL LAW DAY**

**May 1, 2005**

American Bar Association  
312.988.5000  
www.abanet.org

### **NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS WEEK**

**May 1-7, 2005**

International Association of Correctional Officers  
517.485.3310

### **NATIONAL POLICE WEEK**

**May 15-21, 2005**

Concerns of Police Survivors  
573.346.4911  
www.nationalcops.org

### **NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL DAY**

**May 15, 2005**

Concerns of Police Survivors  
573.346.4911  
www.nationalcops.org

### **NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY**

**May 25, 2005**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
800.843.5678  
www.ncmec.org

### **OLDER AMERICANS MONTH**

Administration on Aging  
Department of Health and Human Services  
www.aoa.gov

## **JULY**

### **NATIONAL PROBATION AND PAROLE OFFICERS WEEK**

**July 17-23, 2005**

American Probation and Parole Association  
859.244.8203  
www.appa-net.org

## 2005 Commemorative Calendar (*continued*)

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### **AUGUST**

#### **NATIONAL NIGHT OUT**

**August 2, 2005**

National Association of Town Watch  
800.NITE.OUT  
[www.nationaltownwatch.org](http://www.nationaltownwatch.org)

### **SEPTEMBER**

#### **NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK**

**September 4-10, 2005**

American Association of Suicidology  
202.237.2280  
[www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)

#### **NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE**

**September 25, 2005**

National Organization of Parents  
Of Murdered Children, Inc.  
888.818.POMC  
[www.pomc.org](http://www.pomc.org)

### **OCTOBER**

#### **WEEK WITHOUT VIOLENCE**

**October 16-22, 2005**

YWCA of the USA  
202.467.0801  
[www.ywca.org](http://www.ywca.org)

#### **AMERICA'S SAFE SCHOOLS WEEK**

**October 16-22, 2005**

National School Safety Center  
805.373.9977  
[www.nssc1.org](http://www.nssc1.org)

#### **NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION MONTH**

National Crime Prevention Council  
800.627.2911  
[www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

### **NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH**

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
303.839.1852  
[www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)

### **NOVEMBER**

#### **TIE ONE ON FOR SAFETY**

November - December, 2005  
Mothers Against Drunk Driving  
800.GET.MADD  
[www.madd.org](http://www.madd.org)

### **DECEMBER**

#### **NATIONAL DRUNK AND DRUGGED DRIVING PREVENTION MONTH**

Mothers Against Drunk Driving  
800.GET.MADD  
[www.madd.org](http://www.madd.org)

# Notable Quotables

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“For too long, the victims of crime have been the forgotten persons of our criminal justice system. Rarely do we give victims the help they need or the attention they deserve. Yet the protection of our citizens – to guard them from becoming victims – is the primary purpose of our penal laws. Thus, each new victim personally represents an instance in which our system has failed to prevent crime. Lack of concern for victims compounds that failure.”

*President Ronald W. Reagan  
April 1, 1981, on signing the Proclamation  
declaring the First National Crime  
Victims’ Rights Week*

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“When the President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime, established by President Ronald Reagan convened its regional hearings in 1982, the power of the personal stories of crime victims was highly evident. Most crime victims and survivors who testified felt that people didn’t understand their needs and concerns, and that the justice system was significantly imbalanced in favor of defendants and convicted criminals.”

*John Gillis, Director  
Office for Victims of Crime*

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“Something insidious has happened in America: Crime has made victims of us all. Awareness of its danger affects the way we think, where we live, where we go, what we buy, how we raise our children, and the quality of our lives as we age. The specter of violent crime and the knowledge, that without warning, any person can be attacked or crippled, robbed or killed, lurks at the fringes of consciousness. The lessons of the victims run like a thread throughout and are the foundation of all the proposals that follow...”

*Hon. Lois Haight, Esq., Chair  
President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime*

“There is nothing like hearing from a victim himself or herself to truly hear the layers and layers of harm - the multi-challenges, the multi-layers, the multi-dimensions of this made us embrace more and more the fields and areas we thought were deficient.”

*Dr. Stanton Samenow, Criminal Psychologist  
President, Center for Responsible Living  
Alexandria, VA*

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“It came through so clearly that the system actually *victimized* the victim - all the way up and down the line from the earlier impact of the crime, to the sentencing to parole, victims were not considered appropriate wards of the system.”

*Dr. Marion G. (Pat) Roberston, President  
Christian Broadcasting Network  
Virginia Beach, VA*

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“There was complete disenfranchisement. We were treating victims somewhat like inanimate objects to be present, to say their piece, and to then be removed from the process.”

*Robert J. Miller  
Former Governor of Nevada*

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“Things don’t really happen in the system unless you personalize it, and demonstrate how much difference it makes in the lives of victims.”

*Terry Russell, Executive Director  
President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime*

## Notable Quotables *(continued)*

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“If you were them, what would you want and what would you expect? For crime victims, the importance is assertiveness. They [victims] are not expected to know all of their rights, but they should go in with an attitude that they have some and that they are going to exercise them by asking questions and desiring to participate.”

*Robert J. Miller*  
*Former Governor of Nevada*

“It is hard not to turn away from victims. Their pain is discomforting. Their anger is sometimes embarrassing. Their mutilations are upsetting. Victims are vital reminders of our own vulnerability.”

*Kenneth O. Eikenberry, Esq.*  
*Fomer Attorney General*  
*State of Washington*

### Quotations from five victims who testified at hearings of the President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime, 1982

“To blame victims for crime is like analyzing the cause of World War II and asking, ‘What was Pearl Harbor doing in the Pacific, anyway?’”

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“I will never forget being raped, kidnapped, and robbed at gunpoint. However, my sense of disillusionment of the judicial system is many times more painful. I could not encourage anyone to participate in this hellish process.”

“Why didn’t anyone consult me? I was the one who was kidnapped, not the State of Virginia.”

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“What others see as an inconvenience is for the victim an endless nightmare.”

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“Balancing competing interests and equities in deciding a sentence can require a Solomon-like-wisdom – and even Solomon heard from both sides.”

# Putting Victims First

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The theme of the Office for Victims of Crime – “Putting Victims First” – is highly relevant to *anyone* who is in a position to assist victims and survivors of crime, including family members and friends, victim service providers, criminal and juvenile justice professionals, and the community. By “putting victims first,” we recognize that their rights, needs and concerns are priorities essential to promoting justice, safety and equal rights for *all*.

The following suggestions can be utilized in many victim/survivor and public education resources, including: speeches and other public presentations that target specific audiences; brochures and newsletters; and on agency Web sites. You can expand these “definitions” of “Putting Victims First” to make them more relevant to your own jurisdiction.

## **For Families and Friends of Crime Victims and Survivors, “Putting Victims First” Means:**

- Offering comfort and support immediately after a crime occurs, and in the days, weeks, months and even years that follow.
- Letting your loved one or friend know how sorry you are, and that what happened was not his or her fault.
- Providing encouragement, support and validation to your loved one or friend when he or she wants to talk about what happened, and what will happen in the future.
- Finding out about the wide range of victims’ rights and services that are available to assist victims, survivors and their loved ones in your community, and helping them access these rights and services.
- Asking about the survivor’s most important needs – emotional, physical, financial and spiritual – and referring them to available resources to meet these needs.
- Monitoring your own range of possible emotional, physical and spiritual reactions to the crime and its effects, and seeking support and services, if needed, that can help promote your personal strength and resiliency.

- Recognizing that the anniversary date of a crime may be a difficult time for your loved one or friend – and for you as well – and being prepared to address any residual effects that result from the memory of the victimization.

## **For Victim Service Providers, “Putting Victims First” Means:**

- Creating an organizational environment and personal ethical guidelines that help guarantee swift, sensitive and effective assistance to victims of crime, as well as communications that convey empathy, understanding, and a willingness to help.
- Keeping up-to-date about current victims’ rights laws and public policy at the federal, state and local levels, and developing services that help victims understand and exercise their rights.
- Keeping up-to-date about innovations in victim services that can enhance the assistance you provide to victims, and constantly seeking measures for improvement.
- Empowering victims by providing them with *options* and *opportunities* for assistance and for exercising their rights, and providing support (to the degree possible) for the choices they make.
- Conducting a needs assessment for victims that identifies their sustenance issues, mental and physical health concerns, issues related to how to access and exercise their rights, and their need for services that can be provided by victim assistance, criminal and juvenile justice, and allied agencies, as well as by their family members and friends.
- Becoming skilled in addressing the safety needs of victims, and assisting them, if needed, with the creation of personal safety plans.
- Being culturally competent in the provision of victim services, and the enforcement of victims’ rights.
- Coordinating the provision of victim services, and developing strategic plans that identify gaps and avoid duplication of services.
- Conducting victim assessment or satisfaction surveys of victims whom you serve, in order to obtain important input that can help you improve the delivery of victim services.

## Putting Victims First (*continued*)

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### **For Criminal and Juvenile Justice Professionals, “Putting Victims First” Means:**

- Recognizing your leadership role in helping crime victims understand and implement their rights under law, and how to access victim services.
- Promoting collaboration to improve consistency in the implementation of victims’ rights and the provision of victim services among justice officials and agencies, victim service providers, public policy makers, allied professionals, and community members.
- Being aware of victims’ statutory rights in your state and *your role* in helping victims to exercise them, including the rights to: information and notification; participation in key justice proceedings; input through victim impact statements and pre-sentence investigation reports; protection and safety; restitution and other legal/financial obligations; victim compensation; and any recourse victims may have in your state if they feel their rights have been violated.
- Providing quality victim services that identify and address crime victims’ most basic needs relevant to exercising their rights, and addressing the emotional, physical, financial and spiritual impact of crime on them.
- Empowering victims by providing them with *options* and *opportunities* for assistance and for exercising their rights, and providing support (to the degree possible) for the choices they make.
- Sponsoring ongoing venues for victims to give you input about their most important issues and concerns, such as Victim Advisory Councils, focus groups, and/or victim satisfaction surveys.
- Being culturally competent in the explanation and enforcement of victims’ rights, and the provision of victim assistance services.

### **For Community Members, “Putting Victims First” Means:**

- Understanding that crime isn’t “something that happens to somebody else.” It is our family members and loved ones, neighbors, friends and co-workers who are profoundly affected by crime and victimization.
- Becoming educated about the emotional, financial, physical and spiritual impact of crime on victims, so that you can provide timely and effective assistance to someone you know who may need help.
- Becoming aware of the wide range of victims’ rights, as well as the availability of victim assistance programs, that can help victims seek justice and begin the path to recovery in the aftermath of a crime.
- Volunteering at and providing your ongoing support to victim assistance organizations and criminal and juvenile justice agencies to help crime victims, and promoting victims’ rights and community safety.



# Sample Proclamation

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- Whereas,** President Ronald W. Reagan first declared “National Crime Victims’ Rights Week” in 1981 to focus our Nation’s attention on the plight of crime victims; and
- Whereas,** this Silver Anniversary of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week provides a national opportunity to reflect on the devastating impact of crime and terrorism on victims and our entire Nation, and to strengthen our national resolve to ensure that victims’ needs are identified and addressed; and
- Whereas,** since 1981, the crime victim assistance field has expanded from a handful of assistance programs to include over 10,000 community- and justice system-based programs, and in 2005, there are more than 32,000 federal and state statutes that define and protect victims’ rights; and
- Whereas,** America as a Nation, and we as individuals and communities, recognize that justice isn’t served until crime victims are, that crime and violence in America affects us all, and that victims’ rights are a critical component of “justice for all;” and
- Whereas,** justice isn’t served until all crime victims and those hurt by crime – our mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, neighbors and friends – are provided support and assistance in the aftermath of victimization; and
- Whereas,** despite impressive accomplishments over the past 25 years in crime victims’ rights and services, there remain many challenges to ensure that all crime victims and survivors are treated with dignity and respect, recognized as key participants within our systems of justice, and afforded services that provide help and hope to them; and
- Whereas,** America as a Nation recognizes that we serve justice by serving victims of crime and that by helping victims and survivors of crime, we help make our homes and neighborhoods, communities and Nation stronger, safer and more secure; and
- Whereas,** America has joined together annually for the past 25 years to recognize the needs and rights of crime victims and survivors during National Crime Victims’ Rights Week each April;  
**therefore, be it**
- Resolved,** that (*individual or entity*) proclaims the week of April 10 to 16, 2005, to be (*City/County/Parish/State*) Crime Victims’ Rights Week, and honors crime victims and those who serve them during this week and throughout the year; **and be it further**
- Resolved,** that as individuals, communities and a Nation, we value justice in America that includes and involves crime victims, and seek to serve justice by serving victims of crime; **and be it further**
- Resolved,** that a suitably prepared copy of this proclamation be presented to (*your organization*) on (*date*).

# Sample Speech

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If you ask ten people on the street in our community what “justice” means to them, you might get ten different answers. If you ask ten victims of crime what “justice” means to them, it’s likely a common theme will occur. To victims and survivors of crime, justice simply means that they are treated with respect, that they are *listened to* and actually *heard*, and that they will have a voice in vital decisions that are made related to their cases, as well as to their lives.

In America today, we often speak of “criminal justice” and “juvenile justice” and even “community justice.” Yet we seldom hear about “victim justice,” which is at the very heart and soul of “justice” in our nation. If victims never reported crimes, we would not be able to identify and arrest violent offenders. If victims didn’t cooperate as witnesses in criminal cases and juvenile adjudications, the guilty would remain free to harm again. And if victims didn’t bravely speak out about the devastating impact of crime on them and those they love, few of us would fully realize the domino effect of crime that affects *each and every one of us* – that those being injured and assaulted and murdered are our mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, neighbors and friends. *One* crime can have *many* victims.

This week, we join together to honor victims and survivors and those who serve them, and to commemorate the Silver Anniversary of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week.

When President Ronald W. Reagan declared the first National Crime Victims’ Rights Week 25 years ago, he also soon established the President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime, which for the first time offered a national perspective on the plight of crime victims. “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,” President Reagan said. “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.”

In the past 25 years, there have been hundreds of millions of people in our nation who have been victimized by crime – women battered, children abused and traumatized, men and women assaulted, countless people murdered, and an entire nation devastated by senseless acts of terrorism against our people. It is in honor of these brave victims and survivors of crime that we validate our common “belief in freedom under law” and declare in a unified voice: “Justice Isn’t Served Until Crime Victims Are.”

In the aftermath of crime, there is shock and devastation, pain and trauma and fear. There is confusion about what is happening *now*, and what will happen in the *future*. Yet there is also a path of help, of hope and of healing that is paved each and every time someone reaches out to help a victim of crime, and to provide support to someone who is hurting. There is a path of *justice* that results from the simple act of *service* to victims and survivors of crime. Crime victims *deserve* to have their most important needs identified and addressed.

Justice isn’t served until crime victims are treated with dignity and compassion by our criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Justice isn’t served until crime victims’ most basic needs are identified – safety, housing, basic medical and mental health care, food and clothing for their children – and that efforts are made to meet these important needs.

Justice isn’t served until crime victims are informed of *all* their rights throughout the justice process – rights that empower them, give them important choices, and offer them opportunities to have a voice in their cases, and in their future; rights that include information, notification, protection, participation, restitution, and victim compensation.

Justice isn’t served until we realize, as a community and as a nation founded on the principles of “equal rights for all,” that violence affects us *all*, and that victims’ rights represent the very foundation upon which our nation was created.

## Sample Speech *(continued)*

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And justice isn't served until all crime victims can be assured that their offenders will be held accountable for their crimes, and that our collective efforts focus on preventing future victimization, and promoting individual and community safety.

Every time we serve victims and survivors of crime, we are also serving justice. "Service" comes in many shapes and forms – from simply listening to a survivor who needs to talk about his or her experiences, to asking, "Is there anything I can do to help you?," to becoming informed about victims' rights and services so that you, in turn, can inform victims who truly need these resources. You can serve victims as a compassionate family member or friend, or as a volunteer for one of the many programs in our community that provide victims with information, support, and assistance. You can serve victims through your support of criminal justice policies and public policy that promote rights and assistance for victims of crime, and accountability for criminal offenders. You can serve victims by referring *anyone* whom you know is a crime victim or survivor of crime to a victim assistance program.

This week and throughout the year, we can make justice *truly meaningful* and *truly effective* by recognizing the rights and needs of victims and survivors of crime, and by recognizing that crime isn't something that "happens to someone else." Because one crime can have many victims, and because we have countless opportunities to ensure that victims and survivors receive the rights and respect that they *need* and *deserve*.

So this week, as we pay tribute to crime victims and all those – including many of you – who dedicate their lives to helping them, our shared challenge is to realize that *justice isn't served until crime victims are*, that justice isn't served until victims' rights and services are not just celebrated *annually*, but practiced *daily*.

# Tips for Outreach to and Collaboration with Multi-faith Communities

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If your group or organization is interested in developing an interfaith program involving communities that represent different faiths, or materials specifically for 2005 National Crime Victims' Rights Week, here are some tips for getting started.

## **Start early and be patient.**

Faith leaders receive more mail and invitations than they can accommodate and often are reluctant to take on new initiatives. *They are most likely to participate if they have been involved in the development of a program or project.* It takes time to build trust, even among denominations or sub-groups of one faith. Start with a small group of representatives of various faiths who are already familiar with crime victims' issues and services. They do not necessarily need to be faith leaders, but may be volunteers in the community to whom victims informally turn for help. This initial group should meet a few times in order to move from tolerance to mutual respect and appreciation of each other. Early meetings might offer the opportunity for each group to share basic information about its faith, correct myths or misunderstandings, and identify common themes of peace and non-violence. The ultimate task of this group is to decide on a reasonable goal for commemorating 2005 National Crime Victims' Rights Week and identify interfaith members of a steering committee who can work together to achieve the goal.

## **Decide what you want to accomplish.**

- Sermon, homilies or teaching outlines for faith leaders who will address crime victims' most important concerns?
- Newsletters or inserts for the worship bulletin depicting crime victimization and where to go for help?
- Speakers' bureau of crime victims and victim services providers who will speak to faith groups during National Crime Victims' Rights Week?
- Resource guide for cross-referrals between faith communities and victim assistance agencies?
- Interfaith anti-violence forum or breakfast during National Crime Victims' Rights Week?
- Dating violence materials for faith-based youth groups and organizations?

- Domestic violence screening tools for pre-marriage counseling programs in faith communities?
- A victim memorial service that is spiritually sensitive to all faiths in your community?
- Theologically-based materials for each faith group that emphasize non-violence, compassion for victims, and offender accountability?
- Brochure outlining how members of the faith community can support victims of crime?
- Training about crime victim issues for faith communities?
- A spiritually-sensitive crisis response plan in the event of a community disaster?
- Other?

## **Develop a steering committee with commonalities.**

Most steering committee members will emerge from the initial planning group. A few more key faith leaders may be added. While it would be ideal to bring together all faiths in your community, it is not likely to happen initially. Jews, Christians, and Muslims are likely to work well together because they share the same heritage. Buddhists and Hindus may work well together because of their common faith characteristics. Those who practice traditional Native American spirituality are accepting of other faith groups. If interdenominational groups within Christianity or interfaith groups have already been developed in your community, that's a good place to start.

## **Diversify leadership.**

While one person may be identified to schedule meetings and plan logistics, all participants on the steering committee should have balanced and equal authority in all phases of program development and implementation.

## **Remember that an interfaith program is *not* a melting pot program.**

An interfaith program is more like a mosaic than a melting pot. It is not realistic to seek to reduce each faith to a common denominator. However, it is reasonable to focus on multiple manifestations and

## Tips for Outreach (*continued*)

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expressions of a common theme, such as peace or anti-violence. For example, Jews may pray to Yahweh for peace; Christians may pray for peace in the name of Jesus; and Muslims may pray for peace directly from the words of the Qu'ran to Allah. Hindus and Buddhists are more comfortable with meditation than prayer. Never expect all groups to pray the same way.

### **Meet at different places to develop the program.**

The sites of various committee meetings should rotate among the faiths, perhaps at a church one time and a synagogue, temple, or mosque the next. Likewise, if the program is to be an annual one, such as an Interfaith Memorial Service for Victims of Crime, the actual site of the service may change from year to year.

### **Don't expect universal participation.**

A mailing to every faith community in your jurisdiction is not likely to be effective. Rely on steering committee members to distribute information about the program within their own faith groups; these personal contacts are essential for success. Each can introduce the program to their youth groups, congregations, service agencies, seminaries, and faith leaders through personally-signed cover letters or direct personal contacts.

### **Promising Practices in Interfaith Victim Services Programs**

***The Sabbath of Domestic Peace Coalition*** in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, offers an annual focus on domestic violence in Jewish and Christian congregations. A 36-page booklet informs readers about domestic violence and provides worship resources for clergy. For more information, go to [www.sabbathofdomesticpeace.org](http://www.sabbathofdomesticpeace.org).

***Daughters of Abraham*** in Arlington, Texas, is a group of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim women who came together after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to enhance their understanding of various faiths and seek peace within the community. For more information, contact [jhlord2@comcast.net](mailto:jhlord2@comcast.net).

***Crime Victims Services*** in Allen and Putnam Counties, Ohio, includes a Victim Ministry program to address spiritual concerns of victims. For more information, go to [www.CrimeVictimServices.org](http://www.CrimeVictimServices.org) and click on "Victim Ministry."

***STAND! Against Domestic Violence*** in Richmond, California, has partnered with the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program and Richmond Police chaplaincy in Contra Costa County to enhance spiritually-sensitive services to victims. The program offers faith breakfasts, community roundtables, and Faith Communities and Victims of Crime forums. For more information, go to [www.standagainstdv.org](http://www.standagainstdv.org).

***The Crime Victims Advocacy Council*** in Atlanta, Georgia, includes a Pastoral Care Division that offers pastoral care, crime victim-specific worship services, biblical studies, hospital visits, and death notification services. For more information, go to [www.gbmg-umc.org/cvac](http://www.gbmg-umc.org/cvac).

# Tips to Promote Victim and Community Awareness

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## **Creative 2004 NCVRW Victim and Community Awareness Activities**

*In 2004, communities planning public awareness and community education events for National Crime Victims' Rights Week were, for the first time, provided an opportunity to apply for financial support through the Office for Victims of Crime. Sixty-four communities across the United States were competitively selected to receive partial reimbursement for expenses related to promoting victims' rights and services during NCVRW within specific jurisdictions. Highlighted below are examples of some of the events and activities supported, in part, by OVC. In many of these communities, "traditional" NCVRW events were enhanced by the expansion of collaborative partnerships during the planning phase of each event, and by increased attention paid to utilizing the OVC NCVRW Resource Guide and expanding media relations. More detailed information about each of these NCVRW projects is available from OVC by contacting [ovc.ncjrs.org/askovc](http://ovc.ncjrs.org/askovc).*

## **Tree Plantings/Living Memorials**

In Albany, Georgia, two weeping willow trees were dedicated by the Crime Victims' Rights Week Committee as a reminder that violence has taken and damaged lives. During the ceremony, a poem was read and "Amazing Grace" was sung to the sound of an acoustic guitar. A marble marker near the trees is inscribed, "The willow listens and weeps with the gentle whispers of hope. In memory and honor of crime victims in the Dougherty County area."

Collaboration between service providers and public agencies in Waco, Texas, resulted in the dedication of a grove of trees in honor of all crime victims. During an emotional one-hour ceremony, attended by approximately 300 people, victims and survivors of all types of crimes used a gold shovel to put dirt around the last tree within this "Grove of Hope." Victims had the opportunity to say a few words about their loved one. Seed packets of forget-me-not flowers with the date and NCVRW 2004 imprinted on it were distributed to the participants. To celebrate NCVRW in the future, victim service providers in McLennan County hope to add more trees, benches, and walkways to the grove.

## **Outreach to the Business Community**

In Sioux City, Iowa, the Council on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence collaborated with the local Community Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce, and the Employer's Council of Iowa to host a one-hour working luncheon during NCVRW entitled "When Crime Comes to Work: Recognition, Response, and Support for Victims." Each of the 45 participants, including a diverse representation of leaders from local manufacturing companies and other businesses, received a comprehensive resource package and posters to promote NCVRW. PSAs for radio and television were adapted from the NCVRW Resource Guide to promote the event, and to provide information to the public about victims' rights and services.

## **Blood Drive**

The Crime Victims' Rights Week Committee in Albany, Georgia, collaborated with the local American Red Cross to promote a blood drive, in honor of crime victims, during NCVRW. Radio PSAs and posters distributed throughout the community advertised this event.

## **Web Site Development**

In an effort to promote local NCVRW events in the city of Rochester, New York, and provide information regarding victim assistance resources in Monroe County, the Monroe County/City of Rochester Coalition for Crime Victims developed a Web site utilizing the graphics and the crime clock concept provided within the 2004 NCVRW Resource Guide. The site is located at [www.4victims.org](http://www.4victims.org) and provides telephone contact information and links to Web sites of local victim service programs.

## **Child Identification Event**

A Community Child Identification Event was hosted by the Tri-County Victims' Rights Week Committee, a coalition of 11 victim service agencies providing services in the tri-county area surrounding St. Cloud, Minnesota. With laptop computers and digital cameras from the Jacob Wetterling Foundation and with additional volunteer assistance from the Becker Women of Today Chapter and students from St. Cloud University, approximately 424 children were fingerprinted and photographed. This information, along with the

# Tips to Promote Victim and Community Awareness *(continued)*

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child's height and weight, was burned onto a CD and provided to the parents. The event was held in the Community Center's gymnasium, which was decorated with posters created by the Becker Elementary fifth grade students and banners designed using the NCVRW Resource Guide themes. The MADD–Stearns County Chapter Crash Car was parked near the entrance, and a large display booth promoted victims' rights and local service information.

## **Outreach to High School Students**

The City of Newark collaborated with the Newark, New Jersey, Board of Education to present a NCVRW event to approximately 950 sophomore, junior and senior students. The program included a performance from a teen repertory company about social and cultural issues that concern young people, such as dating issues, gang and sexual violence, robbery and theft, teenage drunk driving, parental issues, peer pressure and taking responsibility for their choices. The students received a list of agencies and telephone numbers for local victim service providers and a list of dating rights and responsibilities.

## **Small Table Tent Displays/Grocery Bag Inserts**

The NCVRW Committee in Allegan, Michigan, designed an outreach campaign to educate the community through local libraries, high schools, grocery stores, restaurants, medical clinics and emergency rooms. For example, information about NCVRW and Allegan County Victim Services was printed on over 15,000 flyers and inserted into grocery bags at small local markets and large grocery store chains. Flyers were also distributed to seven medical clinics and emergency rooms. Eight area restaurants displayed "table tents" that listed victims' rights and local resources.

## **Outreach to Local Restaurants and Bars**

Brown County Victim Services and their collaborative partners in New Ulm, Minnesota, coordinated an outreach strategy involving local restaurants and bars. Local restaurants displayed NCVRW and victim service information with table tent displays and NCVRW posters in English and Spanish. Post-it notes with tear-off information about victim services were placed in the restrooms of local bars, restaurants, and high schools within the area.

## **Victim/Survivor Public Service Posters**

The Vermont Center for Crime Victims Services in Waterbury, Vermont, utilized the support and participation of its Victim/Survivor of Crime Council to help publicize NCVRW events and plans for a memorial garden to honor victims and survivors of crime throughout the State of Vermont. They developed posters with photographs of members of the Council. Each poster highlighted a different form of victimization and read "I am your Vermont Neighbor. I am a victim of.... I invite you to support the rights of crime victims and the Memorial Garden Project."

## **NCVRW Newspaper Supplement**

In Kahoka, Missouri, the Clark County Coalition Against Domestic Violence partnered with six newspapers to develop and distribute a 24-page newspaper supplement to over 9,000 homes within a four-county region. The supplement described victims' rights and local services and included special letters and essays written by an Associate Circuit Judge, individual crime victims, students from Clark County Middle School and Clark County High School, and representatives from the faith community. Also included was a special article written by staff at the Circuit Clerk's Office that detailed the process for obtaining a protection order.

## **Outdoor Advertising**

The Sonoma County Victim Assistance Center and its collaborative partners in Santa Rosa, California, held a luncheon and a candlelight vigil in honor of NCVRW. In an effort to support crime victims and involve the entire community in the NCVRW public awareness campaign, the group distributed 200 small lawn signs, similar to those used in election campaigns, to all participants. The lawn signs were printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other, and carried the message "A Pledge to End Violence: Celebrating National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 18 – 24. For information or assistance, call (telephone number)."

## **NCVRW Billboards**

In Houston, Texas, the Justice for All Alliance received support from an outdoor advertising firm and the office of Houston Mayor Bill White to design four billboard ads highlighting the needs of and services available for specific crime victims. A total of 104 billboards were erected in the Houston - Harris County area, delivering the message "Crime Victims Have Rights" in English

# Tips to Promote Victim and Community Awareness *(continued)*

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and Spanish. Each billboard used the “crime clock” concept included in the 2004 NCVRW Resource Guide, addressed a specific type of victimization and provided a local telephone number where victims can access specific services. One hundred public officials, police department representatives, service providers and crime victims then attended a public event in Houston’s Crime Victims’ Memorial Park, where the significance of the billboard campaign was explained.

## **Art Contest**

In order to reach people within the local communities surrounding Frederick, Maryland, the Frederick County Domestic Violence Task Force asked children to draw their interpretation of the 2004 NCVRW theme by depicting how “helping people” is an American value. One drawing was selected and printed on postcards with a list of victim service and criminal justice-related resources printed on the alternate side. NCVRW posters and the postcards were distributed to community businesses and agencies prior to and during NCVRW.

## **Memorial Brick Dedication Ceremony**

Every year since 1996, the Capital District Coalition for Crime Victims’ Rights, Inc. has hosted a statewide event in Albany, New York, at the New York State Crime Victims’ Memorial, a permanent monument commemorating New York State victims and survivors of crime. This year, their closing event for NCVRW attracted approximately 250 participants. District Attorneys from surrounding counties and family members of victims read aloud the names of the 526 victims whose names are inscribed on bricks mounted within a walkway at the memorial site. In 2004, 48 new bricks were added to the walkway, and a map and index key were developed to help victims, their families and friends locate their individual brick along the path.

## **Motorcycle Run**

The Delaware Victims’ Rights Task Force and its collaborative partners hosted a “Delaware State Police Domestic Violence Awareness Bike Run.” More than 118 participants on motorcycles received a police escort on a journey through Kent County, Delaware. At the end of the event, the riders received information about domestic violence resources and listened to speeches from the Attorney General and State Police representatives. This group received assistance from the Press Secretary of the Delaware Attorney General’s

Office to help write press releases and use its media contacts to gain more coverage for the week’s events.

## **Outreach to Underserved Populations**

A collaborative effort between victim service providers and community organizations enabled communities within Minneapolis and Hennepin County, Minnesota, to host 12 events focused on building links with underserved communities. All events were organized with the input and collaboration of various community and minority groups to ensure successful outreach efforts, and events were announced in neighborhood papers, and through community and minority radio and television stations. To promote respect for diversity throughout NCVRW, information about all the events was compiled on one informational flyer using graphics provided in the NCVRW Resource Guide. Examples of some of the events include:

- *Community Walk for Peace and Non-Violence:* Included a community walk with the African American Youth Drum Team, a resource fair and a program at an African American community neighborhood community center.
- *Homicide Memorial Service Drum Ceremony:* Featured a traditional Native American Homicide Memorial with Drum and Pipe Ceremony.
- *Southeast Asian Community Council Event:* Featured presentations by a local judge and victim service provider and performances by a traditional Asian Youth Dance group.

## **Survivors’ Tree of Peace**

In Augusta, Maine, the Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center had volunteers pre-fold hundreds of origami peace cranes. Participants of their “Take Back the Night” event were encouraged to write a message or the first name of a survivor of sexual violence on a crane and hang it on the Survivors’ Tree of Peace.

## **Community Forum**

In Newark, New Jersey, the City of Newark Law Department Victim/Witness Advocacy Program hosted “An Evening with the Community: Information Panel Discussion” during NCVRW and had the community dialogue recorded for radio broadcast. The event fostered an opportunity for victims of crime and those who serve them to come together to discuss the impact of crime and victimization in Newark communities and



## Tips to Promote Victim and Community Awareness *(continued)*

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to identify and address the needs of crime victims and find ways to reduce risks of harm. The community dialogue was broadcast by Inside Essex County Radio and by an Internet radio network, [www.Live356.com](http://www.Live356.com).

### **Indian Country Initiatives**

The Blackfeet Tribe in Browning, Montana, initiated a series of events with the theme of “Victims’ Rights – Blackfeet Values.” A conference featured two full days of speakers, songs, prayers, and information about the problems of crime and how to address them within the context of traditional Blackfeet culture. Resource tables featured informational brochures from service providers, as well as child safety restraint information provided through the Indian Health Service Environmental Program. Other aspects of their NCVRW public awareness campaign featured a traditional meal and a pow-wow.

### **Collaboration With Community Service Programs for Juvenile and Adult Offenders**

The Siskiyou County Victim Services Program in Yreka, California, coordinated with the County Probation Department and provided juvenile and adult offenders an opportunity to help assemble victims’ rights ribbons and attach them to NCVRW informational pin cards as partial fulfillment of their community service obligations. During the month of April, Victim Services Program staff

distributed over 2,000 ribbon cards to community members, local agencies and service providers.

### **Engaging Correctional Agencies**

In Arizona, the Department of Corrections sponsored programming focused on victims’ issues during the weeks prior to and during NCVRW. Inmates participated in a NCVRW poster contest and submitted over 50 different posters. The winning poster was duplicated and displayed at all state prisons. The focus on victims’ rights made such an impact on the inmates that they raised over \$18,000 for the non-profit Arizona Coalition of Victim Services. Arizona inmates also built four memorials to crime victims throughout the state. In one instance, a large memorial made out of flagstone was handcrafted by inmates over several weeks and was erected in front of the County Courthouse.

### **Interfaith Agency Collaborations**

Prior to NCVRW, three victim service agencies in Everett, Washington, including Families and Friends of Violent Crime Victims, collaborated to provide educational presentations to different interfaith and civic groups in Snohomish County. Through these presentations and media publicity prior to the event, the group was able to broaden its base of support for its primary NCVRW events – a candle lighting event, a healing ceremony and resource fair at a local church.

# Tips to Promote Victim and Community Awareness *(continued)*

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## **Additional Tips to Promote the 2005 NCVRW Theme**

- Utilize this year's "25th anniversary" of NCVRW to promote "25 rights and services" available to help victims of crime in media outreach, speeches and public presentations, and public displays and visuals. For example:
  - Victim compensation
  - Victim notification
  - Victim protection and safety
  - Victim impact statements
  - Participation in justice proceedings
  - Victim restitution
  - Victim information and referrals
  - Compliance with victims' statutory rights
  - Assistance with understanding and exercising victims' rights
  - Crisis intervention
  - Needs assessments
  - Counseling
  - Safety planning
  - Court accompaniment
  - Safe and separate waiting areas
  - Provision of translators and interpreters
  - Transportation
  - Housing and relocation
  - Victim support groups
  - Employer advocacy and intervention
  - Employment and job training
  - Legal advocacy
  - Assistance in pursuing civil remedies
  - Assistance with immigration status
  - Referrals for social services
- Create a visual depiction of the "Paving the Path to Victim Justice" overview in this Guide to highlight landmarks of the past 25 years in your jurisdiction that have improved victims' rights and services. During NCVRW events and observances sponsored in your jurisdiction, prominently display the visual as a backdrop or special feature of the event.
- In advance of NCVRW, provide the theme "Justice Isn't Served Until Crime Victims Are" to allied professionals who work with victims and survivors of crime in your jurisdiction and ask them to address, "What does this theme mean to me?" With their permission, feature their responses during NCVRW events and media outreach with full attribution.
- Create a visual display for NCVRW observances of 25 pillar candles (silver, blue or white) and place a placard with each candle that designates one of the 25 rights and services for crime victims (included in this section). During the event, 25 victims and service providers can come forward, read the right or service, and light that candle to celebrate your accomplishments over the last 25 years.
- During NCVRW, present "Serving Victims, Serving Justice" awards to 25 people who have made a difference in the treatment and lives of victims of crime in your jurisdiction or community.
- Enlist elementary school children to decorate silver bells for crime victims, and present the bells to local victim programs for distribution to victims in your community as mementos of the commemoration of the Silver Anniversary of NCVRW. Another option would be to ask the children to decorate the bells with words of hope for crime victims and display the bells in a prominent way during all NCVRW events, or at some central community location such as the courthouse.
- Create a visual for NCVRW of a large "Justice Tree." Ask participants as they enter the venue or during the event itself to come forward and place a leaf on the tree, on which they have written what justice means to them, or why victim services are important.
- In honor of the 25th anniversary of NCVRW, create visuals for display during local events by creating large silver and blue cardboard or paper bells to place on the walls of the venue. On each bell, write one of the quotations included in this Resource Guide. On silver bells, write quotations that relate to justice; on blue bells, write quotations that relate to service.
- Approach the local print media in your community. Explain NCVRW and its purpose, theme and Silver Anniversary. Present the idea of a full week of opinion/editorial columns or feature articles, with each day focusing on a specific crime, how victims of that crime were treated 25 years ago and how they are treated today. Each day could be sponsored by a different victim service program or coalition (for instance, the local sexual assault center, the local domestic violence program, the local prosecutor-based program, etc.). A template for this concept, "A

## Tips to Promote Victim and Community Awareness *(continued)*

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- Crime Victim's Experience: Then and Now," is included in the "Working With the Media" section of the Resource Guide.
- Create door hangers that can be distributed to homes and businesses that either publicize NCVRW events or provide information about victims' rights and services. Templates for door hangers that can be easily printed with a desktop printer are available in most business supply or computer stores and office supply catalogues.
  - Ask local restaurants to donate 25¢ per customer to local victim assistance programs during NCVRW. Another option is to ask restaurants to "round up" each customer's check paid that day to the next dollar, and donate the funds to local victim assistance programs.
  - Create "wish lists" of donations and services needed by local victim assistance programs, and give these lists to local businesses, service organizations or jurisdictional Departments of Corrections and adult and juvenile community corrections departments. Explain NCVRW and its purpose, theme and Silver Anniversary. Request that wishes be fulfilled during 2005 NCVRW as a way of demonstrating that "Justice Isn't Served Until Crime Victims Are."
  - Ask your local churches to let their bells toll 25 times on a specific date, at a specific time.
  - A public awareness idea implemented by the Dallas County Community Supervision and Corrections Department during 2004 NCVRW was a Safety Fair at one of the local malls. Tables were set up in the middle of the mall and staffed by local victim advocacy groups to distribute brochures and inform visitors in the mall about victim services and programs. Entertainment was provided on the mall stage, as well as featured speakers discussing crime victimization. Outside the mall, numerous local law enforcement and fire departments displayed their police cars, motorcycles, DWI mobile units, emergency mobile equipment, etc. The sheriff's department did free Vehicle Identification Number etching on cars, and a unit from the Texas Department of Public Safety offered renewals of driver's licenses. Costumed volunteers, including McGruff the Crime-fighting Dog, used donated cameras to take pictures of children standing by any police or fire vehicle they chose.
  - If your community has a memorial garden for crime victims, plant flowers that resemble bells in honor of the 25th anniversary of NCVRW.
  - In early preparation for the Silver Anniversary of NCVRW, check design and craft stores during and after the holiday season for silver bells and silver ribbon to help set the stage for events and observances during NCVRW.