

National Crime Victims' Rights Week offers a unique forum to share our field's mission and the importance of victims' rights. Through this year's theme—*Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past*—we can engage the public on a number of levels. We will remember the pain caused by the 9/11 terrorist attacks on our nation ten years ago, the thousands of homicides committed every year, and countless other acts of violence. We will recall when victims had no rights and trace their struggle for equity. And we will begin to build a future that honors the successes of the past. NCVRW outreach that captures these themes will strengthen our own commitment and the public's support for our work.

The *Maximizing Communication and Awareness* section includes tools and ideas to plan activities, engage your community, and convey the meaning of National Crime Victims' Rights Week with impact. These resources can help you plan public events, write speeches and proclamations, and show why victims' rights matter to everyone.

## Commemorative Calendar

Throughout the year, communities and agencies hold events that focus on specific crimes (e.g. National Stalking Awareness Month, National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week), promote public service (e.g., National Youth Service Days, National Mentoring Month), or honor law enforcement agencies (e.g., National Peace Officers' Memorial Day, National Police Week). The Commemorative Calendar lists many of these events, the dates they will be held, and the contact information for primary sponsors. You can find ideas for events throughout 2011 on this calendar.

**OVC Events Calendar:** The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice offers an extensive, continually updated calendar of events throughout the country. Victims, victim service providers, and all NCVRW planners can use this calendar to locate victim-related events that may be occurring in your area. OVC allows organizations to add their events to the calendar and provide links to additional information. You can add and

find notices about your own conferences, training programs, meetings, ceremonies, or other events. Access the calendar at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ovccalendar>.

## Notable Quotables

Powerful quotations enrich your speeches, news releases, proclamations, and other statements. You can use the quotes from famous people in this section to bring additional shades of meaning to the NCVRW theme, *Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past*. To lay the foundation for this year's theme, for example, you might quote the American Bishop Thomas Monson, who said: "The past is behind, learn from it. The future is ahead, prepare for it. The present is here, live it."

## Sample Proclamation

When you ask civic leaders to issue NCVRW proclamations, you can increase your chances of success by providing a sample proclamation for them to follow. The sample proclamation included in this section offers governors, mayors, and other officials a model for declaring the importance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week in standard proclamation format. Officials often hold public signings of their proclamations and invite sponsoring organizations and local media to attend the event. To request a proclamation, contact your officials **at least one month** before National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

## Sample Speech


National Crime Victims' Rights Week events may include luncheons or dinners, ceremonies, and school presentations that call for a speech. You can use the sample speech to help you prepare your remarks. Think about how crime has affected your community in the past, and the effect of that crime on victims. How has your community failed its victims? What have you learned from these failures? How have you helped crime victims rebuild their lives? How will these suc-

cesses shape your plans to meet the future? National Crime Victims' Rights Week calls us to consider these questions and start tackling the work that lies ahead. Your NCVRW speeches can help begin that process.

## Extend Your Reach Through Partnerships

National Crime Victims' Rights Week presents a great opportunity to partner with other organizations to increase the impact of your NCVRW campaign. Partners can donate their equipment, staff time, mailing lists and listservs, and other resources—and engage their clients and partners in planning the week's events. Begin your planning by contacting local businesses, civic and professional organizations, school systems, faith communities, and community agencies that share your concern about public safety and crime victims. Tell them how NCVRW participation would help their organization as well as victims, and ask them to join your planning team. Then build on those partnerships to start reshaping the future for victims of crime in your community.

## Ideas For Special Events

Many communities enjoy observing NCVRW traditions, and others like to devise new event ideas every year. Planners may hold memorial ceremonies, candlelight vigils, sports events, concerts, art exhibits, or essay and poster contests to publicize National Crime Victims' Rights Week and involve a wide range of participants. Every year, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, and the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators competitively select agencies, nonprofit programs, community-based victim service organizations, faith-based organizations, and community coalitions to receive Community Awareness Grants to conduct NCVRW events. This section includes some of the event ideas from the 2010 Community Awareness Project grantees and from other communities throughout the nation. 

### Tips for Using the Theme DVD

Take a minute to review the DVD included in your Resource Guide. You can use the five-minute theme video in special event and media outreach activities.

#### *Ideas for Using the Theme DVD:*

- Use the video to begin your NCVRW opening ceremony.
- Use the 5-minute video to open a news conference on victims' rights.
- Send the video to local media as part of your pitch to cover NCVRW events.
- Plan an event around a special screening of the video.
- Encourage your partners to show the video to their staff and board members.
- Suggest that faith-based organizations use the video in their social justice outreach work.

#### *Tips for Holding Your Own Screening:*

- Choose a quiet location where your audience will be comfortable watching the video.
- Use a good DVD player, speakers, and a large monitor or screen to show the video. You can rent this equipment from an audiovisual company if you do not own your own, or you can choose a location with an in-house system (e.g., hotels, libraries, conference centers).

Remembrance events have long been a part of the national crime victims' rights movement. These occasions allow our nation to pause and honor those among us who have showed tremendous courage in the face of great suffering. And while it is important to remember those who have come before us, it is equally important to think of those who will come after us. How can we work to make our nation a more just place for victims of crime? This year, let your memorial events be about *reshaping the future and honoring the past*.

## January

### Crime Stoppers Month

Crime Stoppers International  
800-850-7574  
www.c-s-i.org

### National Mentoring Month Mentor

703-224-2200  
www.mentoring.org

### National Stalking Awareness Month

National Center for Victims of Crime  
Stalking Resource Center  
202-467-8700  
www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org

## February

### National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week

**February 7-11, 2011**  
Texas Advocacy Project  
Teen Justice Initiative  
512-225-9579  
www.texasadvocacyproject.org

## March

### National Youth Violence Prevention Week

**March 21-25, 2011**  
National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) and GuidanceChannel.com  
800-999-6884, ext. 3037  
www.violencepreventionweek.org

## April

### National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Prevent Child Abuse America  
312-663-3520  
www.preventchildabuse.org

### National Crime Victims' Rights Week

**April 10-16, 2011**  
U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime  
800-851-3420  
www.ovc.gov/ncvrw

### National Sexual Assault Awareness Month

National Sexual Violence Resource Center  
717-909-0710, 717-909-0715 (TTY)  
www.nsvrc.org

### National Youth Service Days

**April 15-17, 2011**  
Youth Service America  
202-296-2992  
www.ysa.org

## May

### National Correctional Officers' and Employee's Week

**May 1-7, 2011**  
American Correctional Association  
800-222-5646  
www.aca.org

## National Law Day

**May 1, 2011**

American Bar Association  
800-285-2221  
www.abanet.org

## National Missing Children's Day

**May 25, 2011**

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
800-843-5678  
www.missingkids.com

## National Peace Officers' Memorial Day

**May 15, 2011**

Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc.  
573-346-4911  
www.nationalcops.org

## National Police Week

**May 15-21, 2011**

Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc.  
573-346-4911  
www.nationalcops.org

## Older Americans Month

Administration on Aging  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
800-877-8339  
www.aoa.gov

## July

### National Probation, Parole, and Community Supervision Week

**July 17-23, 2011**

American Probation and Parole Association  
859-244-8203  
www.appa-net.org

## August

### National Night Out

**August 2, 2011**

National Association of Town Watch  
800-NITE-OUT  
www.nationaltownwatch.org

## September

### National Campus Safety Awareness Month

Security On Campus, Inc.  
888-251-7959  
www.securityoncampus.org

### National Day Of Remembrance For Murder Victims

**September 25, 2011**

National Organization of Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc.  
888-818-POMC  
www.pomc.org

### National Suicide Prevention Week

**September 4-10, 2011**

American Association of Suicidology  
202-237-2280  
www.suicidology.org

### National Youth Court Month

National Association of Youth Courts  
410-528-0143  
www.youthcourt.net

## October

### America's Safe Schools Week

**October 16-22, 2010**

National School Safety Center  
805-373-9977  
www.nsscl.org

**National Bullying Prevention Awareness Week**

**October 2-8, 2011**

PACER Center, National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, National Education Association, and National PTA

952-838-9000, 952-838-0190 (TTY)

[www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org](http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org)

**National Crime Prevention Month**

National Crime Prevention Council

202-466-6272

[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 For Safety**

**November 25-January 2**

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)

*Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past* applauds the power of victims and the victims' rights movement to transform lives and change the course of history. The 2011 NCVRW theme honors victims, underscoring the nation's duty to respect and support their efforts to reclaim their lives. As it calls on us to reflect on past achievements, this theme also challenges us to confront persistent shortcomings in our nation's treatment of victims. The following quotations can be integrated into speeches, announcements, news releases, and other outreach efforts during National Crime Victims' Rights Week, and throughout the year. The words of these great thinkers and leaders can inspire our communities to reshape the future and honor the past on behalf of all crime victims.

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

—*Anne Frank* (1929 – 1945)

"Fear not for the future, weep not for the past."

—*Percy Bysshe Shelley* (1792 – 1822)

"...for events are as much the parents of the future as they were the children of the past."

—*John Galsworthy* (1867 – 1933)

"The past is behind, learn from it. The future is ahead, prepare for it. The present is here, live it."

—*Thomas S. Monson* (1927 – )

"We don't accomplish anything in this world alone... and whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one's life and all the weavings of individual threads from one to another that creates something."

—*Sandra Day O'Connor* (1930 – )

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

—*Martin Luther King, Jr.* (1929 – 1968)

"Nurture your mind with great thoughts; to believe in the heroic makes heroes."

—*Benjamin Disraeli* (1804 – 1881)

"If you don't like something, change it; if you can't change it, change the way you think about it."

—*Mary Engelbreit* (1952 – )

"The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving."

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes* (1841 – 1935)

"Be an opener of doors for such as come after thee."

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1803 – 1882)

"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope or confidence."

—*Helen Keller* (1880 – 1968)

"Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present."

—*Albert Camus* (1913 – 1960)

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

—*Isaac Newton* (1643 – 1727)

"A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history."

—*Mohandas Gandhi* (1869 – 1948)

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

—*Margaret Mead* (1901 – 1978)

"Energy and persistence conquer all things."

—*Benjamin Franklin* (1706 – 1790)

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

—*Helen Keller* (1880 – 1968)

"Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage."

—*Maya Angelou* (1928 – )

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."

—*Anais Nin* (1903 – 1977)

"A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work."

—*Colin Powell* (1937 – )

“It is difficult to say what is impossible, for the dream of yesterday is the hope of today and the reality of tomorrow.”

—*Robert H. Goddard* (1882 – 1945)

“The past is a source of knowledge, and the future is a source of hope. Love of the past implies faith in the future.”

—*Stephen Ambrose* (1936 – 2002)

“An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come.”

—*Victor Hugo* (1802 – 1885)

“You can only protect your liberties in this world by protecting the other man’s freedom. You can only be free if I am free.”

—*Clarence Darrow* (1857 – 1938)

“It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.”

—*Robert F. Kennedy* (1925 – 1968)



## NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK, APRIL 10–16, 2011

- Whereas,** 20 million Americans are victims of crime each year and each crime affects many more, including families, friends and communities;
- Whereas,** crime exacts an emotional, physical, psychological, and financial toll on victims as they have lost loved ones, life savings, physical and mental health, and often their sense of security that has the potential to irrevocably change the course of their lives forever;
- Whereas,** more than 30 years of progress for crime victims stands on the shoulders of dedicated advocates and brave victims who overcame shame, isolation, and indifference to gain a voice, rights, and respect;
- Whereas,** we applaud the progress that our nation has made in recognizing crime's impact on victims and celebrate advocates and survivors who through their determination brought rights and resources for victims and have changed the course of history;
- Whereas,** victim assistance programs across the country are reaching more victims and criminal justice officials are honoring victims' rights more consistently, public understanding of victims' rights remains minimal, and our nation's victim services system remains fragmented, underfunded, and uncoordinated;
- Whereas,** more work remains to be done to address the mental health impact of crime, and to meet the needs of victims of non-violent crime, victims of terrorism, and other underserved victims;
- Whereas,** our history teaches us that, by working together, we can help victims of crime reshape their destinies and ensure that they receive the support they need, the respect they deserve, and the rights they have earned;
- Whereas,** National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 10 – 16, 2011, provides an opportunity for us to reshape the future for victims by honoring the past and reflecting on hard-won victories, and to recommit to working together to insist on better treatment for victims to help them overcome the harm caused by crime; and
- Whereas,** *(Your organization)* is joining forces with victim service programs, criminal justice officials, and concerned citizens throughout *(your City/County/Parish/State/Tribe)* and America to raise awareness of victims' rights and observe National Crime Victims' Rights Week;

**Now, therefore, I,** \_\_\_\_\_ as *(Governor/County Executive/Mayor, Other Title)* of \_\_\_\_\_ *(jurisdiction)*, do hereby proclaim the week of April 10-16, 2011, as

### National Crime Victims' Rights Week

And reaffirm this *(City/County/Parish/State/Tribe's)* commitment to respect and enforce victims' rights and address their needs during *National Crime Victims' Rights Week* and throughout the year; and

Express our appreciation for those victims and crime survivors who have turned personal tragedy into a motivating force to improve our response to victims of crime and build a more just community.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)



## Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past for Victims of Crime

Just a few months from now, we will observe the tenth anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks on our nation. Once again, families will assemble, bells will toll, victims' names will be read, and shocking images will fill our TV screens. We will remember the day that shattered our peace and shook the ground beneath us. And we will all feel closer to the victims of that monstrous crime.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which we observe this week, brings us closer to victims of all crimes. It calls us to ask how we would feel if a child were murdered or a loved one brutally attacked. To think about how our nation treats crime victims—where we have helped them and where we have fallen short. And to ask the meaning of justice—present and future—for those harmed by crime. This year's theme—*Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past*—calls us to reflect together on those questions—and then to act.

What does it mean to *honor the past* for victims of crime? It means never forgetting the impact of crime. For the families who will gather at Ground Zero, the Pentagon, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, September 11 will never end. Their loved ones were violently murdered, there is no “closure,” and there will forever be huge holes in their lives. Although a shaken nation rallied around them, we cannot repair their loss.

Honoring the past means remembering the victims of less publicized crimes. The families of the more than 15,000 homicide victims in 2009,<sup>1</sup> for example, feel the same anguish and face the same kinds of struggles as the victims of terrorist attacks. It means remembering the more than 15 million children in this nation who live in households where partner violence has occurred.<sup>2</sup> It means remembering how long our nation viewed domestic violence as a “family matter” rather than a crime. It means understanding that last year's identity theft or scam victim may spend a lifetime recovering from that loss. It means recognizing that, for the most part, victims alone bear the burden of these crimes.

Honoring the past also means celebrating more than thirty years of progress in establishing victims' rights. Until the last few decades, victims and their families were regularly excluded from courtrooms, received no notifications about court proceedings or perpetrators' whereabouts, and had few rights to speak at sentencing. Rape victims had to pay for their own forensic examinations. Victims received almost no compensation for their injuries or crime-related expenses, and—unlike the accused—had no right to a speedy trial. The criminal justice system's unresponsiveness to victims, said the chair of the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime in 1986, was “a national disgrace.”

The Task Force's scathing report, which included 68 recommendations to improve the treatment of victims, launched an era of reform. Only four years after the report was issued, 31 states had passed victims' rights laws, and 75 percent of the Task Force's recommendations had been put into effect. New laws gave victims the right to be present in court, to apply for compensation, to be heard at parole and sentencing hearings, to be notified when offenders were released, and to receive information about their rights and available services. Every state has now passed victims' rights laws, 32 states have constitutional victims' rights amendments, every state has a victim compensation program, and more than 10,000 victim assistance programs have been established throughout the country.


<sup>1</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Crime in the United States, 2009: Murder,” (Washington, DC: GPO, 2010), [http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2009/offenses/expanded\\_information/data/shrttable\\_10.html](http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2009/offenses/expanded_information/data/shrttable_10.html) (accessed September 28, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Renee MacDonald et al., “Estimating the Number of American Children Living in Partner-Violent Families,” *Journal of Family Psychology* 20, no. 1 (2006): 139, <http://smu.edu/experts/study-documents/family-violence-study-may2006.pdf> (accessed October 8, 2009). The study, published in 2006, documents the number of children living in such households in 2005.

Despite this progress, crime victims still face many challenges. Only 2 to 15 percent of crime victims access needed victim services,<sup>3</sup> such as crisis and mental health counseling, shelter, information, financial assistance, and advocacy within the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Victims' rights vary significantly from state to state and between states and the federal government. Furthermore, many victims do not know they have legal rights. Some victims are still being denied notification, compensation, and access to courts, and too few jurisdictions have set up coordinated, consistent victim response systems.<sup>4</sup> Also, the impact of the recent recession—both on donations to nonprofit victim services and on city, state, and county budgets—means that fewer victim assistance programs are available.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week calls our nation to take up these challenges—to reshape the future by facing our failures and building on the successes of the past. Although this challenge may seem overwhelming, every jurisdiction and every individual can do something to improve our response to victims of crime. We can:

- **Enforce current victims' rights laws.** Victims' rights without enforcement are meaningless. Every time a victim is denied rightful access to a courtroom, the opportunity to present a victim impact statement, or information about his or her rights, that failure affects us all. When a court fails to inform a murder victim's family about a hearing where the accused is ultimately released, the system fails the victim and undermines respect for the court. When offenders are released from federal prisons on medical furloughs without notifying victims and witnesses,<sup>5</sup> authorities endanger victims and sometimes foster more crime. Policymakers and citizens need to insist that victims' rights be enforced.
- **Reach out to underserved victims.** For a number of complex reasons, millions of crimes go unreported every year. In 2009, victims reported 49 percent of violent crimes and 40 percent of property crimes to the police.<sup>6</sup> Only about one in six cases of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation is ever reported to authorities,<sup>7</sup> and teenagers are twice as likely as adults to be victimized but much more likely than adults not to report crimes against them.<sup>8</sup> Recent immigrants, too, are more likely than other adults not to report crimes.<sup>9</sup> These numbers reflect the millions of crime victims who have no contact with the criminal justice system and no means to exercise their rights. Finding ways to reduce these numbers, through outreach by trusted community members or other means, should be an urgent local, state, and national priority.
- **Support crime victims in your community.** Although most of us do not hold public office, we all have the power to help victims of crime. Employers can help prevent workplace violence and actively protect stalking and domestic violence victims who work for them. They can give victims time off to attend court proceedings and receive needed services. Teachers, youth workers, clergy members, and health professionals can look for signs of abuse or sexual victimization in children and teenagers, and find ways to offer support. Parents and teachers can demand strong anti-bullying laws and policies, ensuring that young victims are supported and bullies receive the intervention they need. Also, we can all volunteer at victim service agencies and support them financially.

*Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past*, then, reflects the power of crime victims and their allies to change the course of history. By recalling past struggles and triumphs during National Crime Victims' Rights Week, we can face the future with hope. May we honor all victims by seeking the fullest possible justice for those harmed by crime. 

<sup>3</sup> David Finkelhor, *Childhood Victimization: Violence, Crime, and Abuse in the Lives of Young People* (New York, NY: Oxford, 2008), 110.

<sup>4</sup> International Association of Chiefs of Police, *What Do Victims Want: Effective Strategies to Achieve Justice for Victims of Crime* (Alexandria, VA, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General *Audit Division, Audit of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Furlough Program* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2010), iii. 6 Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization, 2009*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2009), 1.

<sup>7</sup> Linda Borja, "SHSU Professor Discusses Elder Abuse Statistics," SHSU News Service, May 14, 2010, <http://itemonline.com/local/x895849268/SHSU-professor-discusses-elder-abuse-statistics-issues> (accessed October 7, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> National Crime Prevention Council and National Center for Victims of Crime, *Reaching and Serving Teen Victims*, (Washington, DC: National Crime Prevention Council and National Center for Victims of Crime, 2005), 1-3.

<sup>9</sup> Hispanic News, "Fear and Distrust Keep Recent Immigrants from Reporting Crime," April 23, 2009, [http://www.hispanic9.com/fear\\_and\\_distrust\\_keep\\_hispanic\\_immigrants\\_from\\_reporting\\_crime.htm](http://www.hispanic9.com/fear_and_distrust_keep_hispanic_immigrants_from_reporting_crime.htm) (accessed October 7, 2010).

Partnerships with other organizations can boost your National Crime Victims' Rights Week planning and your power to *reshape the future* for victims of crime. Sharing resources, staff, volunteers, and outreach tools with other groups helps increase the scope and impact of your work. Your natural allies include organizations that support police and fire departments, coach children and teenagers, promote violence prevention, and work to advance public health. Start by identifying the groups you regularly work with, and then list several more that might collaborate with your organization. The following list includes the kinds of organizations that can help you plan 2011 National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

### **Partnership Opportunities**

- Allied Professionals
- Businesses and Corporations
- Civic Organizations
- Community Development Agencies
- Faith Communities
- Military Installations
- Native American Territories
- Public Agencies
- Senior-serving Agencies
- Youth-serving Agencies

## Allied Professionals

Criminal justice, healthcare, and social services professionals make excellent NCVRW partners. They know the impact of crime on victims, the services victims need, and the importance of making the most of current resources. Building your relationships with these professionals will strengthen your NCVRW planning and all your work on behalf of crime victims.

## Law Enforcement Professionals, Prosecutors, and Community Corrections Professionals

Criminal justice professionals witness the impact of crime every day, and they understand victims' needs for information,

support, and financial resources. Many police departments have victim advocates and printed materials to inform victims about their rights and the help available to them. As you plan your NCVRW activities, you can partner with criminal justice professionals to build National Crime Victims' Rights Week into their outreach. For example, during National Crime Victims' Rights Week, your police department might distribute cards listing NCVRW events and resources, along with the victim assistance information cards they already distribute. Or you could work with law enforcement to develop victim information cards to distribute to victims during National Crime Victims' Rights Week and throughout the year. You can also ask prosecutors and community corrections officers to speak at your organization's events, explaining how they honor and enforce victims' rights. Also include businesses that partner with law enforcement to enhance public safety—such as building contractors who work with law enforcement to incorporate crime prevention measures into their building plans. Invite representatives of such businesses to help plan your events, support your outreach, and display NCVRW posters in their businesses.

## Healthcare Professionals

Because they see firsthand the physical and emotional impact of crime, healthcare providers share many of the same concerns as victim assistance providers. You can partner with medical practices, medical and dental societies, nurses' associations, and physical and occupational therapists to expand awareness of victims' needs among their members and to raise awareness of victims' rights among their patients and clients. For example, medical office staff members who know about victim compensation can alert victims of violent crime about where to apply for benefits. Invite these professionals to speak at your events and to share their insights, for example, about what they are learning about victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. Ask your local hospitals to post outreach posters and banners, to host information fairs and professional forums, and to encourage their board members to support victims and victims' rights.

## Mental Health Professionals

Mental health professionals often understand crime victims' needs. You might identify local mental healthcare professionals who have done outstanding work with victims, and seek their advice on how to partner effectively with their colleagues. You can work with your community mental health associations to educate their members about local services available for victims. Share your knowledge about safety planning, victim compensation, and other services their patients and clients might need. Organize community coalitions of counselors, teachers, school administrators, and parents to prevent crime and help victims, and invite mental health professionals to contribute their expertise. Include these professionals in planning your NCVRW events, and invite them to support your outreach through their professional publications and communications networks.

## Businesses and Corporations

Crime hurts businesses. One news report of a shopping center mugging, for example, can reduce business for months. So businesses and corporations strongly promote public safety, and they want the public to know about their efforts. You might research local businesses and professional associations that work with the police or schools. Ask them to share in your NCVRW planning, and encourage them to offer resources, tools, advertising and marketing skills, and sites to display posters, banners, and other NCVRW outreach materials. Feature your business partnerships in your publications, and invite their representatives to speak at your events.

## Chambers of Commerce

Contact your local chamber of commerce and Better Business Bureau, and suggest setting up a partnership to sponsor National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Invite them to support your NCVRW observance and to establish long-term partnerships with your organization. Ask how they identify trends and adapt their long-term business plans, and see if they might help you apply such knowledge to reshape the future for local victims of crime. If your community holds an

NCVRW ceremony, honor the Chamber of Commerce and other business leaders who supported your local events.

## Visitors' and Convention Bureaus

Visitors' and convention bureaus make great NCVRW partners because of their vital interest in public safety. Contact these agencies, explain the purpose of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, and update them on crime victim resources in your community. Invite them and their member businesses to join your NCVRW outreach campaigns by working on the planning committee and distributing public education materials—such as palm cards with crime prevention and victim assistance tips, lists of resources, such as the National Center for Victims of Crime's National Crime Victim Helpline (1-800-FYI-CALL) and Web site ([www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org)), or the Office for Victims of Crime Web site ([www.crimevictims.gov](http://www.crimevictims.gov)), that help visitors protect themselves and find help after being victimized. Recognize and publicize the contributions of these organizations in your outreach materials and at your events.

## Civic Organizations

Civic organizations have millions of members who actively support their communities nationwide. Potential NCVRW partners include service organizations such as Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary Clubs; city and county advisory commissions; schools and universities; parent-teacher organizations; professional retirees' groups; neighborhood associations and crime watch groups; senior centers; and other organizations. Work with these groups to plan and host events, broadcast NCVRW announcements, distribute resource materials, and enlist their members as NCVRW event volunteers. Groups representing underserved communities (e.g., ethnic minorities, seniors, victims with disabilities), in particular, may need information about crime victims' rights and services. Contact these groups and ask if they can provide volunteers, translators (if appropriate), and guidance on how to involve their members and communities in National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

## Community Development Agencies

City and county governments often have community development agencies whose mission is to enhance area quality of life and prepare for the future through land use planning, neighborhood improvement, environmental management, and other strategies. Because their work usually includes expanding affordable housing and revitalizing neighborhoods, they have strong ties to businesses, social service agencies, and political leaders in communities where crime may be higher than average. Contact your community development agency director or meet with agency staff, and ask them to suggest potential partners for National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

## Faith Communities

Faith communities want to protect their members and their communities from crime and to help those who are victimized. Churches, synagogues, mosques, and denomination-related service organizations make great NCVRW partners because they have the respect of their members and communities. Make a list of local faith communities, and invite them to help plan your NCVRW activities. Ask for their views on how crime affects their members and what kinds of information they need most. Faith communities can provide event speakers and volunteers, as well as extensive outreach through their member bulletins and other communications mechanisms, especially if they have their own public relations, special events, or bilingual staffs. Ask for their suggestions, and honor their contributions to National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

## Military Installations

Victims of crime on military installations, which experience high levels of certain types of crime,<sup>10</sup> need to know their rights and what services are available to them, both on military bases and in the surrounding communities. For

example, as military services are in the process of improving their responses to sexual and domestic violence, victims need to know how military law handles such crimes and where victims can go for help. By partnering with communications offices at military installations, which often have substantial outreach resources, you can help provide much-needed information to victims on and around military bases.

## Native American Territories

Because the nation's more than 500 Indian tribes experience unusually high levels of crime,<sup>11</sup> victims in Indian territories need information and support, and Native American jurisdictions need resources to support their victim populations. By working with Native American territories and groups that represent them, you can raise awareness about crime in Indian country and reach an underserved population that is disproportionately affected by crime.

## Public Agencies

City and county government agencies—such as government regional centers, libraries, agencies for youth and seniors, commissions for women, and ethnic community liaison offices—can promote National Crime Victims' Rights Week and educate the public about crime victims' rights and victim services. Invite some of the following local agencies to serve as NCVRW partners:

### Libraries

Public libraries can display posters and brochures, assemble multimedia displays on crime victim assistance, host forums and exhibits, and offer meeting space to plan and hold local NCVRW events. As part of their local government communications networks, they can share NCVRW information with the entire city or county staff.

<sup>10</sup> Bruce Watson, "High Crimes: Military Towns among the Nation's Most Dangerous," Daily Finance, November 16, 2009, <http://www.dailyfinance.com/story/mostdangerous-military-towns/19235164> (accessed October 4, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics, "American Indians and Crime," (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2004), <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/aic02.pdf>. (accessed November 9, 2010).

## Minority Liaison Offices

Many cities, counties, and states have minority liaison staffs for various ethnic communities. These offices have strong ties to political leaders and civic organizations within these communities, and they understand the impact of crime on specific populations. They usually have access to recent immigrants, who may be particularly vulnerable to crime yet fearful of interacting with the criminal justice system. Ethnic liaison offices can help alert their communities about crime prevention, victims' rights, and how to seek help if they are victimized.

## Public Officials

Many NCVRW ceremonies begin with speeches, proclamations, and announcements from public officials, who lend authority, prestige, and support to these events. When you start your NCVRW planning, do some research on local officials who have helped crime victims. Contact the offices of your mayor, city council members, or state and federal legislators, commend them for their work for victims, and ask for their advice, endorsement, and participation in National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Publicly honor their contributions, and ask them to support intra-governmental collaboration to support victims throughout the year.

## Regional Centers

Some jurisdictions have regional centers where health and food assistance services, recreation departments, and other community offices are located. Posting NCVRW event and resource information at such sites, in several languages, can promote awareness of crime victims' rights and of NCVRW events.

## Schools


Working with schools helps you reach children, parents, teachers, administrators, and entire neighborhoods. Schools can hold NCVRW assemblies; art, banner, poster, and essay

contests; and NCVRW exhibitions. High school and middle school students can research how crime affects their age group and then produce their own NCVRW outreach campaigns—using school art and drama departments and multimedia studios—to publicize the week. Schools can also host assemblies, films, debates, forums, and plays on issues selected by students, and schools may offer community service credits to students who help plan and present NCVRW events.

## Senior-Serving Agencies

Senior-serving agencies support an underserved population that is particularly vulnerable to many types of crime (e.g., elder abuse, fraud, scams). Senior centers, adult protective services, area agencies on aging, university elder-education programs, and consumer protection agencies in your city, county, or state can collaborate on outreach to seniors on crime prevention and victim services. Civic-minded senior volunteers can also volunteer their time, talent, and energy to staff events and spread the word about National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

## Youth-Serving Organizations

Organizations that serve youth have a great stake in the success of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Young people are more likely than any other age group to be victimized, and they need information about recognizing crimes, exercising their rights, and how and where to seek help. Potential NCVRW partners include the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, youth sports organizations, the YMCA and YWCA, Camp Fire USA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, International Order of Rainbow for Girls, the Boys' and Girls' Clubs of America, Junior Achievement, DeMolay International, and faith-based youth organizations throughout the nation. Parent-teacher organizations, police youth leagues, and other organizations can organize and present NCVRW awareness programs for youth, parents, and communities. 

Special events bring National Crime Victims' Rights Week to life in your community. Whether you hold a memorial ceremony, an arts festival, an information fair, a sports event, or a slogan-writing contest, your local events rally your community's support for crime victims' rights. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), in conjunction with the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators (NAVAA), supports such events through its Community Awareness

### National Crime Victims' Rights Week Special Events

- Art Exhibits
- Butterfly Release
- Candlelight Vigils/Observances
- Clothesline Projects
- Commemorative Displays
  - Commemorative Quilts
  - Empty Shoes Display
  - Memorial Displays
  - Silhouette Displays
- Concerts
- Denim Day
- Dramatic Presentations
- Educational Forums
- Grocery Store Campaigns
- Information and Resource Fairs
- Initiative Announcements
- Media Outreach
- Mock Trials
- Rallies
- Theater Advertisements
- Tree Plantings
- Walk/Run for Victims' Rights
- Youth Events
  - Anti-Violence Events
  - Art, Poetry, and Essay Contests
  - Poster Contests
  - Reading Projects

Projects initiative. OVC selects jurisdictions throughout the United States to receive partial funding for their NCVRW activities. Selection criteria include collaboration, innovation, community impact, media involvement, and experience with victims' issues. You can use the following list of 2010 events, which includes brief summaries of past Community Awareness Projects and other initiatives, to plan your own activities

### Art Exhibit

Art powerfully expresses the disruption, anguish, and pain caused by crime. In Des Moines, Iowa, the Iowa Cold Cases group held an Art Remembrance Exposition honoring individuals from Iowa cold case files. The exposition, titled "If I Met You Today," aimed to tell the rest of each victim's story, "had that been possible," to "give substance to lost hopes and dreams ...and to remember and honor a life ended prematurely by crime." The art, by junior and high school students, was displayed on the Cold Cases Group Web site and at the State Capitol, and the Iowa Public Safety Building in Des Moines, and then presented to the victims' families by the students at the concluding ceremony in Fort Dodge, Iowa. In Minneapolis, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs, held its seventh annual Art of Recovery display of works by crime victims. In Manchester, New Hampshire, YMCA's NCVRW events included a survivor art and poetry night, and in Yonkers, New York, Victims Assistance Services, Westchester Community Opportunity Program, held its fourth annual Survivors' Arts Show. Also in Shawano, Wisconsin, the nIc (nurturing, integrity, compassion) Foundation presented its "Building Character through Art" gallery show, featuring the work of 60 K-12 students.

### Butterfly Release

Butterflies are rich in symbolism. Depending on the culture, they may represent the soul, transformation, change, love, rebirth, or freedom. Butterfly releases during National Crime Victims' Rights Week often commemorate victims and evoke compassion for those who suffer. In Canton, Georgia, the Cherokee County Domestic Violence Task Force held a butterfly release in conjunction with its NCVRW ceremonies.

## Candlelight Vigils/Observances

Candlelight vigils honor and commemorate victims and evoke reverence and hope. In Washington, DC, the National Observance and Candlelight Ceremony will be held on Thursday, April 7, 2011. In hundreds of communities throughout the nation, local NCVRW observances begin with candlelight vigils, and may include speeches, proclamations, musical presentations, and a wide range of other activities. You can invite political and other community leaders to officiate at your ceremony and local media to cover the event.

## Clothesline Projects

Displays of T-shirts painted by domestic violence or homicide victims bear witness to the painful toll of these crimes. In San Bernardino, California, 2010 NCVRW ceremonies included a clothesline display of T-shirts commemorating murder victims. New Hampshire's observances included a clothesline display at the State House, sponsored by the AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program, and Alachua, Florida, displayed a clothesline project in honor of domestic violence victims.

## Commemorative Displays

Communities display commemorative quilts, memorial walls, and other visual tributes to honor victims and convey the devastating impact of crime.

## Commemorative Quilts

During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, many communities display quilts made by victims or supporters to remember victims and convey the impact of crime. The Dickinson, Texas, Citizens Police Academy Alumni Foundation displayed a "No More Tears" quilt made of handkerchiefs from community groups and crime victims. The Nevada Coalition Against Sexual Violence, Reno, displayed Victims' Memorial Quilts in government agencies, and the Salt Lake City Corporation Police Department Victim Advocate Program presented a survivors' quilt at several public locations during the week.

## Empty Shoes Display

NCVRW events often include displays of empty shoes representing victims. In Prescott, Arizona, the Yavapai County Attorney General's office displayed shoes representing the victims who have walked through the county courthouse doors during the previous year. Harris County, Texas, presented a "Shoes without Soles" display representing victims who took the "involuntary and unwanted path" through the local criminal justice system, and at a candlelight vigil in Rancho Cucamonga, California, some survivors brought shoes once worn by their murdered loved ones.

## Memorial Displays

H.A.V.E.N. Family Resource Center, Inc., Lake Havasu City, Arizona, displayed Victim Memorial Boards at a local park, and Montgomery County Sexual Assault Support Services of Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson, Inc., Amsterdam, New York, installed a memorial stone in honor of victims on the grounds of the courthouse. In Evanston, Indiana, victims' photos and names were placed on a memorial tree, and the 4th Judicial District Attorney's Office in Monroe, Louisiana, placed a memorial bench for victims next to the veterans' memorial in the courthouse square.

## Silhouette Displays

Silhouette displays bear silent witness to lives forever changed by crime. In Columbus, Ohio, a Silhouette Memorial was displayed in the lobby of the Franklin County Courthouse to represent community members impacted by crime, and Lenoir, North Carolina, displayed life-sized black wood silhouettes signifying local victims. Each silhouette was painted black and was attached to a shield with the name and story of a victim. Silent Witness silhouettes were also displayed at the opening NCVRW event held by the Office of the Attorney General in Hagatna, Guam.

## Concerts

In Austin, Texas, Crime Victims First concluded National Crime Victims' Rights Week with its highly successful "Jam 4



Justice” benefit concert to increase awareness about crime victims’ rights and enforcement.

## Denim Day

NCVROW events in Hutchison, Kansas, included a Denim Day, sponsored by the Reno County District Attorney’s Office, in which employees of local banks and government agencies wore denim. Denim days, a response to a 1999 Italian court ruling that blamed a victim for a sexual assault, aim to raise awareness and protest destructive attitudes about sexual assault.

## Dramatic Presentations

In Kansas City, Missouri, the Jackson County Family Court’s observance of National Crime Victims Rights Week included a play, “Expressions of Life,” in which victims and youth actors dramatized the effect of violence on their community. The play was also presented in area schools during National Crime Victims’ Right Week.

## Educational Forums

Victim service organizations often hold forums and conferences during National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. Boise State University in Idaho held a four-day seminar on crime victims’ rights, and the governor of Kansas held the state’s 13th Annual Crime Victims’ Rights Conference in Topeka. Arizona State University and the Arizona Attorney General’s Office held a victim impact panel forum, and in Durham, North Carolina, the Victim/Witness Services Unit of the police department held a forum on observing victims’ rights. In Prestonburg, Kentucky, the Big Sandy Council on Elder Maltreatment held a conference titled “Elder Abuse 101: Raising Awareness,” which was open to the public. The Navajo County, Arizona, County Attorney’s Office hosted a one-day conference on victims’ rights for first responders, nonprofit agencies, public entities, and the general public. Dial Help, Inc., of Houghton, Michigan, presented an online forum titled “Victims of Crime Web Chat: Fostering Fairness, Dignity, and Respect.” And the Vermont Center for

Crime Victim Services, Waterbury, held a symposium at the State House with key decision makers to identify priorities and strategies for advancing victims’ rights in Vermont.

## Grocery Store Campaigns

Grocery bags and other advertising in grocery stores (flyers, posters) offer a great vehicle to reach a broad audience that regularly shops for groceries. You can use ads (often in several languages) on grocery bags and inserts, as well as in store windows and on grocery carts, to alert many different communities about NCVROW messages and activities. An awareness campaign by the Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Lenoir, North Carolina, included NCVROW messages imprinted on grocery bags, and the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, Waterbury, Vermont, advertised National Crime Victims’ Rights Week with grocery store handouts and imprinted grocery bags.

## Information and Resource Fairs

Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office Victim Assistance Program in Colorado held a resource fair where more than 20 community resource agencies displayed their information. An information fair presented by Pillsbury United Communities, Brian Coyle Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, targeted Somali, Oromo, Korean, and other East African and Asian nationalities. Participants included an estimated 35 organizations and 100 community members who distributed resource guides on crime-related issues and services. And at a resource fair in Enid, Oklahoma, sponsored by the YMCA and the Garfield County Domestic Violence Task Force, community agencies staffed information booths and distributed T-shirts and bags of information on crime prevention and victims’ rights.

## Initiative Announcements

Political leaders and institutions often choose to unveil initiatives during National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. In Arizona, the attorney general announced the “Bravery Project, For Our Eyes—Community Cohesion: Bonds, Bridges,

and Barriers”—a joint project with Arizona State University, which helps victims break the silence by volunteering to share their accounts through a unique portrait process that tells their story. Montana introduced the “Hope Card,” to be carried by anyone with a permanent order of protection, with personal information about those protected, including children.

## Media Outreach

Communities devise unique and varied NCVRW media campaigns. Media outreach by the Coryell County Crime Victims’ Office, Gatesville, Texas, included NCVRW announcements in church bulletins and through radio, television, and print media; distributing NCVRW awareness buttons and ribbons; and the tolling of church bells each day at noon during the week. The YWCA of Greater Los Angeles, California, distributed culturally adapted and translated flyers and materials to various communities, as well as mirrors, pens, and magnets imprinted with the local crisis hotline number. The Delaware Victims’ Rights Task Force, Wilmington, campaign included print media, advertising on the statewide bus system, billboards, radio PSAs, and newspaper advertisements. In Melbourne, Florida, the South Brevard Women Center’s NCVRW media campaign aired spots on local radio and cable television featuring the voices of victims from different communities, telling their own stories and providing information about victims’ rights. Safe and Fear-Free Environment, Inc., Dillingham, Alaska, sponsored a PSA-writing contest; the best entries were aired on the radio and cable access channel and printed in the newspaper.

## Mock Trials

In observance of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week and Sexual Assault Awareness Month, St. Clair Community College and its partner organizations in Port Huron, Michigan, hosted a mock trial to raise awareness about date rape and date rape myths.

## Rallies

NCVRW activities often include rallies to honor victims, spotlight specific crimes, or create enthusiasm for National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. Family Resources, Inc., Moline, Illinois, held a Take Back the Night rally with a speaker, T-shirts, and giveaways. The “Let the Light Shine In” community march held by Safe and Fear-Free Environment, Inc., (which assists adult and child victims of physical and sexual violence) in Dillingham, Alaska, ended with a rally and bonfire. In Phoenix, the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office took part in a victims’ rights rally at the state capitol.

## Theater Advertisements

NCVRW theater “infomercials” and advertisements aired by civic-minded local theaters can increase the impact of your NCVRW campaigns. Outreach by Medina County Domestic & Sexual Violence Task Force, Akron, Ohio, included cinema theater ads on domestic violence and sexual assault that were aired at 28 local theaters. New Horizon Crisis Center, Marshall, Minnesota, launched an NCVRW theater advertising campaign on victims’ rights that continued for a full year, for a total of 11,800 airings.

## Tree Plantings

Many communities plant trees and flowers to honor and commemorate victims, and to celebrate the renewal of life, even in the midst of tragedy. In Ohio, the Attorney General’s Office supported statewide NCVRW ceremonies that included tree plantings, and the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole presented its Voice for Victims awards to victim advocates in ceremonies that included tree plantings.

NCVRW events in Knoxville, Tennessee, included memorial tree plantings, and each year in Oswego County, New York, a different community is chosen to host a tree-planting ceremony in honor of victims of crime. In Reno County, Kansas, shrubs were planted around the “Justice Tree” in memory of homicide victims.

## Walk/Run For Victims' Rights

Many communities hold NCVRW walk/run events or memorial walks to boost participation and community engagement in the week's activities. Such events in 2010 included the Courage Walk in Jefferson County, Colorado; a 5K/1 Mile Fun Run/Walk in Colorado Springs; the North Carolina Victim Assistance Network Memory Walk in Raleigh, North Carolina; and the Victims' Race against Crime and Violence in St. Croix, Virgin Islands. Events at Calvary Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, concluded with a "Walk for Victims' Rights" and an educational/information expo. The Esperanza Shelter for Battered Families, Inc., Santa Fe, New Mexico, held a "Walk a Mile in My Shoes" march, starting at the state capitol and ending at the Santa Fe railyard.

## Youth Events

### Anti-Violence Events

The Mental Health America of Licking County, Newark, Ohio, which runs a violence prevention and youth asset-building program called PAVE, held "Peacemakers' Showcase," an event showcasing teen-created anti-violence messages through interactive displays and poetry. In Wisconsin, the Shawano nIc (nurturing, integrity, compassion) Foundation worked with youth via the schools and 4-H groups to create NCVRW promotional votive candles with the attached message "light a candle for all victims of crime" and "wishing seeds/dust" with the attached message "making your own wish for peace." The project conducted storytelling crime prevention lessons at local schools and at a library and held a candle-lighting ceremony in the rural community of Clintonville.

## Art, Poetry, and Essay Contests

By involving schools, parents, and students, NCVRW contests inform entire communities about what it means to be a victim of crime. Victim Services of Cullman, Inc., Cullman, Alabama, held a poem and song contest for 6th to 8th graders and an essay contest for 9th to 12th graders; the top students for each contest showcased their work at "The Slam," an event during National Crime Victims' Rights Week. The District Attorney's Office in Staten Island, New York, conveyed victim-related information to non-English-speaking immigrant residents through a student art and poetry contest held for their English-speaking school age children.

### Poster Contests

In Colorado, the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office Victim Assistance Program held a poster contest with area high school students and honored the winners at an awards ceremony during National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Events hosted by the Cherokee County Domestic Violence Task Force, Canton, Georgia, along with MADD and the Georgia Court-Appointed Special Advocates for Children, included an art poster campaign in conjunction with the community art program with local school children. The Mental Health America of Licking County, Newark, Ohio, sponsored a student poster contest addressing diversity and victimization.

### Reading Projects

The County of Isabella Prosecutor's Office, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, conducted a reading project with second graders, titled "Hands Are for Holding and Helping, Not Hitting and Hurting," to address domestic violence. 