

National Crime Victims' Rights Week offers a great opportunity to inform the public about the history and goals of the victims' rights movement. This year's theme—"Extending the Vision: Reaching Every Victim"—evokes our hopes for the future and a "vision" most people know little about. By working with the media, you can increase concern for crime victims and support for advancing their rights.

## REACHING OUT TO THE MEDIA

Traditional media—television, radio, and newspapers—can reach a massive audience. By working with reporters, producers, and editors throughout the year, you can boost the impact of your NCVRW awareness activities and other outreach efforts. If you don't have regular contact with the media, now is a great time to start. You might check your local newspapers and watch local news to find out who covers crime and the criminal justice system. Make a list of these reporters, and regularly update that list.

You can build your list through Internet research—checking media Web sites (e.g., [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) or [www.nbcwashington.com](http://www.nbcwashington.com)) or doing Google or Yahoo searches for "crime reporter" or "justice reporter" and your area. Or simply check the phone book and call the media outlet to ask who covers crime. Libraries can provide further information through media directories such as *Bacon's Media Directory* (published by Cision) and the Vocus online directory ([www.vocus.com](http://www.vocus.com)) that list the latest information about producers and reporters who cover crime. Then at a time when reporters are not on deadline (usually in the morning), you can call them, introduce yourself, and tell them what you think might interest them about your work.

If your agency is holding a newsworthy event, alert your local reporters by phone or an e-mailed media alert. Offer yourself as a resource, especially when you have human interest stories they may want to write about. Do you know a resilient victim who has helped change laws or helped other victims overcome crime-related obstacles? Let local report-

ers know. If reporters contact you, respond immediately, providing them with the information and resources they need. The next time they want to write a crime- or justice-related article, they will remember you.

## USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Don't forget about the power of social media to grow your audience. You can find out if there are bloggers in your area who write about crime. Common blog search engines include Technorati ([www.technorati.com](http://www.technorati.com)), Google blog search ([www.google.com/blogsearch](http://www.google.com/blogsearch)), and Blog Search Engine ([www.blogsearchengine.com](http://www.blogsearchengine.com)). If you find a blog about an issue affecting your area, you can leave a compliment or informational comment, with a link to your Web site, and see how people respond. If you use Facebook and Twitter, you can also post items about events or issues you want to publicize. Your Facebook friends and Twitter followers will share the information with their communities, who often include reporters, producers, and editors looking for stories and feature items. You can also follow reporters on Twitter and Facebook to see what issues particularly interest them.

## SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

You can use the sample news release in this section to help write your own NCVRW releases. The sample release announces National Crime Victims' Rights Week, explains the theme, quotes an official, and urges your local audience to help observe the week. If your event honors victims, advocates, or allied professionals—or focuses on specific crimes—be sure to send your releases and advisories to organizations that represent those groups or interests.

Send out your NCVRW release at **least 10 days** before your event. You can use that lead time to follow up with reporters and partner organizations, find spokespersons, answer questions, and create your fact sheets and media kits to have available at the event. Be sure that your media kits include information on your organization, your leadership, and your work on issues that may interest local reporters.

## MEDIA ADVISORIES

You can use media advisories to alert reporters about newsworthy events they might want to attend during National Crime Victims' Rights Week. E-mail these advisories to your media list, and ask your partners to do the same. Media advisories list the “who,” “what,” “when,” “why,” and “where” of the event. After you have sent them out, call the local reporters you think are most influential, and make strategic follow-up calls to local television producers about your event. Before sending out a media advisory, make sure you have assembled information about National Crime Victims' Rights Week, your organization, and your event that you can share quickly with reporters, partners, and your organization's constituents.

## FACT SHEETS

Fact sheets are a key component of media kits, which are information packets that organizations prepare for press conferences and other media events. Media kits typically include background information on the organization's mission and history, bios of organization leaders, past press coverage, press releases related to the purpose of the event, and fact sheets about the issue that is the focus of the event, as well as contact information for media staff. An NCVRW fact sheet might include information about the victims' rights movement, the vision of its founders, the decades-long struggle for rights and services for victims, and the current state of victims' rights. It may also include information about your organization, its history, and the services you offer. The *2012 NCVRW Resource Guide* includes a wealth of information you can draw on in preparing your fact sheets: “Section 5: Landmarks in the History of Victims' Rights and Services” and the “Section 6: Statistical Overviews,” which present snapshots of the latest studies on 21 crime topics. In preparing your fact sheets, check the latest crime trends in your area, and arrange the information accordingly. Are gangs a problem in your community? Then focus on crimes against youth. Reporters appreciate you doing the groundwork for them, and these efforts may generate inquiries and publicity for your organization.

## SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Many media outlets offer free air time for public service announcements (PSAs) to publicize events of interest to the community. Radio stations, in particular, may have significant amounts of time to fill and may be receptive to a request to air your NCVRW PSA. This section includes three sample scripts—for a 15-second, 30-second, and 60-second PSA—on National Crime Victims' Rights Week. You can create your own PSA spot or work with your local stations to produce an announcement about National Crime Victims' Rights Week and your organization's contributions to the community. Be sure to include your organization's name, phone number, and Web site address in your public service announcement so that viewers and listeners can contact you. To increase the likelihood that your local media will air your PSA, contact them *at least two months* before National Crime Victims' Rights Week (early February, at the latest). Talk to the producer, explain why the week is so important, and mention that you have already prepared PSAs about the week. When you send your script or PSA to your local reporters or television stations, include a cover letter with your contact information and the reasons why National Crime Victims' Rights Week is important for your community.

## NEW! LETTER TO THE EDITOR

By writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, you can increase awareness about National Crime Victims' Rights Week. You can use one of two approaches in preparing your letter. First, letters to the editor usually react to recent articles or editorials in the publication. You can scan your newspaper for recent articles about crimes and local crime trends, and then write a letter showing how these crimes relate to the purpose of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Or you can ask your local district attorney or other law enforcement official to write a letter explaining the importance of the observance. Some local newspapers print such letters as a public service and a courtesy to the officials.

## SAMPLE OP-ED COLUMN

Publishing an opinion piece (op-ed) in a newspaper can also help inform your community about the importance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Choose a topic that generates interest and concern in your community. Has a home repair scam artist stolen money from older home owners, or have fraudulent work-at-home schemes caused even more hardship for unemployed local residents? Have local students been badly hurt by bullying? Or have gangs increased crime and fear in your community? By exploring the goals of National Crime Victims' Rights Week within the context of your community, you can build awareness and support for the observance.

## SOCIAL MEDIA STATUS UPDATES

You can post the status updates included in this section on your Facebook page or send them out as tweets on Twitter. Each status update is a brief point of information related to victimization, crime, or National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Because they are all 140 characters or fewer, you do not need to edit them to send them out on Twitter. You can also write your own status updates, particularly to alert your audience about your local events.

## OTHER OUTREACH TIPS

- ♦ Contact editors, producers, or station managers by phone, e-mail, or mail **two months in advance** of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.
- ♦ Recruit experts and spokespersons from your organization or community to be available to answer reporters' questions or to give speeches during National Crime Victims' Rights Week and throughout the year.
- ♦ Find issues that might interest local media, and if you know victims who are ready and willing to speak to the media about the impact of crime on them, ask them to be available during National Crime Victims' Rights Week.
- ♦ Ask your local officials to issue NCVRW proclamations, speak at your events, and send a letter to the editor of your local paper about National Crime

Victims' Rights Week. Thank them for their contributions, and publicize them in your news release and outreach materials.

- ♦ After your NCVRW events, send high-quality video<sup>1</sup> or high-resolution digital images<sup>2</sup> to your local television stations or newspapers (with your contact information and cell phone number, if possible). Then if they need to fill a few minutes on their broadcasts or in their news pages, they can use your video or photos. ♦

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- 1 Check with your local station for their requirements, which vary widely, depending on the station's equipment.
  - 2 Digital images should have a minimum of 300 pixels per inch. For example, if the image is to be printed 2 x 3 inches, then your digital image has to be a minimum of 600 x 900 pixels. Note that it is possible to "downsize" digital photos but not enlarge them. So when in doubt, inquire about your media outlet's requirements—or send a larger image.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[Date]

**CONTACT:** [Name/Title/Agency]

[Phone number]

[E-mail]

## **[Your City] Advocates “Extending the Vision: Reaching Every Victim” 2012 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week**

[City/State]—April 22, 2012, begins National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, a time to honor crime victims and our nation’s progress in advancing their rights. This year’s theme—*Extending the Vision: Reaching Every Victim*—celebrates the vision behind that progress and the ideal of serving all victims of crime.

The vision that launched the victims’ rights movement emerged more than 30 years ago. Then—as now—crime victims endured physical and emotional wounds, costly financial burdens, an often hostile criminal justice system, and an alarming public tendency to blame them for the crimes against them. Victims were often excluded from courtrooms, disrespected by officials, and afforded few rights. They began organizing to confront these challenges and to promote fair, compassionate, and respectful responses to victims of crime.

Since the 1980s, the nation has made dramatic progress in securing rights, protections, and services for victims of crime. Every state has enacted victims’ rights laws, and 32 states have constitutional victims’ rights amendments. All states have victim compensation funds, and more than 10,000 victim service agencies have been established throughout the country. The Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice, supports a range of programs for crime victims, and seeks to extend those services to those who are underserved.

Yet there is still so much to do. Victims’ rights are not universal and are often not enforced. Only a fraction of victims receive crime victim compensation, which is usually limited to victims of violent crime. More than 50 percent of crimes are not reported, and fewer than 20 percent of victims receive needed services. The victim services system is fragmented and uncoordinated, and agencies are struggling to keep their doors open in the face of budget cuts.

Yet victim advocates have not lost their resolve. “Our commitment to ‘extend the vision’ and ‘reach every victim’ will overcome every challenge that confronts us now,” said Joye E. Frost, Acting Director, Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice. “The vision, determination, and passion for justice that inspired our history will help us transform the future for every victim of crime.”

National Crime Victims’ Rights Week will begin in Washington, DC, at the Department of Justice’s annual Attorney General’s National Crime Victims’ Service Awards Ceremony, April 20, 2012, to honor outstanding individuals and programs that serve victims of crime. [City, County, State] will observe National Crime Victims’ Rights week with special events and programs from April 22–April 28. These activities will include [list examples and attach a summary of main events to the news release].

Each community can encourage its members to participate in the week’s events and find ways to help victims of crime. For additional information about National Crime Victims’ Rights Week and how to help victims in your community, please contact [agency/organization] at [area code/telephone number], or visit [agency’s Web site] at [Web site address]. For more ideas on how to volunteer, visit the Office for Victims of Crime Web site, [www.crimevictims.gov](http://www.crimevictims.gov). ♦

## 15-SECOND PSA

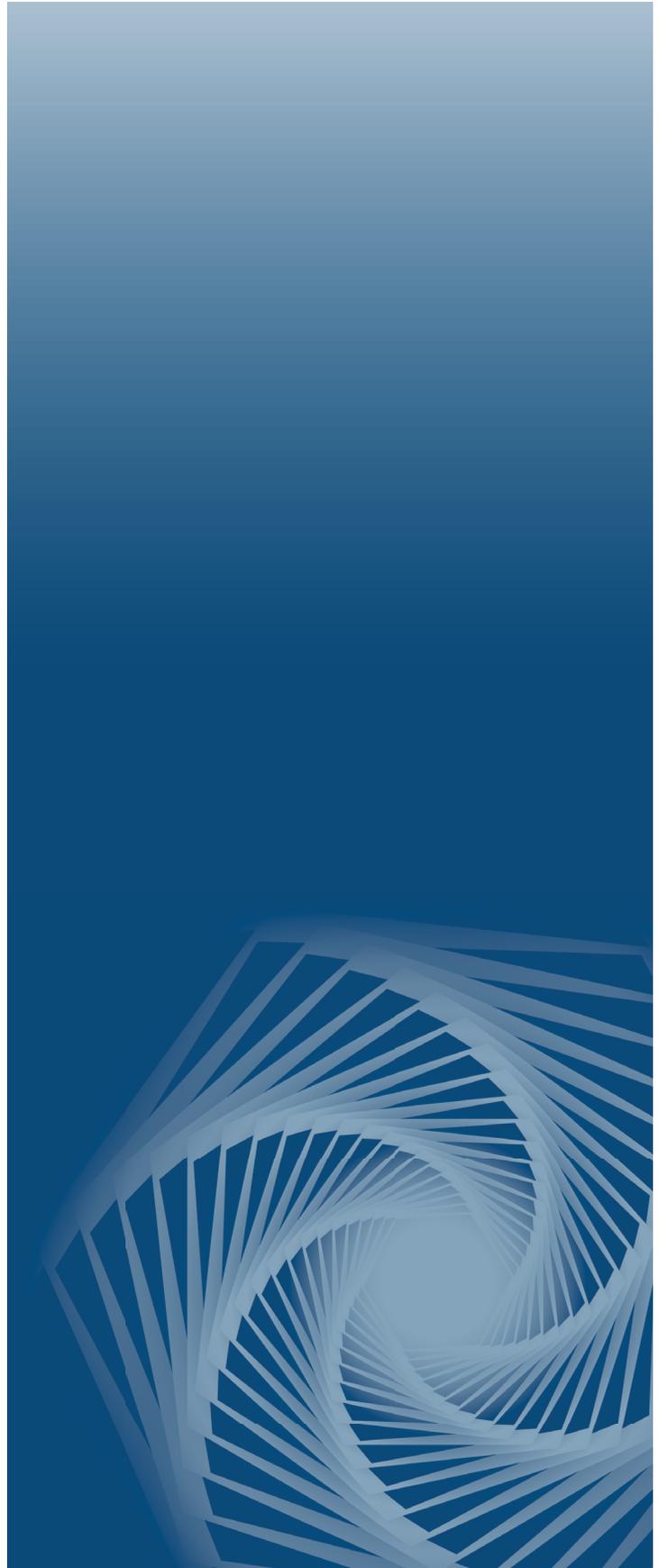
Every year, millions of innocent people become victims of crime. They deserve our understanding, compassion, and respect. This is National Crime Victims' Rights Week, a time to reach out to victims and help them rebuild their lives. To find out what you can do, call [agency name, number, URL] or visit [www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org).

## 30-SECOND PSA

Every year, millions of innocent people become victims of crime. They deserve our understanding, compassion, and respect. April 22–28 is National Crime Victims' Rights Week, a time to reach out to victims and help them rebuild their lives. Last year, there were almost 19 million crimes in our country. All of those victims need our support. To find out what you can do, call [agency name, number, URL] or visit [www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org).

## 60-SECOND PSA

Every year, millions of innocent people become victims of crime. They deserve our understanding, compassion, and respect. April 22–28 is National Crime Victims' Rights Week, a time to reach out to victims and help them rebuild their lives. Last year, there were almost 19 million crimes in our country. All of those victims need our support. And you can help. You can volunteer at a shelter, donate to a victim service agency, or attend a National Crime Victims' Rights Week event. To find out more, call [agency name, number, URL] or visit [www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org). ♦



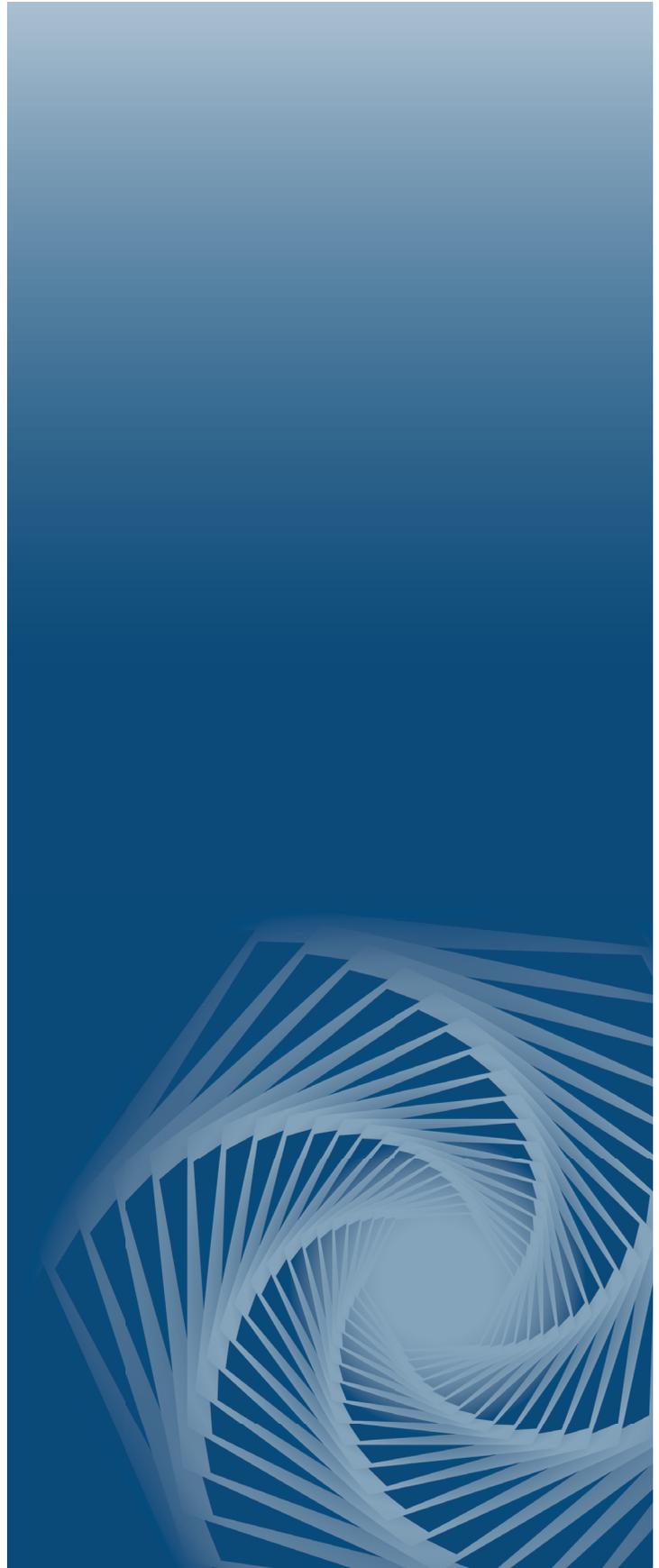
## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor usually respond to a previous article in a printed periodical (e.g., newspaper, magazine). The goal is to persuade the public to accept the letter writer's viewpoint on a specific subject. Your letter might mention a recent article about a crime in your community and show how the impact of this crime demonstrates the importance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. The following sample letter compliments the newspaper for a recent feature article (fictitiously published on 03/08/2012) on a crime victim whose struggles show the importance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

Another approach you can use is to ask a local law enforcement official (e.g., the district attorney or state attorney general) to write a letter to the editor about the importance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. You can write a draft letter for the official's staff, using language from the news release in this section. Newspapers sometimes print such letters as a public service and a courtesy to the official.

Before you write your letter, check your newspaper's submission guidelines. Newspapers often limit letters to 250 to 300 words. Keep your letter short and concise—usually two or three brief paragraphs. Start by stating your viewpoint, include a few sentences to support your argument, and conclude with a summary. When you submit the letter, include your full contact information (name, address, e-mail address, and phone numbers) so the newspaper can contact you if they decide to print your letter.

Most newspapers receive far more letters than they can print. If your newspaper doesn't print your letter, you might consider submitting it to a blog or organizational newsletter. ♦



03/15/2012

“Five Years Later” Struck a Chord

I appreciated your thoughtful feature, “Five Years Later,” (03/08/2012) about the impact of a sexual assault on “Susan,” a local victim. You captured both the horror of the crime and the courage that sustained her throughout a long recovery.

To those of us who work with sexual assault survivors, Susan’s story was sadly familiar. The shocking crime, the intrusiveness of the crime-reporting and forensic examination processes, the shame, the fear, and the sense that life will “never be the same”—all are common to the victims we serve. Susan’s fear that the offender would be released without her knowledge, her conflicts with her employer about taking time to go to court, her problems in paying her medical and counseling bills, and her need for help in devising a safety plan are typical challenges for sexual assault (and other crime) victims. Because crime imposes great burdens on many victims, they need our respect and support.

That is why it’s so appropriate that our nation takes one week, National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, to reflect on our responsibilities to crime victims. During this week (held April 22–28 this year), we ask how well our state victim notification and compensation programs are working, whether a victim’s right to take leave to attend court proceedings is being enforced, and whether safety planning help is readily available. The answers to such questions tell us how well we are doing for victims—and how far we have to go.

Your feature portrayed the plight of crime victims and showed why—as long as there are survivors like Susan—we should take National Crime Victims’ Rights Week very seriously.

Your Name, Title

Your City Rape Crisis Center

Your City, Your State ◆



# HOW TO WRITE AN OP-ED

Crime attracts attention, but victims often do not. Television crime programs, local news, and the criminal justice system tend to focus on the crime and the offender—not the victim. Our job is to change that—to convince others that the millions of crimes committed in this country every year affect each of us. By writing an opinion piece for your local newspaper, you can persuade your community that the effort to reach and serve every victim helps everyone.

## WHAT ARE OP-EDS?

Op-eds are persuasive essays, written by newspaper columnists or outside contributors, that seek to convince readers to accept a specific viewpoint on a timely issue. Op-eds often appear directly opposite the newspaper's editorial page, and they draw a large readership. By writing an op-ed for your local newspaper or community organization newsletter, you can show that crime victims' rights are everyone's rights. Your op-ed can “*extend the vision*” by showing why “*reaching every victim*,” will improve life in your community.

## WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE OP-ED?

Effective op-eds grab readers' attention, provide new information, and generate excitement about a topic that is in the news. Op-eds should be clearly written by someone who understands an issue that your community cares about. Controversial topics make excellent op-ed pieces, and timing is everything. Don't wait even a few days after a great news story to submit your op-ed because by the time the newspaper receives it, your topic may be old news. Your op-ed can also make news by raising an important topic not yet covered by the media. Perhaps your agency has noticed a spike in cases of child abuse or financial fraud. You can write an op-ed suggesting a course of action to prevent or address such crimes. You can also link your op-ed to a specific event (e.g., Women's History Month, Black History Month) or time of year (e.g., the back-to-school or holiday season).

## WHAT SHOULD YOU WRITE ABOUT?

What crimes have the greatest impact on your community? Have sexual assaults against women increased? Have

emergency rooms seen more abused children or battered women? Has cyber-bullying increased in local schools? By regularly checking your local newspapers and watching news broadcasts, you can find a topic to write about for National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

## WHAT MESSAGE WILL YOU CHOOSE?

Your op-ed will amplify the “vision” underscored by this year's theme. The public needs to “see” crime victims—not ignore them because they fear being victimized themselves. They need to understand the impact of the almost 19 million crimes that were committed in 2010. Many of those victims need medical help, counseling, and funds to recoup their financial losses. Your op-ed may focus on rights (e.g., to notification, to make an impact statement, or to be present in court); services (e.g., counseling or protective services for child abuse victims), or policies and laws (e.g., the importance of changing the statute of limitations on child sexual abuse). Your central message may be that your town needs better laws, services, or policies because a particular crime (e.g., violence against children) has a devastating impact on the lives of many victims.

## HOW TO WRITE THE OP-ED

- ♦ **Write a memorable opening:**  
*Example:* “The child's screams and her father's curses echoed down the apartment corridor. The little girl's father was ‘disciplining’ his daughter again.”
- ♦ **State your central argument in the first or second paragraph:**  
*Example:* “The more we learn about the impact of violence against children, the greater our responsibility to do something about it.”
- ♦ **Link your op-ed to National Crime Victims' Right Week:**  
*Example:* “April 22–28 is National Crime Victims' Rights Week, a time to renew our commitment to the most vulnerable victims of crime.”

- ♦ **Back up your main argument with two or three points:**

*Examples:*

- » Violence against children is widespread.<sup>3</sup>
- » Children exposed to even one type of violence are at far greater risk of experiencing other types of violence.<sup>4</sup>
- » We must respond immediately to violence against children and take steps to keep it from recurring.<sup>5</sup>

- ♦ **Support your statements with facts, statistics, and quotes:**

*Examples:*

- » More than 60 percent of children surveyed have been exposed to violence within the past year, either directly or indirectly.<sup>6</sup>
- » “Child abuse casts a shadow the length of a lifetime.”—Father Herbert A. Ward<sup>7</sup>
- » Experts have found effective therapies for violence-related trauma.<sup>8</sup>

- ♦ **Write a memorable finish that recaps the NCVRW theme:**

*Example:* “By striving to reach every young victim of violence, we can realize the vision that inspired National Crime Victims’ Rights Week.”

## STYLE TIPS

- ♦ Choose short words, and write brief sentences and paragraphs.
- ♦ Limit your op-ed to 750 words (check your newspaper’s publication guidelines).
- ♦ Choose active verbs (e.g., “A neighbor *sexually abused* the child” rather than “the child *was sexually abused* by a neighbor”).
- ♦ Use a personal, conversational tone.
- ♦ Avoid clichés (e.g., “better safe than sorry,” “big as life,” “as luck would have it”) and unfamiliar abbreviations (e.g., SAMHSA rather than the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration).

## HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR OP-ED

- ♦ **Guidelines:** Check your newspaper’s guidelines on length, deadlines, method of submission (e-mail, fax, or mail) and other requirements (usually available on the newspaper’s Web site).
- ♦ **Approval:** If you are writing on behalf of an organization or including your organizational title in your submission, have the op-ed approved by your organization’s management.
- ♦ **Contact information:** Include your name, address, title, phone number, and your organization’s Web site URL.
- ♦ **Cover letter:** Include your contact information in a brief cover letter that explains the purpose of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week and why your issue is important. ♦

3 David Finkelhor et al., *Children’s Exposure to Violence: A Comprehensive National Survey*, (Washington, DC: Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, 2009), 1, [www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/227744.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/227744.pdf) (accessed November 4, 2011).

4 David Finkelhor et al., *Polyvictimization: Children’s Exposure to Multiple Types of Violence, Crime, and Abuse*, (Washington, DC: Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, 2011), <http://www.ojjdp.gov/publications/PubAbstract.asp?pubi=257485> (accessed November 4, 2011).

5 STRYVE, “Why Prevention Must Be a Priority,” [http://www.safeyouth.gov/Pages/Prevention\\_Priority.aspx](http://www.safeyouth.gov/Pages/Prevention_Priority.aspx) (accessed November 4, 2011).

6 Finkelhor, *Children’s Exposure to Violence*, 1.

7 Father Herbert A. Ward served as director of the St. Jude’s Ranch for Children in Nevada from 1970 to 2000.

8 The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, “Treatments that Work,” <http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers/treatments-that-work> (accessed November 4, 2011).

## Victimized Children Need Our Help

“Please help—my mommy is dead,” screamed the six-year-old as he pounded on a neighbor’s door. “Please let us in!” The boy and his three-year-old brother had just watched their mother being beaten to death by her boyfriend, who fled on foot as the children ran for help. This murder, culminating months of intimate partner abuse, left the children without a mother and vulnerable to lifelong emotional damage.

Until recently, too little was known about the numbers of children exposed to such violence. But this nightmarish scene from 2010 in Gulfport, Mississippi, is a symptom of a disturbing national trend. Children’s exposure to violence is “common”; most children (60 percent) surveyed in a recent study (the *National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence*) had been exposed to violence in their daily lives during the past year, and more than 1 in 10 reported 5 or more exposures. In the year preceding the study, 1 in 20 children had witnessed someone being shot, 1 in 200 witnessed a murder, and 1 in 50 was sexually assaulted.

Even more ominously, exposure to one form of violence may make a child more vulnerable to other forms. A child who was physically assaulted in the previous year, for example, would be five times as likely also to have been sexually victimized and more than four times as likely to have been maltreated during that period. Nearly two-thirds of directly victimized children reported more than one type of victimization, and more than 10 percent of children had been exposed to five or more forms of violence (e.g., physical assault, sexual abuse, witnessing family or community violence) during the previous year. These numbing figures represent what experts call polyvictimization, one of the most serious threats to the future of our nation’s children.

The impact of multiple victimizations is devastating. Over the course of their lifetimes, these children are more likely than other child victims to experience illness, accidents, family unemployment, substance abuse, and mental illness. Multiple-crime victims show higher levels of distress, including anxiety, depression, anger, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Experts believe that many of these children experience victimization not as a single event but as a chronic condition that can overwhelm their lives. They live in a constant state of siege.

William Kellibrew, IV, of Washington, DC, was one of those children. At age six, he was sexually assaulted by a neighbor, and at age 10, he witnessed his mother and brother being murdered by his mother’s ex-boyfriend in the family’s living room. The next day, he watched his grandfather shoot a neighbor in a dispute over a parking place. “I slipped into a downward spiral,” said Kellibrew. “My life became chaos, and I didn’t want to live. Although my grandmother tried to take care of us, she couldn’t protect me from the pain going on inside my head.”

Yet William escaped an early death through a series of opportunities (e.g., joining a performance group at Howard University) and choices (e.g., deciding to seek counseling, to earn a GED, and go to college so his grandmother would not have to worry about him). Several years ago, the William Kellibrew Foundation to help other at-risk kids was founded in his name. “Our goal is to reach troubled young people *before* they go through what I did,” says Kellibrew.

“Early intervention is key,” said Kellibrew. “We have to identify these children, reach out to them immediately after they are victimized, and get them the interventions that can save their lives. And fortunately, thanks to Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr’s Safe Start and Defending Childhood Initiatives, our nation is starting to do just that.”

From 2000–2006, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded 11 demonstration sites nationwide to create a comprehensive service delivery system for children exposed to violence and their families. With the knowledge gained from these projects, OJJDP funded 15 more demonstration sites in 2005 and 8 “Promising Approaches II” sites in 2010. These projects—and the Defending Childhood Initiative to prevent violence and mitigate its effects—are building a nationwide effort to protect victimized youth.

As these projects are building knowledge and capacity, every community should use National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, April 22–28, to start planning how to reach the most vulnerable children in their midst. Because children in homes with domestic violence are particularly vulnerable to polyvictimization, communities should vigilantly enforce their domestic violence laws. They can mobilize their youth-serving agencies to apply Safe Start approaches and to collaborate to reach more children. They can publicize the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-4-A-CHILD) and teach adults to respond when they suspect child abuse. And they can build a better world by standing up to violence—one child at a time. ♦

Below is a list of suggested status updates for you to share with your online audience. Every day in April, you can choose a different message to use on Facebook or Twitter or as announcements on other social media sites.

- ♦ *April 1, 2012:* National Crime Victims' Rights Week is April 22-28, 2012. Learn more about the national and local impact of crime at <http://ovc.gov/ncvrw>.
- ♦ *April 2, 2012:* Looking for ways to observe 2012 NCVRW in your community? Check out previous NCVRW community awareness projects at <http://www.navaa.org/cap>.
- ♦ *April 3, 2012:* The entire *2012 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide* is now downloadable for free at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ncvrw2012>.
- ♦ *April 4, 2012:* In 2010, U.S. residents 12 and older experienced 18.7 million crimes—1.4 million fewer than in 2009. Find out more at <http://bit.ly/qaqbWi>.<sup>9</sup>
- ♦ *April 5, 2012:* April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Find out more at [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org).
- ♦ *April 6, 2012:* In two years, 1.8 million U.S. households replaced their computers because of spyware infections. Visit <http://bit.ly/vWWGGD>.
- ♦ *April 7, 2012:* How do crime victims react to trauma? Find out more at <http://bit.ly/gT9ARR>.
- ♦ *April 8, 2012:* Are you or is someone you know a victim of crime? Find useful information in the 2012 NCVRW Resource Guide at [www.ovc.gov/ncvrw2012](http://www.ovc.gov/ncvrw2012).
- ♦ *April 9, 2012:* Need a video for your 2012 National Crime Victims' Rights Week event? Download the 2012 NCVRW theme video at [www.ovc.gov/ncvrw2012](http://www.ovc.gov/ncvrw2012).
- ♦ *April 10, 2012:* Want to know more about how to protect yourself from fraud and scams? Visit the National Consumers League at [www.nclnet.org](http://www.nclnet.org).
- ♦ *April 11, 2012:* Did you know the rate of total violent crime victimizations declined by 13% in 2010? Find more recent crime trends at <http://bit.ly/s9tRT5>.
- ♦ *April 12, 2012:* Want to find out how to reach the Crime Victim Compensation program in your state? Visit <http://www.nacvcb.org/index.asp?sid=5>.
- ♦ *April 13, 2012:* Want to see an artistic presentation of victims' stories? Visit "Feats of Feet" at [www.featsoffeet.com](http://www.featsoffeet.com).
- ♦ *April 14, 2012:* The 18<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect is April 16–20 in Washington, DC. Visit <http://www.pal-tech.com/web/OCAN/> for more information.
- ♦ *April 15, 2012:* In 1994, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act to combat sexual assault, domestic violence, and other crimes.
- ♦ *April 16, 2012:* Did you know that about 50% of all violent victimizations and nearly 40% of property crimes were reported in 2010? Visit <http://bit.ly/tZ5fPo> for more information.
- ♦ *April 17, 2012:* Don't miss the 2012 National Conference of the National Center for Victims of Crime. For more info, visit <http://bit.ly/tsmFv2>.
- ♦ *April 18, 2012:* As technology improves, victims find more ways to safeguard their identities and finances. Visit [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov).
- ♦ *April 19, 2012:* If you have suffered physical or financial victimization, you can find help to rebuild your life. Learn more at [www.nacvcb.org](http://www.nacvcb.org).
- ♦ *April 20, 2011:* Do you know the warning signs of child sexual abuse? Find out more at [www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org).

9 Bit.ly is an online URL-shortening service that condenses and abbreviates URLs into a code that includes "bit.ly" and a computer-generated assignment of letters.

## SOCIAL MEDIA STATUS UPDATES

- ♦ *April 21, 2012:* Stalking is a crime in all 50 states, DC, U.S. Territories, and under federal law. Visit <http://bit.ly/d3SHuf> for more on stalking laws.
- ♦ *April 22, 2012:* Today marks the start of 2012 National Crime Victims' Rights Week, *Extending the Vision. Reaching Every Victim*. Visit [www.ovc.gov/ncvrw](http://www.ovc.gov/ncvrw).
- ♦ *April 23, 2012:* How much do you know about stalking? Test your knowledge at <http://stalkingawarenessmonth.org/quiz>.
- ♦ *April 24, 2012:* How do your taxes help support crime victim restitution? To find out, visit [www.ovc.gov/about/victimfund.html](http://www.ovc.gov/about/victimfund.html).
- ♦ *April 25, 2012:* Of children under 17, 60.6 % experienced at least one direct or indirect victimization in a year. See <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/227744.pdf>.
- ♦ *April 26, 2012:* Crime can be particularly devastating to older persons. Find out more at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/topic.aspx?topicid=63>.
- ♦ *April 27, 2012:* An extensive, searchable database of federal, state, and tribal victim laws is available at [www.victimlaw.info](http://www.victimlaw.info).
- ♦ *April 28, 2012:* As 2012 NCVRW comes to end, find out how you can continue helping victims throughout the year by visiting [www.crimevictims.gov](http://www.crimevictims.gov).
- ♦ *April 29, 2012:* Learn about community victim assistance-related events or add your own conference or training opportunity. Visit <http://bit.ly/tKEx4B>.
- ♦ *April 30, 2012:* Want to know more about how DNA forensic science affects crime victims? Visit <http://bit.ly/ulP4dS>. ♦

