



**CREATIVE IDEAS
FOR
INSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS
AGENCIES
TO
PARTNER WITH CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE
ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES
TO PROMOTE
2016 NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

CO-SPONSORED BY:

**American Correctional Association Victims and Restorative Justice Committee
American Probation and Parole Association Victim Issues Committee
Association of Paroling Authorities International, Victims Committee
National Association of Victim Assistance in Corrections
National Institute of Corrections,
Network of Post-Conviction Victim Service Providers**

Introduction and Overview

The professions of institutional and community corrections have a long-standing commitment to crime victims and survivors and those who serve them.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) was first proclaimed by President Ronald Reagan in 1981. The time-honored tradition of NCVRW seeks to educate people in America about the rights and needs of victims and survivors of crime, and promote their rights and the myriad services available to assist them.

From the creation of Victims Committees at ACA (1987), APPA (1991), and APAI (1992) and the establishment of the National Association of Victim Assistance in Corrections (NAVAC, formerly known as NAVSPIC) and the National Institute of Corrections Network of Post-Conviction Victim Service Providers, the field of corrections has recognized the importance of enforcing victims' rights in the post-sentencing phases of their cases, and providing services and support to the victims and survivors of the offenders whom they detain and supervise.

This document marks the first time that the leading national correctional agencies and organizations and their respective victim/survivor-related Committees have joined together on a project that we hope will enhance and promote corrections-based victim services. Outreach to our respective members contributed to these creative ideas about how correctional agencies can partner with victim assistance organizations to promote 2016 NCVRW in six categories:

1. Correctional clients' fundraising for victim services
2. Victim/survivor awareness and programming
3. Correctional staff education
4. Direct victim and community support
5. Educational programs
6. Media relations and public awareness

If you have any questions about the ideas and resources included in this document, please email Anne Seymour at annesey@atlantech.net.

2016 National Crime Victims' Rights Week

2016 NCVRW is scheduled for April 10-16, 2016. The theme for NCVRW is *"Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope."*

THEME COLORS: Medium Blue and Dark Gold

2016 NCVRW VIDEO AND ARTWORK AVAILABLE AT <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ncvrw/index.html>

FOR FREE NCVRW RESOURCES, VISIT

https://puborder.ncjrs.gov/Listservs/Subscribe_NCVRW.asp

Correctional Clients' Fundraising for Victim Services

People who are incarcerated or supervised on probation or parole host events and activities that raise money to support designated victim assistance programs in their communities.

Restorative Justice Offender Councils are responsible for hosting fundraisers. Items available for purchase include pizzas, chicken wings, headphones, ice cream, brownies (i.e., items they cannot normally get in canteen). Eighty percent of the proceeds are then donated to a crime victim service organization in Minnesota. The remaining 20 percent is transferred to a centralized account managed by the DOC RJ Lead Coordinator at Central Office. The funds are used to support victims in restorative justice practices (VOD, VOCARE). Additionally, funds in this account can also be used to provide victims and facilitators with small stipends for speaking engagements and victim impact programming. Offenders must complete a voucher with their account information in order to purchase items in the fundraiser. Beginning in 2016, all vouchers will include a space for offenders to make an additional straight donation on top of the price of the items they ordered.

Offender musical groups/bands put on a concert and sell tickets with the proceeds going to local victim service agencies.

Talent shows are hosted with ticket sales donated to victim service programs.

Food and coffee sales are available for inmates to purchase, with food donated by community-based restaurants, coffee houses and food kitchens

Silent auction offers inmate-made hobby items for staff purchase

Inmate art projects are sold to the public and staff

Sponsorship of and participation in fun runs:

- Encourage participants to register and find sponsors
- Invite local activists, elected officials and musicians to speak or perform at the run
- Can include victim and advocate speakers at the beginning and end of the event
- Can focus on health and wellness for all

Sponsorship of a "New Beginnings" Flower Garden, where staff and inmates can purchase paper flowers (with their name on them) for \$1.00 to be displayed on the windows within an institution; \$5.00 donations get a different-colored flower

Monetary donations are accepted from inmates to benefit a victim services agency or program (such as PAWS program for domestic violence victims fleeing their homes with pets in Pennsylvania)

Youthful offenders sponsor a car wash, with proceeds going to a local domestic violence shelter or children's advocacy center

Adult and juvenile probationers sponsor a coat drive for domestic violence shelters/programs

Victim/Survivor Awareness and Programming

Activities and programs are sponsored to help raise awareness of the impact of crime on victims and their families, offenders' families, and communities.

Sponsorship of a "Make the Chain" Campaign, where participants summarize their involvement in crime into one sentence which is written on to a slip of colored paper:

- The many slips are combined into a colorful chain
- The chain is displayed at NCVRW events within correctional agencies and the community

Crime victims and survivors share their stories with inmates and discuss the impact of crime on them, which is followed by an introspection circle of inmates using restorative justice practices to discuss what they heard, what they learned, what was impactful, and what was challenging.

Sponsorship of "Color Days" during NCVRW that recognize and honor specific victim/survivor populations:

- Purple for domestic violence
- Blue for child abuse
- Teal for sexual assault
- White for victims of terrorism
- (*Whichever color*) is featured in each year's NCVRW artwork and theme (blue or deep gold for 2016 NCVRW)

Sponsorship of an Apology Bank letter-writing symposium

Offenders are invited to workshops to learn more about writing letters of apology to the people they harmed.

Hosting a "Day of Responsibility" during NCVRW for inmates that focuses on accountability to victims, their own families and their communities

Sponsorship of a Clothesline Project with t-shirts created by crime victims that depict their personal experience as survivors

Implementation of victim awareness classes for adult and juvenile inmates/detainees and probationers that reflect the NCVRW theme

Sponsorship of conferencing circles that focus on victim-related issues and concerns, and the NCVRW theme

Creation of a “pinwheel garden” to support victim awareness and crime prevention (particularly child abuse prevention):

- Focus on the “cycle of violence”
- Coordinate with Child Abuse Prevention Month (also in April) partners

Sponsorship of drama, spoken word and choral performances that address different types of victimization:

- Performers design and hold a sign over their faces to symbolize “voiceless,” “faceless” and “right-less” victims

Sponsorship of art or poster/essay contests, poetry contests or poetry slams that focus on the NCVRW theme:

- “Judges” representing corrections, criminal/juvenile justice and victim assistance agencies and organizations
- “Winning” selections displayed in visiting rooms, classrooms and/or staff rooms
- Certificates of Appreciation provided to *all* participants, and Certificates of Awards provided to winners

A panel of parolees and victims/survivors speak to troubled youth (i.e., second chance schools or juvenile justice detainees) about the impact of crime on their victims’ lives and their own lives, and the impact of making wrong decisions

Corrections agencies’ staff members participate in NCVRW public and victim awareness events and activities:

- Co-sponsor events
- Sponsor a booth or table with information about their agency and relevant victim services
- Provide a proclamation to recognize NCVRW from corrections agencies

Use of the “Notable Quotables” included in the OVC NCVRW Resource Guide for inmate/probationer education and awareness:

- Relate to the NCVRW theme
- Relate to the crimes/delinquent acts committed and their impact on victims and communities

Display the NCVRW theme poster, educational posters and state/local crime statistics in correctional agencies:

- Entry hallways
- Chapels/multi-faith rooms
- Classrooms
- Staff break rooms

Sponsorship of a designated “moment of silence” for correctional staff and those whom they supervise to recognize and honor victims and survivors, and those who serve them

An inmate presents a reading that he wrote about his offense and the impact on his victim, himself, their families and the community

Development of a “pledge” about victim awareness and offender accountability that inmates and probationers can sign:

- This can be combined with additional victim awareness programming
- The signed pledges can be present to victim awareness program speakers (victims and survivors) to validate their experiences and willingness to participate in “impact of crime” programs

Hosting a NCVRW-specific program that focuses on the importance of victim restitution as a tenet of offender accountability and helping the victim recover pecuniary losses resulting from their crimes:

- Financial impact of crime on victims (often devastating)
- How offenders can fulfill their restitution obligations
- Sponsorship of budgeting classes in community corrections agencies

The NCVRW theme DVD and other victim awareness-related DVDs are shown on correctional institutions’ in-house channels

- During the afternoon, evening counts and during block out
- For staff training

Providing inmates with the “history of crime victim services” (included each year in the OVC NCVRW Resource Guide), and have some give presentations about the history and accomplishments of the field

Inmate/probationer artists create coloring books for children that focus on the NCVRW theme

Sponsorship of a bulletin board competition with artwork, poetry or other visual arts, which can be related to the NCVRW theme

Any agency/institution tours conducted during NCVRW include an overview of the NCVRW theme, and the agency’s efforts to promote victims’ rights and services

Correctional Staff Education

Educational forums are sponsored about victimization issues that are directly relevant to correctional staff to promote greater awareness and sensitivity.

Sponsorship of a staff training program that focuses on the differences between batterer intervention programs and anger management programs

Sponsorship of a staff training program about workplace violence and staff victimization, including prevention and response

Holding meetings with local district attorneys (or other justice officials) and promote victims' rights and the right to notification and participation throughout institution and community corrections

Victims and survivors share their personal experiences with staff, and reflect on the role of corrections in justice and offender accountability

Providing staff presentations on PREA and their important role in preventing sexual violence

Direct Victim and Community Support

Activities are hosted that provide correctional clients and staff with the opportunity to support crime victims and those who serve them through a restorative justice framework.

Collaboration with state coalitions against domestic violence and sexual assault to identify needs that can be addressed through community service projects or correctional staff voluntarism

Staff collection of toiletries to donate to domestic violence shelters and programs

Restorative community service activities (can include information about the corrections/victim service partnership to promote NCVRW, and victims' rights and services within a state):

- Inmates plant a garden and donate all food to the community food bank or domestic violence shelter
- Inmates knit and crochet various items for hospitals, shelters, or children's advocacy centers
- Inmates repair donated bikes for children in the community
- Inmates or probationers affix NCVRW commemorative ribbons to ribbon cards (artwork included in the OVC NCVRW Resource Guide); this activity can be accompanied by a victim awareness presentation by a survivor or advocate while ribbons are being affixed to the pin cards

- Inmates make wooden toys, rocking horses, cradles and puzzles for children’s advocacy centers and domestic violence shelters
- Corrections staff and probationers volunteer for “Habitat for Humanity” to build homes for domestic violence survivors and their children
- Probationers build lockers for domestic violence shelters’ clients, and their supervising agencies donate locks for the lockers
- Probationers help build memorials and monuments to honor victims, often at state capitols or county court houses
- Inmates make quilts that are donated to domestic violence shelters, or to victim assistance organizations for fundraising auctions
- Staff and clients donate books and teddy bears to be provided to child abuse victims

Educational Programs

Standardized educational programs for correctional clients incorporate NCVRW resources and the annual theme.

“Impact of Crime on Victims” programs focus for one week on the NCVRW theme

Sponsorship of psycho-educational classes and debriefing in victim issues

Sponsorship of essay writing contests for clients that focus on the NCVRW theme

Creation of a specialized focus on PREA education and awareness for inmates and probationers:

- DVDs
- Agency policies
- How to report sexual assaults
- Resources for victim assistance

Media Relations and Public Awareness

Traditional and social media outreach and other public awareness activities promote the unique partnership between correctional agencies and victim assistance programs.

Development of public service announcements (video/print/web) that highlight victims’ positive experience with the criminal justice and corrections systems, and formerly incarcerated persons speaking about their experiences and accountability

Inclusion of support from correctional agencies in all NCVRW state and local proclamations commemorating the week

Sponsorship of a social media campaign that promotes the corrections/victim services partnership:

- #Corrections4Victim Services
- Descriptions of correctional agencies' community service projects that benefit victims and survivors on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)

Co-sponsorship of information/community fairs about victims' rights and services, crime prevention, and corrections-based victim services, in the community:

- Health screenings
- Information about crime prevention
- Information for youth about bullying, alcohol and other drugs, etc.

Victim service agencies and organizations honor correctional agencies for their efforts that benefit crime victims; and correctional agencies honor survivors and advocates that participate in correctional agencies' programming, with media outreach to recognize efforts

In support of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women and its [Clothesline Project](#), offenders at Minnesota Correctional Facility- Stillwater created a shirt in honor of a woman killed by her intimate partner in 2015. The shirt is now a part of the 2015 Clothesline Project, a visual memorial of the "cost" of domestic violence. Here is a link to the national site: <http://www.clotheslineproject.org/>.

Sponsorship of an agency ceremony or tribute to staff who were killed in the line of duty.