Teen Action TOOLKIT

Building a Youth-led Response to Teen Victimization

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THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR Victims of Crime

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR
Victims of Crime

Founded in 1985, the National Center for Victims of Crime is the nation's leading resource and advocacy organization for victims of crime. Our mission is to forge a national commitment to help victims of crime rebuild their lives. Through collaboration with local, state, and federal partners, the National Center:

- Provides **direct services and resources** to victims of violent and non-violent crime across the country;
- Advocates for federal, state, and local laws and public policies that create **resources**, secure **rights**, and provide **protections** for crime victims;
- Delivers **training and technical assistance** to victim service organizations, counselors, attorneys, criminal justice agencies, and allied professionals serving victims of crime; and
- Fosters **cutting-edge thinking** about the impact of crime and the ways each of us can help victims of crime rebuild their lives.

In 2001, the National Center launched its **Teen Victim Initiative** in response to the high levels of victimization among teens and the lack of services specifically for teens. The Teen Victim Initiative builds the capacity of victim service providers to serve teen victims and urges the youth services community to consider victimization among the many risk factors impeding youth's healthy development through:

- Training
- Technical assistance
- Research
- Publications
- Public awareness
- Youth-led demonstration projects

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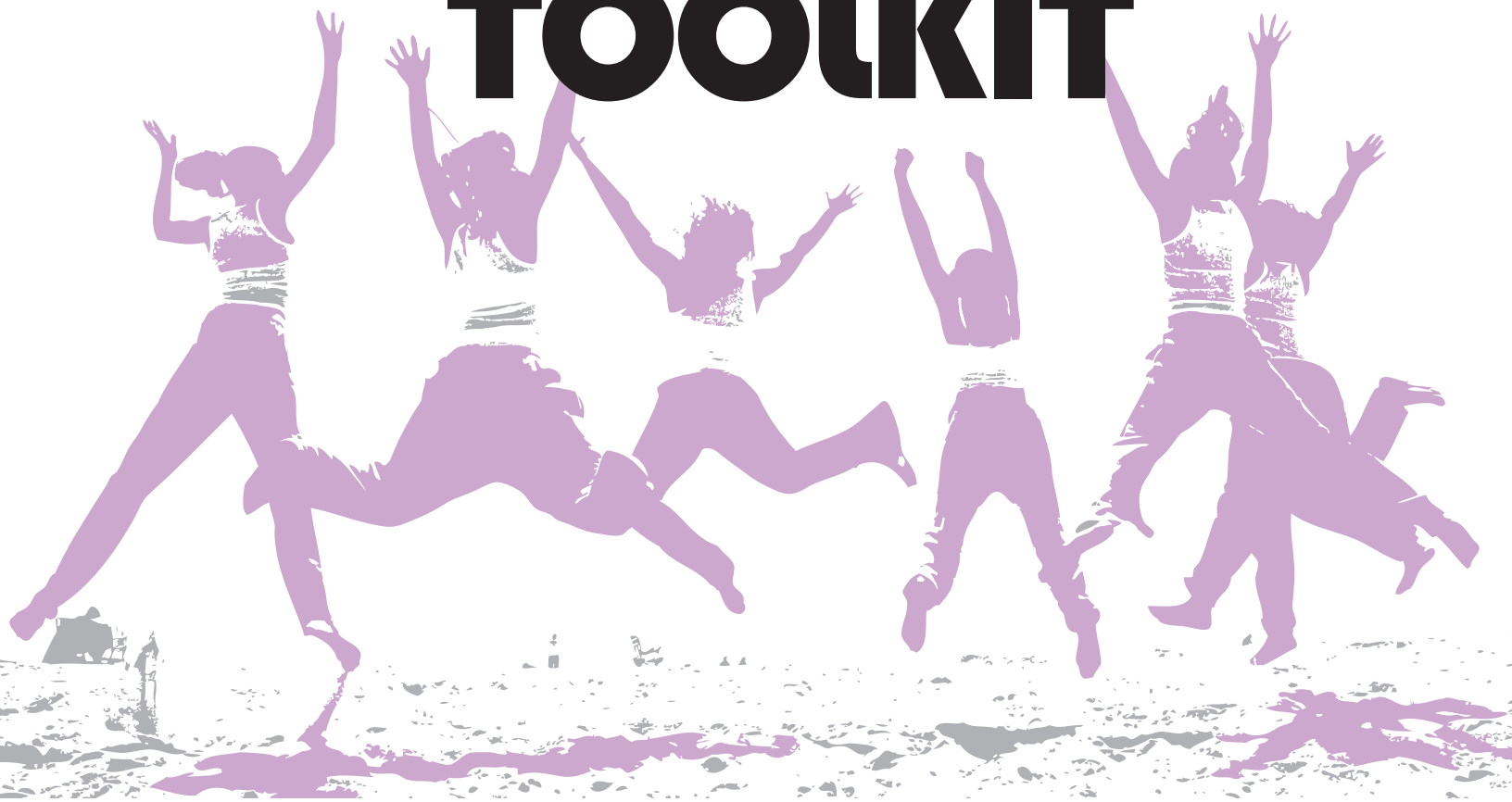

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National Center for Victims of Crime

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Introduction

Purpose

Teen Action Toolkit: Building a Youth-led Response to Teen Victimization is a hands-on implementation guide for the Teen Action Partnership for Teen Victims program.[1] TAP for Teen Victims is a program that marshals the strengths of youth as leaders to transform their communities' response to teenage victims of crime, while building the resilience of the youth participants at the same time.

The *Teen Action Toolkit* is intended as a resource for educators, law enforcement personnel, outreach workers, victim service providers, youth workers, teens, and others who might be interested in starting a youth-led effort to improve local policies, outreach, and services for adolescent crime victims. The toolkit provides a blueprint for engaging youth in community problem-solving around the issue of teen victimization. It includes "how-to" guidance on the four phases of the TAP for Teen Victims program (community assessment, outreach, advocacy, and peer victim service), and includes ideas for activities and reflections. While this toolkit can be used as a stand-alone resource, ideally its use should be accompanied by training and technical assistance from the National Center for Victims of Crime's Teen Victim Initiative staff. (See contact information inside the front cover.)

What Is the Teen Action Partnership for Teen Victims?

TAP for Teen Victims is a youth-led civic engagement program designed to improve local policies, outreach, and services to teen victims of crime. It is a flexible program model that begins with a local community assessment, which allows the youth leaders to pinpoint the type of teen victimization they want their project to address and to get a sense of the community's needs and resources related to that problem. Once they have a handle on the problem they want to address and the

1 Throughout the toolkit, the program is referred to as "TAP for Teen Victims," or in some cases, "TAP." This publication is referred to as the *Teen Action Toolkit*.

resources available in the community, youth can take three kinds of action: outreach, advocacy, and peer service. The *Teen Action Toolkit* will prepare youth-adult teams to go through all four phases of the model to improve their community's response to teen crime victims. The book provides skill-building exercises, ideas for activities, and a framework for your efforts, but the direction and outcomes of the project are really up to the youth who lead the effort. In this way, TAP is a structured model whose implementation looks different in every community because its direction is based on a local needs assessment and it is led by a group of youth with diverse talents, interests, and ideas.

Seven different organizations and six groups of young people around the country participated in piloting the TAP for Teen Victims model from 2003 to 2006, ultimately producing four successful TAP initiatives. Most of the activities and ideas in this resource were developed and tested during the pilot project. We've also incorporated throughout the toolkit examples of the original TAP sites' work and lessons learned from both the challenges and successes of the pilot program.

Why Teen Victims?

Teens and young adults are victimized by crime more than any other age group, yet they are underserved by both community agencies and the justice system.[2] Teens often do not receive, for a variety of reasons, the assistance that could help them overcome the effects of victimization and reduce their risk either of being victimized again or of engaging in risky behaviors. Some of those reasons include the low crime reporting rate for teen victims, teens' lack of knowledge about available services, and agencies' lack of teen-specific outreach and support. TAP for Teen Victims aims to equip groups of youth leaders to minimize these barriers for their peers (and themselves) in their own communities so that more teen victims get the help they need to overcome the trauma of victimization.

> "Kids can do more than I ever thought we could."
> Sarah, 14, from Ohio

Why Youth-Led?

Youth leadership means not only "developing the leaders of the future," but putting youth in charge today. Being entrusted with real leadership responsibilities has many benefits for teens, including increased knowledge, skills, self-esteem, and resilience. But youth leadership does not only benefit the youth leaders themselves. Teens have the ability to change lives in their communities when given the opportunity and skills to do so; and when it comes to problems that directly affect their lives, teens deserve to be meaningfully included in the planning and implementation of solutions. It is far

2 Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2005*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006); see additional details on page 34.

too common for communities and institutions to convene task forces, committees, and other groups to deal with "youth issues" without any representation from youth themselves." Nothing about us without us" has become a rallying cry for the disability rights movement, and the same motto can easily apply to youth, who are left out of countless discussions about problems and solutions that affect their lives.

> "This planet demands the qualities of youth: not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease."
>
> Robert F. Kennedy

Aside from issues of justice and inclusion, there are also many practical reasons for youth to take the lead when addressing the crime and victimization that is happening to them and their friends. The Youth Activism Project, for example, lists these specific assets that youth bring to community change efforts:

- Serving as role models and peer educators.
- Diagnosing problems and providing a reality check on teen experience.
- Challenging conventional thinking.
- Influencing their parents and other adults.
- Attracting media coverage.
- Capturing the attention of decision-makers.
- Pursuing unorthodox tactics and circumventing roadblocks.[3]

Young people bring extra passion, energy, and creativity to community change efforts. It is up to adults to recognize and channel these qualities by providing effective training, guidance, and facilitation to make youth leadership not just a cliché but a reality.

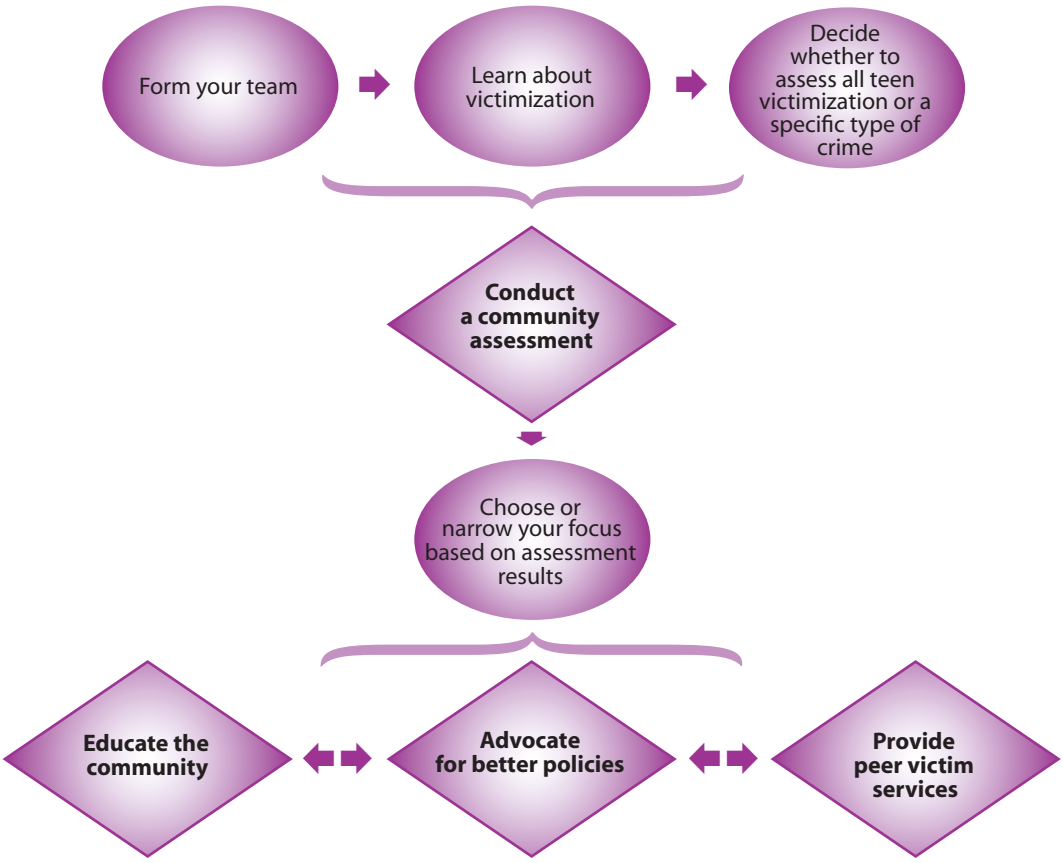
Why These Four Steps?

The Teen Action Partnership for Teen Victims model includes four steps or phases: (1) community assessment, (2) public awareness and outreach, (3) public policy advocacy, and (4) peer victim service. These four types of action are the building blocks of virtually any community problem-solving effort, and are particularly well-suited for improving a community's response to crime victims. Victimization is often a hidden problem, and therefore, it is important to begin by bringing the problem to light through research (community assessment) and information campaigns (public awareness and outreach). It is not enough, however, for people to know about the problem. Victims must feel safe enough and supported enough to come forward for help. Action may be needed to improve state and local laws or agency or school policies to make them more victim-friendly or teen-friendly (policy

3 Youth Activism Project, "Adults Only," http://www.youthactivism.com/Adults_Only.php (accessed May 2, 2007).

advocacy). Finally, services provided must be effective and developmentally appropriate, and teen involvement in the provision of services is an excellent way to achieve these goals (peer victim service).

Steps in TAP for Teen Victims. Groups can choose a specific victimization focus (such as bullying or dating violence) before or during the community assessment phase. After completing a community assessment, the team can tackle the next three steps in any order that makes sense to them.



How Long Will It Take to Complete a TAP for Teen Victims Project?

TAP for Teen Victims has been designed as a two-year initiative, with approximately four to six months allotted for each phase of the project (including training by the National Center for Victims of Crime). If you are doing the project on your own, your timeline may vary according to your context and the availability of the youth you recruit. In a school setting, you might tackle two phases of the project each year for two successive school years, while taking a break in the summer. If you are in a community-based program, you may work through the summer,

or even do most of the project during the summer months. How long each step takes depends mostly on how often your group meets, but no matter your meeting schedule, it's generally helpful to create a timeline at the beginning of the project and set deadlines for when you want to accomplish each objective. You may need to revise your timeline as you go, but at least you'll have a framework to use as a starting point.

Who Is on a TAP Team?

TAP for Teen Victims is based on a model of youth working in partnership with adults. Youth take leadership in the program, and adults provide guidance, facilitation, and connections with other community leaders. Team members will vary with the community and the organizational setting. School-based project teams will likely be composed of students (they may be traditional or non-traditional student leaders, or, ideally, a mix), along with one or more faculty advisors and/or a school resource officer. In a community-based organization, the adult advisor(s) may be staff or volunteers of the organization, and the youth may be staff, volunteers, youth advisory board members, program participants, or clients of the agency. In any setting, there will be a core team of youth and at least one adult facilitator, but every project will need to involve other adults at different points in the process.

Organization of This Toolkit

Following this introduction (Section 1), the *Teen Action Toolkit* is organized into 10 additional sections:

2. ***Getting Started.*** This section covers the basics for getting started with a TAP project, including recruiting a team, defining the community that will be the focus of the project, and establishing and nurturing youth leadership in your group.

3. ***Impact and Dynamics of Victimization.*** This section introduces the major concepts of teen victimization that underpin the program and includes exercises to help educate youth about the impact of victimization. It is strongly recommended that these exercises be facilitated by someone experienced in working with victims, such as a trained victim advocate.

4. ***Community Assessment.*** This section guides your group through the process of community assessment—the essential first step of the TAP program—and provides training activities and samples of assessment tools developed by past TAP teams. Understanding a problem through local data is essential to developing effective solutions; therefore, every teen action project should begin with a community assessment.

5. ***Outreach,*** **6.** ***Advocacy, and*** **7.** ***Peer Victim Services.*** These three sections provide information, exercises, and examples that will equip your team to undertake these phases of the

project. Outreach, advocacy, and peer service can be conducted in any order, depending on the results of the assessment and the direction the youth want to take the project. For example, youth may learn through their assessment that victimized teens would seek services in school if they were available. Thus, the teens may begin by *advocating* for a victim service program in school, which they may themselves become a part of as *peer helpers*, while they conduct *outreach* to publicize the program and encourage their victimized peers to seek help. Another group may discover that a strong teen victim service program already exists in their community and their first step will be to conduct an outreach campaign to make local teens aware of the underused service. They may then proceed to *advocate* for policies that make it easier for teens to access services (such as a partnership between the agency and their school, transportation vouchers, or confidentiality rights), and they may finish their project by training as *peer hotline counselors* at the agency. The community assessment will give shape to the rest of the project, and as the youth continue to work on their chosen issue, they will channel their new learning into various types of concrete actions to help their victimized peers.

8. *Reflection and Celebration.* This section contains tips and ideas for recognizing, celebrating, and reflecting on the youths' efforts. Reflection deepens the youth leaders' experience of the program, increases its impact on them, and is an essential element when using TAP for Teen Victims as a service-learning project. It is highly recommended for TAP groups in any setting to include elements of reflection on and recognition of the teens' efforts.

9. *Evaluation and Sustainability.* This section contains brief guidance on evaluating the program's success and incorporating it into your school's or organization's structure in a sustainable way. Our hope is that many organizations and schools across the country will adopt the Teen Action Partnership model to better reach and serve victimized teens, making it a regular part of their youth programming.

10. *Fact Sheets on Teen Victimization.* This section provides overviews of several distinct types of victimization commonly faced by teens. Your group may select one of the topics as defined in these fact sheets, or they may choose another victimization issue or a combination of crimes as the focus of their project. The fact sheets also serve as reproducible outreach materials and the information contained in them can be adapted into brochures, public service announcements, or other outreach materials developed by the youth. Check *www.ncvc.org/tvp* for periodically updated versions of the fact sheets.

11. *Resources.* This section lists many types of resources—including books, articles, curricula, Web sites, and organizations—that either were consulted in the production of this toolkit or would be useful for further reading or consultation.

We welcome feedback on the *Teen Action Toolkit* from anyone who reads or uses it to implement Teen Action Partnership for Teen Victims or a similar program in their community. Please direct comments to the National Center for Victims of Crime, Teen Victim Initiative, at 202-467-8700 or *gethelp@ncvc.org*, with a subject line of "Teen Victims."

2 Getting Started

Gathering Your Team

The first step in implementing the Teen Action Partnership for Teen Victims is recruiting a group of youth and adults to form your project team. Most project groups have a core team of six to fifteen members who participate regularly in meetings and events. In addition, you may have another ten, twenty, or even fifty people who are interested in the project and willing to help occasionally. Set your initial recruiting goal high (around 20 to 40 people), and your core group will emerge. Don't discount the people who express interest but cannot commit to meetings or seem to "disappear." Return to them for big events when you need extra hands, and include them in group e-mails or listservs so they can stay informed about the project (unless they ask to be taken off your list).

A great way to start is by making a personal appeal to a few youth to take the lead in recruiting other youth. Teens will be much more effective at bringing their peers and friends into the program than an adult would be alone. Hold one or more informational recruiting meetings. The meeting can include snacks, an icebreaker (see Exercise 1, page 18, for a suggestion), a brief explanation of the program (including the time commitment involved), written materials for potential members to take home (including phone and e-mail information of youth and adult group leaders), and time for questions. A brief (10- to 15-minute) training exercise can give potential new members a glimpse of the project's content in an entertaining way. For maximum effectiveness, this meeting should be led by youth, who will explain not only what the program is but why they chose to be involved in it. Make the meeting no longer than an hour, and end by announcing the time and date for the next meeting. Have a sign-in sheet where people who are interested can provide their phone and e-mail information. Then contact them the day before the next meeting as a reminder.

It is usually easiest to recruit teens in a school setting. If you are not working in a school setting, you may have to be more creative and expend more energy to attract youth attendance at meetings. One solution may be to ask one or two youth to approach an administrator or teacher in their school about holding meetings on the premises. Though community agencies often report difficulty "getting into the schools," if the students themselves want to start an activity or club that they can show is productive and helpful, the school is not likely to turn them down. Generally, all it takes is one teacher to serve as the point of contact for the school.

Checklist for Recruiting Your TAP Team

- ❒ Aim for high numbers initially.
- ❒ Let youth take the lead in recruiting other youth.
- ❒ Use brief, engaging informational meetings to build interest.
- ❒ Collect contact info from potential recruits and use it to invite them to or remind them about meetings.
- ❒ Think about recruiting in locations such as schools, churches, after-school programs, and juvenile probation offices.
- ❒ Try offering incentives such as community service hours, stipends, and food.
- ❒ Recruit adults as well as youth.
- ❒ Make recruiting an ongoing part of the program.
- ❒ Have victim service and other referrals available for all team members.

Of course, schools are not the only places where youth spend time. You can also recruit youth for your project team through local churches and other faith communities; after-school and enrichment programs such as Scouts, 4-H, Boys & Girls Clubs, and Law Enforcement Explorers; and even through the local juvenile justice system—youth on probation could be an ideal group of potential leaders waiting for an opportunity like TAP.

Sometimes incentives can help with both recruiting and retaining youth participants. Some schools require students to complete a certain number of community service hours; TAP for Teen Victims may qualify as a community service or service-learning activity. If your agency has the resources (or you can get a local business to sponsor your group), you might consider paying the youth a stipend. Even a modest amount to cover their transportation costs to meetings and events lets youth know that their participation is valued and can remove a barrier to participation for some youth. Having food at meetings is another simple incentive that can work wonders for bringing youth to the group until they are "hooked" on the project itself. (After the first few meetings, ideally youth will come for the project and not the pizza, but it's still nice to provide them with nourishment as they work to support others in their community.)

Even after your core group is established, plan to continue recruiting. Every group has some turnover, so it's necessary to keep bringing in new members who have different talents and perspectives to add to the group. An easy way to expand membership is to ask each youth to bring a friend. Sometimes people need to hear about an opportunity multiple times or

be asked to join directly by someone they know before they take the plunge. These "reluctant recruits" sometimes turn out to be the most dedicated members of the team.

It's critical to also recruit adult team members and supporters. Additional adult volunteers expand the base of expertise and contacts available to the group, give the youth practice working in partnership with adults with different styles and personalities, and ease the burden on the primary adult facilitator by handling some of the organizational and planning tasks and stepping in if the primary facilitator has to miss a meeting. Try recruiting other staff and volunteers from the host organization, or even friends of family members, to build your group of adult team members.

It's important to be aware from the outset of the project that some of the youth you are recruiting will have had experiences of victimization, whether you—or they—are aware of it. Be sensitive to this fact and be prepared to provide support and resources if needed. Be sure to connect with a local victim service provider or call the National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL to discuss how to handle disclosures of victimization *before* beginning the project. One thing NOT to do is to ask for disclosures of victimization. It's important to respect each person's right to share or not to share personal information in a group setting. The essential thing is to ensure an atmosphere of respect and safety—physical and emotional—for all youth (and adult) participants.

Getting a Written Commitment

Some groups may want to have youth apply to be in the program, or sign a contract or agreement after they join. This process can be a way of laying out all the responsibilities and benefits of participation from the beginning, as well as notifying the teens' parents of what the project is all about and what will be expected of their child, and providing the names and phone numbers of the adult leaders. Following is a sample TAP participant contract. Even if you do not require participants or parents to sign an agreement, they should still be informed of the goals and activities of the program and the responsibilities and benefits of participation (preferably in writing).

Exercise I

Icebreaker: Seeking Common Ground

(This game also goes by the name "The Big Wind Blows" and is often used in group settings with children and youth.)

Have all participants sit in a circle, with one person standing in the middle. For explanation and modeling purposes, the facilitator can be the first one to take the center role. (This can be a youth facilitator if he or she has played the game before.) There should be one fewer chairs than there are people, meaning that every chair in the circle is full and the person in the middle doesn't have anywhere to sit.

The person in the middle begins the game by saying, "I am seeking common ground with people who __ ____," and filling in the blank with a personal characteristic of his or her own (e.g., "people who like pizza"). Anyone who shares that characteristic with the speaker must get up and find a new seat, while the person in the middle also tries to sit down. Whoever is left standing takes the center role and makes another "seeking common ground" statement.

Important rule: People who get up and move seats are not allowed to sit in the chair immediately to their right or left; they must move at least two seats (unless the only other person to stand up is next to them).

This game is a good way to start getting to know each other. Common ground statements can be superficial or deep, temporary or permanent. For example, you can seek common ground with people who are wearing jeans, people who have three or more siblings, people who know a victim of crime, or people who want to work for peace.

Teen Action Partnership
Youth Participation Contract

General Information

The Teen Action Partnership (TAP) group will meet at the 5th Street PAL Center every Tuesday, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Snacks will be provided. Meeting times may change, by agreement of the majority of youth participants and Officer Smith.

The goals of the Teen Action Partnership are:

1. To raise awareness of the problem of teen victimization.
2. To get teen victims of crime the help they need and to reduce repeat victimization (prevent people who have been victims from being victimized again).
3. To build youth leadership.

To accomplish these goals, the TAP youth leaders will develop and conduct a community assessment, which will include surveying and/or interviewing teens, adults, and service providers in the community. They will then use the information gathered in the assessment to propose changes and improvements in the way teen victims are assisted in the community. They will also work to educate their peers and other members of the community about teen victimization and the help that is available.

To be an effective TAP youth leader, teens must be willing to:

- Be responsible and reliable
- Speak with adults and teens in the community (whether they know them or not) by phone and in person
- Do research using the telephone book, the Internet, and other resources
- Participate in both indoor and outdoor activities
- Work as a team with other teens
- Complete assigned tasks
- Help other people
- Work to improve the community
- Respect and listen to others
- Learn new things

Agreement

I, _____, agree to honor the following commitments for the duration of the first year of the Teen Action Partnership program, from September 2006 through August 2007.

1. I will attend every meeting, unless I have an emergency or am ill. If I cannot attend, I will call Officer Smith at the PAL Center (555-555-5555). I will be responsible for making up any missed work before the next session by calling Officer Smith or another program participant. I understand that if I do not attend a meeting, I will not be paid for that meeting [for programs that have stipends available to youth].
2. I will demonstrate responsibility by being on time, doing what needs to be done, and working to solve any problems that arise.
3. I will be involved in all TAP activities and give my full participation.
4. I will listen to others and be willing to learn and try new things.
5. I will respect everyone's ideas even if I disagree.
6. I will be a hard worker and try my best.

I understand that in exchange for my participation in the TAP program, I will receive certain benefits. These benefits include:

1. Learning new skills such as interviewing, public speaking, and computer skills.
2. Meeting young people from around the country who are using TAP in their communities [for participants in TAP projects facilitated by the National Center for Victims of Crime].
3. Having a positive impact on my community.
4. Building my own leadership skills.
5. Receiving a stipend of $25 per month for participating in TAP meetings and activities [for programs that have stipends available to youth].

_____

Signature, TAP youth leader

I have read the TAP agreement and will do my part to support this youth participant.

_____ _____

Signature, parent or guardian Signature, adult TAP facilitator

Youth Leadership and Youth-Adult Partnership

The roles of youth and adults in TAP for Teen Victims are different from the roles youth and adults traditionally have in most settings. In TAP the role of the youth is not only to participate, but also to take the lead, generating ideas, initiating activities, deciding the direction of the work, and planning and implementing the project. The role of adults is primarily to provide guidance and training, along with encouragement, some structure, community contacts, and perspective. Both youth and adults take on these roles in a spirit of partnership with each other, meaning that power and decision making in the group is shared, as is responsibility for both successes and failures.

Working this way has its challenges. Youth, who in many settings are taught to be passive and simply follow directions, are challenged to take initiative and assume responsibility for keeping the project moving forward. For adults, the challenge is to avoid the two extremes of "owning" the program or watching it from the sidelines, instead balancing trust in the youth with the responsibility to provide direction when needed. Youth leaders also do a balancing act—learning to trust themselves but also asking for help when they need it. Youth-adult partnership, when done well, is a dance, with each partner reflecting the other's movements in reverse; when one steps up, the other steps back, creating a balance that allows for each side to show off its skills in flourishes and twirls while creating something beautiful together.

This sounds nice, but how do you accomplish it? You can use Exercise 2 (Tell Me What You REALLY Think, page 22) to help your group begin to break down stereotypes and learn to collaborate in an environment of trust and accountability.[4] It takes more than one exercise, of course, to build effective youth-adult partnership in your group. Adults must take responsibility for nurturing and developing youth leadership throughout the life of the project. They should begin by examining their own assumptions about youth, and then continually challenge both themselves and the youth to rise above long-held beliefs about age-related roles and instead allow each individual's personality and talents to shine.

> "The further development of human society depends upon the existence of a continuing dialogue in which the young, free to act on their initiative, can lead their elders in the direction of the unknown. . . . The children, the young, must ask the questions that we would never think to ask, but enough trust must be re-established so that the elders will be permitted to work with them on the answers."
>
> Margaret Mead

4 The exercises in this toolkit are provided as examples of activities that can enhance the learning of TAP participants. While the toolkit assumes a general chronological order, it is not a prescriptive curriculum, and facilitators should decide at what point in the life of their *TAP for Teen Victims* project to use any of the suggested exercises.

Exercise 2

Tell Me What You REALLY Think

Materials: Flipchart and markers or whiteboard/blackboard
Time: 15 minutes

Note: Because this exercise is about breaking down stereotypes between youth and adults, include as many of your adult team members and allies as possible. This way, one adult does not have to speak for all adults, and the groups will be more balanced.

Make three columns on the board or tape up three separate pieces of chart paper on the wall.

As a group, brainstorm words that adults use to describe teens, and write these in the left-most column or sheet. Draw out any stereotypes the young people feel are applied to them as a group. Both youth and adults can add to the list.

Next, brainstorm a list of words that teens use to describe adults, again probing for stereotypes that are applied to all adults across the board by youth. Be sure the adults have a chance to share the labels that have been applied to them, and allow youth to add to the list as well. Write these on the right-most column or sheet.

The group may start out by holding back the most negative descriptions, not wanting to hurt people's feelings. Encourage them to be very honest about the ideas they have heard, or even what they may think, about members of the other (or their own) age group.

Now ask a youth to read the entire list of stereotypes about youth, slowly and clearly for the group to hear. Have an adult read the list of adult stereotypes. Have the group discuss how it feels to be labeled in these ways and how difficult it can be for youth and adults to work together when this is how we often see each other.

Now go to the middle column or sheet and ask the group for ways to "bridge the gap" between adults and youth. The group will most likely come up with ideas like listening, respect, taking time for each other, and many other ideas. Ask if the group members agree to apply the ideas in this middle column to their work together, and to gently remind each other of the middle column when disrespect between youth and adults seems to be surfacing.

Forming an Effective Team

Breaking down traditional barriers between youth and adults and learning to trust each other and share power form the foundation of a good youth-adult team. Additionally, establishing good systems of communication, organization, and leadership will greatly improve the effectiveness of your project and everyone's satisfaction with the experience of working as a team. Here are some areas to address both early on and periodically throughout the project.

Group Decision Making. How will your group make decisions about the project's focus, direction, and content? Will you strive for consensus, use a democratic voting system, or just let everyone argue it out until somebody gives in and somebody wins? Setting up a process for making group decisions can help things go more smoothly, although it is not necessary to use the same system for every type of decision. For example, you may institute a decision-making process that involves brainstorming, then going around in a circle and giving everyone a chance to speak, then trying to come to consensus as a group. You may decide to use this process for major decisions, like selecting your project's focus, choosing your advocacy issue, or deciding on your outreach methods. On the other hand, there may be less weighty decisions that need to happen faster and can be made by individuals or sub-committees (such as picking a color scheme for outreach posters or finalizing the wording of a news release). Whatever type of decision-making process you choose, make sure that youth are in the lead and that adults are providing appropriate guidance and facilitation.

Leadership. The TAP model encourages all youth participants to take leadership. However, it may be necessary for specific individuals to assume certain leadership roles for effective group process. As with group decision making, there are many ways of deciding which individuals will occupy which leadership roles, and for how long. Some groups elect officers, while others break into committees with a different youth heading each committee. Committee leaders may come together as a leadership team or council. Still another way is to alternate leadership roles, such as meeting facilitation, among several youth. However it is done, the process of assigning leadership functions to individuals should be transparent and agreed upon by the group.

Communication. Communication consists of information or messages being initiated and received. Good communication relies on both the initiator and the recipient of the communication being thoughtful, respectful, attentive, and clear. Group members should pay attention to the way they send and receive messages and their feelings around communications. If there seems to be a lot of miscommunication between members of the group, take the time to talk it over and figure out where the signals are getting crossed.

Conflict Resolution. People have many different ways of dealing with conflict, and one of the best things to do in a group is to make sure that everyone understands their own tendency. Some people have a confrontational style when it comes to conflict, easily arguing or even getting into physical fights. Others are conflict avoiders and will do almost anything to prevent arguments and fights from happening. Still others are "discussers" who try to resolve conflicts by talking things out. Some people combine styles depending on the situation, perhaps withdrawing to cool down and then later trying to discuss and resolve. Exercise 3 (What Would You Do?, page 25) can be a useful tool for reflecting on different ways of handling conflict and your own tendency in conflict situations.

Once participants understand how they typically deal with conflict, that others may deal with it differently, and that no single style is the "best" style, it can be easier to spot patterns in a group and objectively label the dynamics that are happening in order to move beyond them. Not every conflict needs to be dissected by the group, but those issues that are obviously causing tension and distracting from the group's work should not be left unaddressed. Both simmering resentment and constant arguing create a negative vibe for everyone else and can destroy a team's morale. Once a conflict is entrenched, it can be hard to solve from the inside, so if an ongoing conflict is disturbing the peace of your group, try nominating an impartial youth-adult pair to intervene with the conflicting parties and help them work it out.

Scheduling Meetings. Meetings are essential to accomplishing group goals, so they should occur regularly and be run well. The first challenge will be finding a time that's convenient for all or most group members to meet. Remember that not everyone will be able to make it to every meeting, so strive for a time that accommodates most people most of the time. While rotating meeting times may sound like a good idea if people have conflicts on different days, in practice it makes the meeting day and time harder to remember and usually leads to low turnout. It's generally best to stick to the same day and time each week so everyone easily remembers when meetings are and people don't need as many reminders. Another option is to schedule a regular monthly meeting for the whole group and then break into smaller committees that meet on their own. Smaller groups should have less difficulty identifying meeting times and places that accommodate everyone's schedules.

If you find that everyone's after-school time is completely booked, be creative with meeting times and places. Consider meeting in the morning, before school. You may find it convenient to meet at someone's house or a local coffee shop or restaurant that's easily accessible to everyone, especially if the team members attend different schools. In the end, remember that some scheduling conflicts just can't be avoided, and some people will have to make a choice between TAP for Teen Victims and another activity. Remember, however, to go back to those people who can't attend meetings for help with special events or activities. They'll probably

Exercise 3

What Would You Do?

Materials: Pens and paper
Time: 30-40 minutes

Ask each group member to write down an example of a conflict that he or she has either been a part of or has witnessed when working in a group. (This could be an experience from a school project, a sports team, a drama cast, a job, or any other setting where youth work in groups either with or without adults.) Ask the youth to focus on one of the parties in the conflict and (without using names) write down three possible ways that person could have handled the situation. (They can choose whether or not to include the person's actual response to the conflict as one of the options.) The three possible responses should correspond to the following styles:

A. Forcing/Competitive: The person takes charge and insists on having his or her own way.
B. Avoiding/Accommodating: The person removes himself or herself from the conflict situation or gives in to the other.
C. Compromise/Collaboration: The person tries to find a way to come up with a mutually agreeable solution.

After all participants have written their conflict and three possible solutions, gather them and read each one aloud (without saying who wrote it). Have each person (including yourself) note which of the three possible responses is closest to the way he or she normally acts in situations of conflict: A, B, or C. If someone has a different response that doesn't fit into the A/B/C categories listed above, it can be noted as option D. Go through each scenario and have the group members silently reflect on what their normal course of action would be, noting for each situation whether they would have an A, B, or C reaction (or a substantially different D reaction).

After reading all the scenarios and reactions aloud, ask each person to reflect on his or her own "conflict style": is it mostly As, mostly Bs, mostly Cs, or a mix? Ask if people have "D" answers they want to share, and discuss as a group how those answers differ from the A, B, or C response categories. Then discuss the following two statements:

1. For most people, there is one way they deal with conflict most of the time, which could be called their personal conflict style.
2. All of the styles have good and bad points, and all of them can be useful in certain situations.

Do your group members agree or disagree with these statements? Why? What do they think their own predominant style is? Under what circumstances is it good to force, to avoid, or to give in?

be glad you thought of them and found a way for them to participate despite their inability to regularly attend TAP meetings.

Making the Most of Meetings. When it comes to running group meetings, there are three golden rules that will help keep group members happy and meetings productive:

1. Have an agenda, communicate it, and stick to it.
2. Start on time.
3. End on time.

It also helps to make meetings engaging by including at least one interactive activity whenever possible. Beyond these "rules," meeting facilitation styles may vary. The person(s) leading the meeting (and it's important to know ahead of time who that is) should be clear on what is to be accomplished during the meeting and know how to strike a balance between giving everyone a chance to be heard and keeping things moving forward. This type of skill takes practice to develop; youth who facilitate meetings should have support from the adult advisor, who can give guidance on leading discussion, assigning tasks, summing up, and making sure everyone is on board with the next steps to take. Youth leaders will learn even more if they have a chance to review their meeting facilitations (and other new skills they learn throughout the project) by discussing what went well and what could have gone better.

Group Agreements

Agreeing as a group on the ground rules for group interaction at the outset of your work together can go a long way toward avoiding and defusing potential conflicts or disruptions for the life of the group. The first substantive meeting (after the informational recruitment meetings) is a good time for the youth to define the guiding principles for how group members will treat each other and the information shared during the project, with input and direction from the adult facilitator. Of course, the adult facilitator could simply present the youth with a list of rules, but it is usually far more effective to elicit group agreements from the youth themselves. The list may end up being nearly identical to the one the adult would have proposed (including, for example, such agreements as respecting others' opinions even if you disagree, one person talking at a time, or keeping personal information shared in the group confidential), but when the youth create the group agreements—rather than having the rules imposed on them—they are much more likely to consistently abide by the agreements and to hold each other accountable for adherence to them. With group agreements in place (everyone should receive a written copy and/or they should be posted in the meeting space), most "infractions" can be handled by the youth themselves reminding their peers what they agreed to at the start of the group.

Understanding Your Motivation: Why Do You Care?

TAP for Teen Victims is all about making sure that victimized teens get the help they need to overcome their victimization and move forward with their lives. Help group members reflect on why they want to participate in this project, what it means to them, and why they think others should care about it. Some people are passionate about helping teen victims because they themselves have been victimized. They may have received great help and want to be sure everyone knows that help is available, or they may have had no help or encountered a negative response and want to be sure that others have a better experience. Some teens will have a friend or a loved one who was victimized, and that person's experience draws them to the issue. Others will be motivated by simple compassion—because it seems like the right thing to do.

While it's unnecessary for individuals to share their motivation with the whole group (especially if the group members don't know each other very well), it can be helpful for group members to reflect individually on why they joined this project and what they hope to achieve for their community, their peers, and themselves. Exercise 4 (Journaling on Motivation, page 28) can be a good way to facilitate this reflection.

Identifying Allies

Once you have formed your team, you can start listing potential community allies to call on for support at different points in the project.

For a project on teen victimization, some specific community players should be natural allies in your effort. These include your local victim service providers (such as domestic violence and sexual assault crisis centers, court- or police-based victim advocates, homicide survivor groups, child protective services, or the local chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving), the police (both school resource officers and municipal police), district attorneys or other prosecutors, hospitals, schools and after-school programs, and any other groups in your community that regularly have contact with teens or crime victims.[5] In addition to these groups, think broadly about other community stakeholders, such as businesses, churches, city or county government officials, and voluntary associations, and determine how to link your issue to their interests. A local business, for example, may be convinced to support your program when you point out that victimized youth are more likely to commit crimes, and crime affects a business's bottom

5 If you're not familiar with your local victim service providers, you can call the National Crime Victim Helpline (1-800-FYI-CALL) for a list of people and organizations in your county that serve crime victims.

Exercise 4

Journaling on Motivation

Materials: Whiteboard/blackboard or flipchart with markers, notebooks or journals, and pens
Time: 15 minutes

Write the following two questions on the board:

1. Why do you want to help teen victims of crime?
2. What do you hope to get out of this project?

Give everyone five minutes to write about their motivation and expectations for the project. Let them know that they will not be forced to share their reflections but that there will be an opportunity to share what they wrote if they want. After the writing period, ask if anyone wants to share any part of what they wrote. If you've made a group agreement about keeping personal information shared in the group confidential, remind everyone of this prior to the voluntary sharing of reflections.

Take note of what group members hope to get out of the project, and return to that list periodically to check in with the group and see if its expectations are being met. To close the reflection on motivation, ask the group members to think about how they will use their own motivations to come up with ways to motivate others in the community to take action during the outreach and advocacy stages of the project.

line.[6] Of course, business owners and others may also be convinced to help your group simply because it's a good thing to do, and many of them may be parents or grandparents of teens who may benefit from the program—or even want to get involved.

> "I learned that there are lots of people who care about victims of crime."
> Andy, 17, from Ohio

Write down the names of organizations and individuals, and keep working on your list as you go through the project, adding new allies as you learn about them and noting who you have approached already and what their response was. Before the youth leaders approach anyone to support your project, be sure they think about the following:

- Can you clearly and concisely describe your group and the project you are undertaking?
- If you are using any acronyms for your group or project name, do you know what they stand for?
- What is your goal for the conversation? Are you just introducing yourself and letting them know about the project, or are you asking for a specific type of support? Do you need their help right away, in the future, or both?
- Have a concrete message to deliver to the potential ally.
- Know how supporting your work will also benefit the ally. Let them know "what's in it for them."
- If you don't have a specific request at your first meeting with them, let them know you'll come back to them later in the project to update them on your progress and possibly ask for their help.
- Don't be afraid to ask for people's time, talent, or resources. Studies have shown that many people want to help others but don't do so unless they are asked directly. The more closely your request matches the person's available resources, the more likely it is that you'll get a positive response. For example, ask a restaurant owner to donate food for an event, ask a local deejay to emcee an awareness-raising dance, or ask a police officer to come speak to your group about how the police respond to victims at a crime scene. If your request shows that you have thought about how the person can help your efforts and that you are asking them for something they are uniquely able to contribute, they are likely to respond positively.

6 For more information on the connection between victimization and juvenile delinquency, see Madeline Wordes and Michell Nunez, *Our Vulnerable Teenagers: Their Victimization, Its Consequences, and Directions for Prevention and Intervention,* (Oakland, CA: National Council on Crime and Delinquency and the National Center for Victims of Crime, 2002), available at www.ncvc.org/reports.

Additional suggestions for involving community allies in specific phases of the TAP project will be included throughout the toolkit. Although the adult facilitator can be the one to approach other adults in the community about the project, it is usually better—and worth taking the time—to prepare the youth to make the initial contact themselves. An intermediate approach is for the adult facilitator or another trusted adult to "vouch" for the youth or introduce them to the potential contact to ease the way. Once the youth have the ear of the person or group being approached, they will probably find that if they are informed, organized, and well-prepared, their appeal is almost impossible for potential allies to turn down. The teens' leadership skills and confidence will also get a great boost in the process.

3 Impact and Dynamics of Victimization

Before embarking with a group on a project about victimization, all members of the team must understand some basics about the impact and dynamics of victimization. Some participants will have personal experience with victimization, about which you might or might not be aware. Others will know someone who has been a victim, and some will know only what they see on television and in the movies. Whatever people's personal experience, it's worth taking the time as a team to establish a common framework for understanding the many ways in which teens are victimized, the impact it can have on people's lives, and ways that teens can find help to overcome the trauma of victimization.

This section consists of a series of training exercises to help establish your group's basic understanding of victimization. Exercise 5 (What Do You Call That?, page 36) will help your group define the different and overlapping terms used to describe victimization and related concepts. Before progressing with the project, use the other exercises in this section to help enhance your group's understanding of the following basic points related to victimization:

1. Teen victimization is a big problem.
2. Every victim's experience is unique.
3. Being victimized is never the victim's fault.
4. Some common types of victimization that people dismiss as "kid stuff" are actually crimes.
5. Teen victims may experience many different kinds of reactions to victimization.
6. Teen victims have many reasons for not telling anyone, and there are many reasons they should tell someone.
7. Dealing with victimization on your own is a heavy burden and raises a teen's risk for many different problems.

8. Many different individuals, organizations, and other resources can be helpful to teen victims.
9. The most important things for a good friend of a victim to do are to listen, be supportive, and be non-judgmental. Friends can also help their friends find more support.

The fact sheets in Section 10 provide more detailed information on different types of victimization. You may want to spend time as a group reading through some of these fact sheets, or ask the youth to read them on their own and think about which issue they would like to tackle in their TAP project.

Fact: According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, teens represent **13.7 percent** of the U.S. population but **28.5 percent** of the victims of violent crime. In 2005, for all Americans ages 12 and up, teens ages 12 to 19 and young adults ages 20 to 24 had the highest violent victimization rates.

Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice
Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2005

It is imperative that a victim-serving professional be involved in training youth about these topics for at least two reasons. First, every group is bound to contain some victims (based on statistics alone), and the material can trigger difficult emotional reactions in youth who have been victimized or who have a loved one who has been victimized. Someone trained in supporting victims and responding to these reactions should be present when the issues are discussed. Second, a skilled facilitator is needed to challenge deeply ingrained victim-blaming attitudes that are widely held by both youth and adults. Even seemingly benign beliefs can contribute to victims' self-blame and withdrawal—for example, the belief that with the proper knowledge youth can (or could have) prevented their own victimization. (See Key Concepts box on the following page.) While people may be able to take certain steps to reduce their risk of being victimized, it's important to recognize that the only people able to prevent victimization are those that are *doing the victimizing*. This is, perhaps, the most essential point to get across to your group if they are to be effective in improving their community's response to teen victims.

If your TAP group is not already connected with a victim-serving organization, reach out to such an organization in your community. Victim service providers are generally thrilled to be

invited to provide training and education on these issues to groups in their community. Alternatively, the National Center for Victims of Crime may be able to provide the training for you or recommend someone in your area who is qualified to do so. (See inside front cover for the National Center's contact information.)

Key Concepts

Risk reduction is focused on victims or potential victims, and refers to the things people can do themselves to reduce their risk of being victimized, such as avoiding alcohol and drugs or sticking to well-lit paths when walking at night. Such measures can help, but they are no guarantee that a person will not become a victim.

Prevention is focused on perpetrators or potential perpetrators, and refers to changing destructive attitudes and abusive behaviors that contribute to violence in society. The only people who can prevent crime are those who would commit crime.

Exercise 5

What Do You Call That?

A youth training activity on the words we use to describe when someone harms someone else.

Materials: Heavy paper or cardboard, markers, scissors, Handout 1

Time: *Preparation:* 1 hour
Activity: 15-30 minutes, depending on the size of the group

Vocabulary Words

Abuse, Crime, Victimization, Trauma, Violence, Resource, Resilience

Preparation

Write the words above (or any others that relate to your topic) on heavy paper or cardboard (recycled manila folders work fine). Cut out each word, then cut each word into pieces containing two to five letters each, aiming for one "piece of a word" per participant. (For example, the word victimization can be divided into four pieces: "vict," "imi," "za," and "tion.") You need enough people so that each word can be cut into at least 2 pieces. (Another option is to leave out one or more of the words if the group numbers fewer than 14.) If the group is very large, you can pair people up for this activity and/or have several copies of each word.

Instructions

Shuffle the word sections and distribute one to each participant or pair. Instruct them to find the person(s) with the other section(s) of their word. Do not tell them what the words are. Once all the words have been put together, if you have used more than one copy of any word, have all pairs that have the same word group together. Then give each small group about two minutes to come up with a definition for the word they have. Call on the groups one at a time to share their definitions, and compare them with the definitions listed in Handout 1. (If you want, you can copy and distribute these definitions to the group, but only after the small groups have come up with their own definitions.)

As you go through each term, point out similarities between the small group's definition and the definition on the handout, clearing up any misconceptions about the terminology. Recognize that there is overlap between some of the concepts, but they are not synonyms. Allow flexibility if members of the group disagree with the definitions on the sheet. The purpose is discussion, not learning a rigid definition of each term.

Handout 1

The Vocabulary of Victimization: Suggested Definitions

Abuse: Abuse is when one person deliberately harms another and there is a power difference in the relationship, for example: adult-child, male-female (though not always applicable), boss-employee. Child abuse, specifically, is when an adult who is responsible for the welfare of a minor (a person under the age of 18) causes harm to that young person. Types of child abuse can include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. People who are responsible for the welfare of minors (and can, therefore, commit abuse) include parents, older relatives, foster parents, babysitters or daycare providers, teachers, principals, coaches, clergy, youth group leaders, and others who, at any given time, have responsibility for making sure that a young person is safe.

Crime: A crime is an act that is against the law. Criminal law is different in every state, so something that is a crime in one state may not be a crime in another. Crime is often divided into two categories: violent crime and property crime. Violent crime includes the use or threat of force. Property crime is the taking, damaging, or destroying of another's property without the use or threat of force. Robbery is a violent crime, and theft is a property crime.

Victimization: If somebody has experienced victimization, it means that someone else has deliberately caused them harm. The harm can be physical, emotional, or financial. Some forms of victimization are against the law (for example, rape), and others are not (for example, severe teasing). Whether or not the victimization is against the law depends on the type of behavior involved and, in some cases, the harm inflicted. Some victimization that is not against the law is still against school or workplace policies.

Trauma: Trauma refers to the effect of mental or emotional stress or a physical injury on a person. For example, if someone is mugged, they may experience a trauma reaction afterward, such as having flashbacks of the mugging. Because each person is unique and reacts differently to events, something which causes a trauma to one person may not cause trauma to another. There is a medical condition called *posttraumatic stress disorder* or PTSD, which is a severe form of trauma reaction that lasts at least three months and includes intrusive thoughts (such as flashbacks or dreams) of the event, avoidance of reminders of the event, and physical reactions to reminders of the event. (For example, someone who survived a shooting jumps when they hear firecrackers going off.)

Violence: Violence is usually defined as severe and deliberate physical harm, for example, beating someone up or shooting them. Some people feel that violence is not only physical harm but includes emotional and psychological harm as well.

Handout 1 cont.

Resource: A resource is something that can be used to accomplish a goal. In terms of crime and victimization, resources are used to help victims heal, hold offenders accountable, or prevent crime in the first place. Resources could include money, people, places, or organizations.

Resilience: Resilience is the ability to cope with and recover from a difficult experience or rise above hard circumstances. Synonyms include strength, flexibility, and bounce.

Exercise 6

The Shape of Adolescent Development

Materials: Eight poster board shapes (described below), markers, and masking tape
Time: 1 hour

Introduction

Before delving into the impact of victimization on adolescents, this activity will help your group develop a common understanding of what is already going on in teens' lives without the presence of victimization. The goal of the activity is for the youth to educate the adults about adolescent development.

Activity

Divide teens into eight groups. These groups should be strictly composed of youth, with no adults. The terms "youth" and "adults" can be defined flexibly based on the age range you are working with, but do not include anyone over college age in the youth groups. The purpose is to let youth speak for themselves without being interpreted, filtered, or guided by adults present in their group. Place adults in one or more separate groups.

Give each group of youth one of the following shapes cut from a (relatively large) piece of poster board:

1. A car—Independence
2. A mirror—Identity
3. A silhouette (can be paper-doll style)—Body changes and body image
4. A group of people (can be paper-doll style)—Friends and other peers
5. A heart—Romantic relationships
6. A telephone—Communication
7. A book—Achievement
8. A lightning bolt—Stress

Note: If your group is smaller than 16 people, eliminate one or more of the topics, or combine topics. It's important that there be two or more youth in each group (not all youth think alike!).

Have each group do a brainstorm and list on their shape what is going on for teenagers in that area of their lives. They should list common experiences, feelings, what teens feel is important, and what they like and don't like about that aspect of life. Allow 10 minutes for brainstorming.

Exercise 6 cont.

For Adults: Place adults in small groups (or one group) to brainstorm on the same topics. If you have only one small adult group, they probably will not have time to get through each topic; instead of a full brainstorm, have them list just one or two key phrases related to each topic that they think characterize most youths' experience in that area.

Re-group and have each youth group present their shape, reading everything written on it, and then attach it to the wall. Ask the adults to share what they said about the same topic. Then see if the youth agree or disagree with the adults' perspective. This exercise can produce an enriching conversation, as long as basic guidelines are followed (e.g., respect each others' opinions, listen, don't talk over others). Keep in mind that the main goal is for the youth to educate the adults about adolescent development. Therefore, it's important that the youth have the last word on each topic discussed and that the adults do not dictate to the youth or try to give advice.

Exercise 7

What Does Teen Victimization Look Like?

Materials: Handout 2, flipchart or whiteboard/blackboard
Time: 1 hour

Instructions

1. Divide youth into four groups and assign each group one of the scenarios outlined in Handout 2 to act out. Give the groups 10 minutes to read through their scenario, plan how to act it out, and practice it once or twice.
2. Meanwhile, prepare flip chart(s) or dry erase board with three columns. For now, label only the first column: "Reactions."
3. Have the first group act out scenario one.
4. Ask the group how they think the victim feels. List their responses under the reactions column. This will be repeated for each scenario, so it is not necessary to form an exhaustive list the first time. Once you have three or four responses, stop and move to the next column.
5. Label the second column "Why not to tell." Ask the teens for reasons why the victim in scenario one might not tell anyone what happened/is happening. As before, solicit only a few responses before moving on.
6. Label the third column "Why to tell." Ask the teens to name positive things that could happen if the victim decides to tell a trusted adult.
7. Repeat with scenarios two through four. Go through the brainstorm exercise after each scenario because each one will draw out slightly different responses from the participants.
8. Read out the list of reactions in column one and ask what general conclusions the teens can make about victimization from that list. The point is to validate the heavy burden victims face but not to make it seem that all victims are doomed to a life of depression or anger.
9. Discuss the teens' responses in the second two columns. Emphasize that all the reasons not to tell are based on valid feelings and fears and that there is risk involved in sharing what happened to you. Point out the importance of trust in overcoming the risks involved in telling. Finally, emphasize the good things that can come out of telling someone about victimization and seeking help.
10. Finally, ask teens to come up with a list of adults who might be able to help. List them on the flipchart. After they have listed as many as they can think of, add any others you're aware of to their list. Point out that not every teen has a good relationship with every adult on the list, but almost all teens will be able to trust at least one of the people listed. That person is the one they should look to for help. Point out that if a teen absolutely has no adult in his or her life to

Exercise 7 cont.

trust, he or she can turn to resources such as hotlines and helplines for support. Such phone lines serve several purposes: operators can simply listen to a teen and help him or her make sense of what happened; they can offer support and information on options and help with safety planning; and they may be able to connect the teen to a service provider in his or her community who can continue to help that teen. Be sure to provide teens with at least one hotline/helpline number as a resource, such as the National Crime Victim Helpline, 1-800-FYI-CALL.

Handout 2

Victimization Scenarios

Scenario 1

Amy, a 9th grader, is an outgoing, friendly leader in her class. Three months into the school year, Amy starts receiving notes in her locker from a secret admirer. This person likes her. He thinks she is nice and compliments the clothes she wears. He tells her she's really pretty. Amy thinks little of the notes, but she enjoys the attention, even if she doesn't know who it's from. As the months pass, the notes continue—now talking about specific things in Amy's life, both at school and home. This person knows what path she takes to walk to school and that she has piano lessons on Tuesday nights. He even knows that she walks her dog, Henry, every afternoon after school. He knows what classes she takes, what lunch period she has, and who she talks with in the halls between classes. The notes Amy receives are now attached to gifts—candy, flowers, and CDs. The tone of the notes changes—Amy's secret admirer wants Amy to like him back. He is angry that she doesn't talk to him in the cafeteria. He makes fun of her date to the school dance. He even threatens her, saying that he will hurt her if she doesn't go out on a date with him.

Scenario 2

Brian is in 7th grade. He lives in the city and walks three blocks to his house after getting off the school bus each night. Walking home one night he sees some older boys—not from his neighborhood—walking toward him. After he passes them he feels somebody push him from behind, and he falls to his knees. He drops his bookbag, CD player, and headphones. One of the boys tells Brian to give him his CD player. This is Brian's most prized possession. It was a birthday gift from his father. He uses it every day on the way to and from school. When he doesn't hand it over, the boys push him again. One of the boys pulls a gun out of his pocket and demands the CD player and headphones. Brian cries as they rip it out of his hands and run off.

Scenario 3

Nikia's family moved to a new neighborhood over the summer, so she had to change schools for 8th grade. She is angry at her mother for moving. She feels sure that she won't make any friends at her new school.

About two weeks into the school year, Nikia starts to notice some girls giving her mean looks. At first, when she looks back at them, they look away and pretend to be paying attention to the teacher. Over time, the girls get bolder, and just continue to stare at her. Sometimes they make rude gestures, or pretend to be cutting off her hair, which she wears in long braids. She tries to avoid the girls, but they seem to find her whenever there are no teachers around. One day, she is in the bathroom, and the girls come in. They block her path and threaten her, telling her she better watch herself. Nikia has no idea why the girls hate her, but now she is really scared of them. She decides that the next time they try to bully her, she will tell them

Handout 2 cont.

off. When they surround her at her locker after school, she tells them they are just jealous of her because they are all ugly and stupid. One of the girls starts hitting her and pulling her hair. A teacher shows up and separates the girls.

Scenario 4

Carmen is 17 and a senior in high school. David is a 23-year-old construction worker who has been working on some jobs in Carmen's neighborhood. They met at the local pizza place, and David asked Carmen for her number. They have been seeing each other ever since—about 3 months now.

In the beginning Carmen thought that David was the sweetest guy she had ever met. He was so caring and concerned about her. He wanted to know who all her friends were, how she was doing in her classes, how she got along with her mother. He even gave her a cell phone so he could always reach her—just to tell her how much he loved her.

Lately, David's behavior has changed. He acts jealous and accuses Carmen of seeing someone behind his back. She has assured him that she isn't seeing anyone else, but he doesn't believe her. He has started calling her names like "whore" and "slut," and he tells her that her mother doesn't love her and that her friends are all fake. He tells her that when he calls her, she'd better answer, or else. He said that if he hears a guy's voice in the background, he will know that she is cheating on him, and he will find the boy and kill him, and Carmen, too. Carmen still loves David, but now she is scared of him sometimes. She's afraid that her mother would make her break up with him if she knew, and Carmen doesn't want to do that. She thinks she can handle David if she can convince him that she loves him only and that he doesn't need to be jealous. So what if he's a little rough when they argue—doesn't that happen to everybody? He only left bruises one time, and she knows he didn't mean to.

Exercise 8

How to Help a Friend

Materials: Handout 2, Handout 3, flipchart or whiteboard/blackboard
Time: 30 minutes

Instructions

1. Distribute Handout 3, "How Can You Help a Friend in Need?" Discuss why certain responses are helpful or unhelpful to victims. If participants have a hard time grasping the "don'ts" (such as don't judge or don't give a lot of advice), ask them to put themselves in the shoes of a victim and think about what they would want a friend to do.

2. Have participants re-form the groups that were involved in preparing the victimization scenarios (Handout 2).

3. Have each group choose two new actors: one to play the victim, and one to play the victim's friend.

4. Give each group five minutes to prepare. Ask each pair to act out the victim in their scenario telling a friend what happened and the friend's response. Have the pairs act out the scene twice: once with the friend responding unhelpfully (but with good intentions), and then a second time, with the friend responding in a way that is helpful and supportive. While they are preparing, encourage them to incorporate the tips from Handout 3 into their supportive skits.

5. Have each group act their two skits back-to-back. After each group finishes, ask the audience for their reactions.

Handout 3

How Can You Help a Friend in Need?

- Listen to your friend.
- Believe your friend.
- Let him or her know that you are there to help.
- Don't judge.
- Resist the temptation to give lots of advice.
- Don't ask any questions that start with "Why...."
- Let him or her know the importance of getting help.
- Offer to go with your friend to get help.
- Look in the phone book or on-line together to find out who can help.
- If you can't find a local place to help, or your friend isn't ready to talk to anyone in your town, you can call the National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL or send an e-mail to *gethelp@ncvc.org*.
- Even if your friend isn't ready to get help or leave an abusive situation, don't give up on her or him. Stay supportive and listen without pressure.
- If your friend asks you to keep it a secret but you are worried about your friend's safety, talk it over with an adult you trust. If your friend is in danger, you shouldn't be the only person to know—that's a heavy weight for you to carry.
- You can call a local victim service provider or 1-800-FYI-CALL and give a hypothetical situation to see what your friend's options are. These organizations can also help you get support for yourself in this difficult situation.
- Take care of yourself, too. Get emotional support from a counselor or other trusted adult.

4 Community Assessment

Once your group is formed, you've learned some basics about victimization, and you've identified some of the potential allies in your community, you're ready to begin the community assessment process.

What Is a Community Assessment?

A community assessment is a research project you conduct to find out how a specific problem or issue affects your community and what resources exist within the community to help solve the problem. For the Teen Action Partnership for Teen Victims project, the youth complete an assessment of teen victimization in their community. Your group might want to choose a topic in victimization first (such as any of those described in detail in Section 10), and then assess that problem's impact on youth in the community. Alternatively, you may want to do a more general assessment to find out which problem local teens feel is most urgent or widespread.

> "I learned that research can actually be fun."
> Gerald, 13, from Connecticut

Why Do a Community Assessment?

The following Indian folk tale provides some clues about why it is important to use research to understand a community's problems and strengths.

Five blind men wanted to find out what an elephant was. They had one brought to them. Surrounding the elephant, each blind man reached up to touch it. The first blind man grabbed the elephant's trunk. He said, "Aha! So an elephant is like a snake." The second blind man, holding one of the elephant's legs said, "Oh, no, it's like a tree trunk." The third grabbed the elephant's ear and said, "How can you say that? An elephant is clearly like a fan." The fourth, clutching the animal's tail, said, "No, no, no! The elephant

is like a rope." The fifth, climbing up the side of the elephant, said, "You're all wrong! The elephant resembles a small hill."[7]

This story illustrates the way that most of us know about our communities—through personal experience. However, because every person's experience is different, we can all come away with a different picture of the same community, just as the five blind men each had a different idea about what an elephant is like based on the specific part of it they touched. By collecting data from a number of different sources (described below), you can create a common understanding of the problems and strengths of your community, which is the first step to creating positive change.

Steps in a Community Assessment

Step One: Define your community. Because TAP for Teen Victims focuses on improving a community's response to teen victims, the group will need to decide how broadly or narrowly they want to define their community. They may want to focus on their school or after-school program, or they may want to look at their neighborhood, town, or county. Considerations in defining community include:

- What do we consider our community to be?
- Are there natural (e.g., geographic or demographic) boundaries to this community?
- Would this community include both teen victims and the resources to help them?
- Is the community a manageable size for accomplishing our goals?
- Who are the community leaders? Who makes decisions in this community? Can we persuade them to be allies for our project?

Exercise 9 on page 51 can help you refine your definition of community for the project.

Step Two: Choose a focus. Teen victimization is a broad term and includes many different types of violence and harm. (See Section 10 for an overview of several—but not all—possible sub-topics.) Your group will probably want to narrow its focus to one or a few types of victimization. Your group may want to use the community assessment as a way to find out the most pressing concerns of teens in the community and choose their focus based on that. Or, the group may already have strong opinions about a particular crime topic and want to begin by assessing the community's needs and resources in that particular area. Either approach is fine, as long as the focus is determined by the youth. If agency constraints dictate the focus of your work (e.g., you are a sexual assault center, so your project must focus on sexual assault), there still may be sub-topics within that crime that the youth will want to highlight in their project

7 Excerpted from *Take Charge: A Youth Guide to Community Change* by the Constitutional Rights Foundation.

Exercise 9

Mapping Your Community

Sketching a map of the community you intend to focus on for the project can help you define its boundaries and answer the questions under "Defining Your Community." If the group agrees on how to define the community, create a picture of the community (e.g., school, neighborhood, or city) together and include the features listed below.

- Places where teens hang out
- Places where crime and victimization occur
- People, places, or organizations that help teens or victims or both
- Anything else you think is important about the community

If there are different concepts of community within your team (for example, some people want to focus on the high school while others want to include the entire city), have each individual or small group draw its idea of community. Then use the maps as a discussion tool for comparing the pros and cons of each community as the focus area for your TAP project. (You can return to these maps during your community assessment and throughout the project to add new information and gain new insights about your chosen community.)

(e.g., sexual assault in dating relationships, drug-facilitated sexual assault, or underage drinking and sexual assault).

Step Three: Set a goal. What do you want to learn through your assessment? Your goal might be to find out which type of teen victimization is most common, most underreported, or most serious. If you already have a victimization topic in mind, what do you want to learn about that problem in your community? For example, your goal might be to learn everything about abusive dating relationships in your community.

Step Four: Write research questions. These are more detailed than your goal and relate to the specific types of information you are seeking. For example, if your goal is to gain a better understanding of teen sexual assault in your community, your research questions may read something like the following:

- How common is sexual assault among teens in our community?
- What services or programs help sexual assault victims?
- What do authority figures such as police, teachers, and school principals think about this problem?
- What do teens think about it?

Step Five: Gather existing information. Once the group decides what it wants to learn, look for information others have already gathered on the same topic. This way you won't "reinvent the wheel," and you can build on what others have learned. You may also find it useful to compile some general background information on your community's population. Here are some sources to check for existing information related to your topic and your community:

- Literature review: Research what's been published in journals, magazines, and newspapers about your chosen topic at the library or on the Internet.

- Crime data: Look up published crime data about your topic. The FBI provides national crime statistics, and your sheriff's department can provide local crime statistics. Remember that these statistics only include crime that was reported to the police. Different crimes are reported at different rates (e.g., auto theft is the most reported crime and sexual assault the least), but overall only about half of all crime is reported to the police—an important fact to take into account when examining official crime statistics.

- Victimization data: The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice (*www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs*) publishes statistics every year on the number of people victimized by different kinds of crime. These numbers are gathered during tele-

phone and face-to-face interviews and do not rely on police reports. The whole set of statistics can be overwhelming to read, so narrow your focus either by victim age or by a specific type of crime (e.g., sexual assault).

- Child maltreatment data: To look at cases of abuse or neglect of youth by their caregivers, contact your state's child protective services (CPS) authority. (This may also be called the Department of Social Services, Department of Child and Family Services, or another similar name.) They can usually give you statistics by county. Keep in mind, as with crime data, that these statistics will cover only cases of abuse that have been reported. Of those that were reported, CPS can break down how many were investigated and whether or not they were substantiated (meaning that evidence of abuse was found).

- Service utilization data: Many nonprofit and government agencies keep statistics on the people they serve. Local agencies may be able to tell you how many teens they serve, or the most common type of victimization they see in their teen clients. You may also examine data on race/ethnicity, disability, English ability, or other factors to determine whether specific sub-groups of teen victims are being helped by your local agencies.

- Demographic data: Your town, city, or county government can provide basic data about your local population, such as how many citizens are in each age group or racial/ethnic category. Another excellent source of demographic data on your community is the U.S. Census Bureau (*www.census.gov*).

Step Six: Take stock. Look at all the information you have gathered so far and determine what other information you still need to answer your research questions.

Step Seven: Gather new information. Many different methods can be used to get new information on your topic. Some of the most common are listed below. Remember that you don't have to use every method. Pick the ones that are best suited to answering your research questions. (Exercise 10 on page 61 will help you become more familiar with these methods and practice using them.)

- Observation: An easy way to start your assessment is by traveling around your community and recording what you see that's related to your research questions, either by writing down your observations or by taking photographs or video. Visual records of community problems and resources can be extremely useful when it comes to advocating for better solutions through policy change. For example, you

may want to improve neighborhood safety by getting all the streetlights in your city in working order. Providing your public works department with a list of streetlights that need to be repaired is helpful, but providing photographs or videos of the darkened areas at night, along with the list of locations, is likely to increase the speed of the department's response. (Note: If you plan to document dangerous locations in your community, take precautions! Consider asking a police officer to accompany you, travel by car, and have a cell phone handy.)

Types of Survey Questions

1. **Multiple Choice:** Several possible answers are provided. You may tell the respondent to check only one answer, or you may want them to check all that apply.
2. **Dichotomous:** Similar to multiple choice, but only two opposite answers are provided (yes/no or true/false).
3. **Likert and Frequency Scales:** A range of options (usually five) is provided. The range can be most often to least often, strongly agree to strongly disagree, or another type of scale.
4. **Rating:** The question is answered on a scale of one to ten where one is the least or lowest and ten is the best or highest. A definition is provided for the two ends of the scale.
5. **Ranking:** A list is organized by the respondent in order of importance (or a similar criteria).
6. **Open-ended:** A space is provided so the individual can write his or her own response.
7. **Vignettes:** A scenario, scene, event, or dilemma is posed and questions are asked about it. The questions can follow any of the above formats.

Adapted from *Participatory Action Research: Curriculum for Empowering Youth,* (National Teen Action Research Center & Institute for Community Research, 2000), 4-104.

- Surveys: Anonymous surveys are a great way to obtain input from youth in your community on sensitive topics related to victimization and getting help. You can create a pencil-and-paper survey or use an on-line survey tool to ask teens' opinions about the kinds of victimization they are aware of and whether they know how to access helpful resources. When creating a survey, keep it short and limit the number of open-ended questions to one or two (if any). Closed-ended questions (where possible answers are provided) are quicker and easier to answer, and will also make it easier to analyze the responses later. For each question you want to in-

clude in your survey, ask yourself, "How are we going to use this information?" You may be interested in learning many things from other teens in your community, but stick to asking only questions that directly relate to the specific research questions you are trying to answer. Remember that after you get the surveys back, you have to read and analyze all the responses, so save yourself work and don't include extraneous questions.

- Focus Groups: A focus group is a structured, facilitated discussion aimed at discovering what a particular group of people thinks about something (e.g., an issue, slogan, piece of artwork, or program). To plan and run a focus group you need to recruit participants from the group whose opinions you are interested in, come up with a list of questions to guide the discussion, and secure a safe and convenient space for the focus group to take place. Focus groups work best with two facilitators, one to lead the discussion and the other to take notes and be available in case anything is needed during the meeting. Offering food can help put people at ease, and giving a small amount of cash or a gift to each participant is a way of thanking them for their time.

Planning for Focus Group Success

Read the first-person accounts of successful and not-so-successful focus groups in the next two boxes. Then, discuss these questions:

1. What should the organizers of the less successful group have done differently?
2. What did the organizers of the more successful focus group do well?

The Focus Group Disaster

❝ This focus group was supposed to talk about health needs in the community. There were supposed to be eight of them, one for each ward in the city. The city council representatives, one per ward, were supposed to help get their constituents out. But only two meetings actually got off the ground, which tells you that community health needs were not exactly a council priority.

"The meeting I went to was held in a function room at a popular local restaurant, on one of the coldest nights of the year, as it turned out. I'd say 20 or so souls wandered in. The room was very big and dark. People scattered themselves around—you could hardly see some of them. The local city council rep did show up, and a couple of other familiar faces. And a lot of them were talkers, so for the few citizens that happened to be there, you could see that they were not going to get into a talking contest with the city council reps, so they gravitated to dark corners and kept quiet. I don't think they really knew much of what was going on anyway.

"The meeting was sponsored by the local hospital, though they brought in an outside facilitator. But in this community, the reputation of the hospital was not the greatest (which, to the hospital's credit, was why these groups were occurring in the first place). But people didn't seem very trusting of what was going on. They didn't talk easily. At least a couple of them looked intimidated; they weren't going to stand up and tell the hospital what to do.

"The facilitator did a pretty good job, but probably worked harder than he should have had to. The members in this focus group weren't exactly forthcoming. To get ideas and opinions out of them wasn't quite like pulling teeth, but close. A couple of ideas did leak out. You couldn't say the meeting was really bad, yet it wasn't exactly warm and cozy. You can't overcome all the history and distrust in a single meeting. ❞

Source: KU Work Group on Community Health and Development, *Community Tool Box*, "Chapter 3, Section 6: Conducting Focus Groups," (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 2000), http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/sub_section_examples_1018.htm (accessed September 8, 2006).

The Successful Focus Group

❝ We put together a focus group to talk about how to improve housing for people living with HIV and AIDS. All the group members were HIV-positive themselves; some had an AIDS diagnosis. Of course, we didn't call it a 'focus group.' That would have scared people off. We just called it a 'group discussion,' something like that.

"We invited about a dozen people who had been working to improve local policy and improve local AIDS services. We knew them ahead of time. They knew us, which was good. And we offered to pay them $10.00 for coming to a one-hour meeting—not all that much, but mainly a gesture of respect—not that they couldn't use the money.

"Well, they came. I think out of about a dozen we asked, 11 showed up. And, believe it, we didn't have to work very hard to get them to speak up. You say, 'What do you think...?' and start writing. You hardly have to ask another question for the whole next hour.

"These focus group members, 'consumers,' with poor education, low incomes, lots of drug and jail histories, were very passionate, very articulate, and generally right on target on housing issues. Should I have been surprised? No, but I was anyway, a little. I agreed with them just about totally. They didn't need any prompting from me, and hardly any guidance, except to serve up a new question at the right moment, and maybe to steer them back to the question every once in a while, because some of them tended to get so heated up they would swerve off the road.

"I didn't have a recorder with me. So I took notes myself, which was probably a mistake, since it's always hard to write and lead at the same time. But I think I got the main points down. I sat down to fill out the notes soon after the meeting, so I wouldn't forget. ❞

Source: KU Work Group on Community Health and Development, *Community Tool Box,* "Chapter 3, Section 6: Conducting Focus Groups," (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 2000), http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/sub_section_examples_1018.htm (accessed September 8, 2006).

Tips for Conducting Interviews

- Make an appointment with a specific date and time over the phone. Let them know the purpose and how long the interview will take.
- Confirm the appointment a day before the interview.
- It is important to be on time. Add an extra fifteen minutes to your travel time just to be sure.
- Dress appropriately and be polite.
- Before the interview, practice what you will say. It is very helpful to do a mock interview beforehand with a friend or parent.
- Write your questions down beforehand.
- If you don't understand the person's response, ask them to clarify. Do not just move on.
- Take notes, but keep them brief so that you can still focus on the speaker. Another option is to tape record the interview, if the person has given you permission.
- Ask for literature and names of other experts.
- Send a short thank-you note within a week of the interview.

Adapted from *Active Citizenship Today: Field Guide,* (Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2005), 96.

- Interviews: Individual interviews are a good way to get information from people in key positions related to your issue. For example, if you are assessing the problem of bullying in your community, you will want to interview some bullying victims and perhaps their parents, school principals and guidance counselors, and school resource officers. The identities of people who are interviewed are usually kept confidential. When interviewing victims, it's important to be conscious of their safety—both physical and emotional—during and after the interview, and have information and referrals to give them at the end of the interview in case they want to talk to somebody for support about their victimization.

- Resource inventory: To propose solutions to a problem, you must first know what resources are already being devoted to the problem. Take some time to catalogue every organization or individual in your community that you can identify who works with your issue. You will need this information for your outreach campaign (to tell teen victims where to get help), for your advocacy efforts (to see what needs to be improved in your community's response to teens), and when you research the peer victim service phase of the program (as resources to help train and support you in that work).

- Mapping: Create or obtain a map of your community (or, if you've defined your community for the purposes of the project as a school or program, map the building, grounds, and perhaps the surrounding neighborhood). On the map, record any information you have that relates to specific locations, including problem spots, resources, and observations. A map is

a great visual tool that can inspire you to see a problem (and its solutions) in a different way, and it can also be a helpful tool when making presentations to decision makers in your community who may be too busy to read a long report.

The Assessment Stations exercise (Exercise 10 on page 61) will give your group practice with all these assessment methods and help you decide which ones you will use to answer your research questions.

Step Eight: Analyze the information. To bring your assessment to a successful conclusion, you must take the time to analyze the information you have collected and draw conclusions about your community and its needs. Statistics alone are no help unless you think about what they mean. Ask yourself these questions as you organize your data and work on your conclusions:

- Have your research questions been answered?
- What is already being done?
- What else needs to be done?
- What is going well?
- What needs to be changed?
- Are teen victims getting what they need in our community?
- How can the community's response to teen victims be improved?

Step Nine: Make a plan. Decide how you will use your assessment findings. There are many different things you can do with the information. You can turn it into an audiovisual presentation or a report to share with decision makers in your community. You can share the information with schools, organizations, and others in the community who might be interested in your topic. You can distribute the information to your local media. Think strategically about the benefit of using the assessment results to bring about change for the better. Finally, think about where the assessment leads you next. Do you want to move into outreach, advocacy, or peer service? What does the information you gathered tell you is the most urgent, most achievable, or most needed type of action? Make a plan for your next phase as a group. Then congratulate yourselves on a job well done! (See Section 8 for ideas on how to celebrate the completion of your community assessment.) The following box gives examples of how other TAP teams have handled their community assessments.

TAP for Teen Victims in Action: Stamford, Connecticut

Middle-school students in Stamford, Connecticut, decided at the beginning of their TAP project that drug abuse and drug-related crime were the top challenges to teens' safety in their community. They designed and administered a survey on teens' experience with drug-related crime, through which they learned that many teens had experienced or witnessed violence related to drug use or drug trafficking.

Their next step was to see who in the community was working to help youth and families with these issues. Using a phone book and the Internet, the students set out to learn as much as they could about their local service providers. They were surprised to find many individuals and organizations in their community that were committed to helping youth and families in crisis because of drugs or abuse.

The youth had an idea: if they hadn't known about all of these services before they started TAP, then other youth in their community probably didn't know about them either. They designed a second survey to confirm and expand upon their earlier findings about teens' experience with drugs and violence in the home and to see how much people knew about local services.

True to their hypothesis, the majority of survey respondents answered "none" or "one" to the question, "Do you know of any services other than the police that help children facing the issues we've been discussing?" The students decided that they had to raise awareness of local services and try to work with their police department to be sure that youth victims received information about the many services available in their town.

TAP for Teen Victims in Action: Vinton County, Ohio

Youth in rural Vinton County, Ohio, set out to discover what their peers felt was the top crime or act of violence against teens in their community. They designed a survey and handed it out at the county fair. To their surprise, the number one problem, according to their peers, was bullying. To learn more, they interviewed adult stakeholders, including a juvenile and family court judge, the local prosecutor, and the director of the county's only victim service program, a domestic violence shelter. They discovered that adults' perceptions of teen victimization were strongly related to their own field of work. (The judge was concerned about underage drinking, while the shelter director wanted to see more done about teen dating violence and stalking.) The difference between teens' and adults' perception of what affects teens was a valuable lesson that the youth incorporated into the rest of their TAP project by working to educate more adults about bullying and by partnering with them in their outreach and advocacy projects.

Exercise 10

Assessment Stations

Materials: Handouts 4-9, Map (see preparation below), small sticky notes, phone book, pens

Time: *Preparation:* 30 minutes
Short Version: 45 minutes
Long Version: 2 hours

Preparation

1. On a piece of poster board or chart paper, prepare a large grid. Label the vertical grid lines 1st through 20th Streets. Label the horizontal grid lines streets A through M.
2. Create five work stations in the room: (1) surveys, (2) focus groups, (3) interviews, (4) resource inventory, and (5) mapping. In each station place copies of Handout 4, plus the directions for that station (Handout 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9, according to the station).
3. In the mapping station, place the blank map on the wall and have sticky notes available.
4. Place the phone book in the resource inventory station. (A computer connected to the Internet in that station is also helpful but not necessary.)

Instructions

1. Divide participants into five small groups of two or more people, and assign each group to one of the stations. If you have fewer than ten people, you can use fewer groups, but some groups will have to complete more than one station.
2. Review Handout 4 on the five assessment tools.
3. Explain that the group is going to practice using these tools or methods in preparation for conducting their own community assessment. Tell the groups to read their instruction sheet, and give them about 10 minutes to complete the task for their station.

Short Version

4. Ask each group to report on their task and what they learned about the method they were assigned. Make sure each group shares enough details with the rest of the group so that everyone understands how each assessment tool is used.

Long Version

Skip step 4.

Exercise 10 cont.

5. After 10 minutes, have the groups rotate to the next station and spend 10 minutes on the task in that station. Each group rotates through all five stations, practicing each of the assessment tools.
6. After each group has practiced each of the five tools, have a group discussion about each tool and its pros and cons as it relates to your TAP project. Decide which tool you want to start with for your community assessment, or use several tools by dividing the group into committees, each working with a different tool.

Handout 4

Assessment Tools

Surveys

Surveys can provide useful information about people's knowledge, opinions, and experiences. They are usually anonymous, especially when asking for sensitive information, such as someone's experience with victimization. It is important to give survey respondents a number to call for help if they are upset by the survey or want more information.

Focus Groups

A focus group is a facilitated discussion. The purpose is to find out how a particular group of people (e.g., teens or parents) view an issue. The person who leads the discussion must be prepared with a list of questions designed to prompt people to share their opinions on the issue being researched. He or she must also be ready to ask follow-up questions, keep the discussion on track, and encourage quiet participants to talk. A second leader usually tape-records the discussion and/or takes notes.

Interviews

Interviews are one-on-one conversations that can take place in person or over the phone. You will probably know the identity of the people you interview, but you should usually keep it confidential (not share it with anyone outside of your assessment team). Interviews are used to find out more in-depth information about a topic. Questions should be tailored to the role or experience of the person being interviewed.

Resource Inventory

Often people are unaware of the resources in their own community. If you wanted to encourage teen victims to get help, how would you know where to tell them to go?

Mapping

Creating a map of your community that visually shows your assessment findings can be a great way to present your information. It can also give you new ideas, because seeing a picture of a problem is sometimes clearer than reading words about it. Maps can be simple and hand-drawn, or computer-generated and complex. University-based researchers can often help you with computerized mapping techniques.

Handout 5

Mapping Station Instructions

Plot the following facts on the map:

1. Police have been called to the corner of C and 3rd Streets 5 times in the past week because of robberies.
2. The high school is located at 1500 H Street.
3. There is an abandoned building at 2nd and E Streets.
4. Police headquarters is located at K and 18th Streets.
5. The rape crisis center is located at 200 A Street.
6. 40 percent of the students at the high school live in the area bounded by 1st and 6th Streets, and B and G Streets.

From interviews and surveys you learned that:

1. Youth feel there is nothing to do in their community.
2. Many people are afraid to go out in the evenings.
3. The rape crisis center doesn't get many teen clients.

What conclusions do you draw from these facts and the map?

What recommendations would you make and to whom?

Handout 6

Resource Inventory Station Instructions

Use the telephone book (and Internet, if you have access to it) to find as many resources as you can that would be helpful to teen victims. List them here:

Name of Resource	What Do They Do?	Phone Number	Web Site & E-mail

Handout 7

Survey Station Instructions

You plan to survey all the students in your high school about their experiences with sexual harassment. Write three questions for your survey:

1. A scale-type question.
Example: On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not at all and 5 being very much, how much do you enjoy chemistry? (Circle your answer.)

1 2 3 4 5

2. A multiple-choice question.
Example: Which of the following foods have you observed being eaten in the cafeteria? (Check all that apply.)

___Grapefruit
___Pizza
___Macaroni & cheese
___Potato chips
___Spinach
___Lasagna
___Fried rice
___Baloney

3. An open-ended question.
Example: If you could change one thing about school lunches, what would it be?

Handout 8

Focus Group Instructions

You are planning to hold a focus group with teens to learn their views on the relationship between police and youth in their neighborhoods and schools.

Discuss how you would handle the focus group. Create a plan for each of the following elements:

1. How would you ensure a respectful conversation?

2. How would you make sure that the participants feel free to speak honestly?

3. How would you encourage participants to say more if all they say is "I agree" or "I disagree"?

4. How would you keep one or two people from dominating the discussion?

Handout 9

Interview Station Instructions

Through your survey you learned that the majority of students in your school have witnessed or been victims of bullying or sexual harassment. You want to come up with a plan to improve the situation, but first you need to talk to some adults in the community to get more information.

Write two questions that you would ask each of the following people in an interview:

1. A school resource officer

2. A rape crisis counselor

3. The high school principal

4. A local minister or other faith leader

5 Public Awareness and Outreach

What Are Public Awareness and Outreach?

Public awareness and outreach are components of most public service advertising campaigns. These campaigns generally include both a concerted effort to get a message out to the general public or a specific audience about a particular topic (public awareness) and a call to action (outreach). The awareness aspects of the campaigns generally focus on bringing little known facts to light or educating people about the causes or consequences of a particular problem. The outreach components target one or more specific groups of people and try to persuade them to take a particular action. For example, a public awareness and outreach campaign by Mothers Against Drunk Driving both highlights the dangers of drunk driving (awareness) and urges people not to let their friends drive if they've been drinking (outreach). The campaign includes both information and a call to action. Your TAP for Teen Victims campaign will include both public awareness of your chosen victimization issue and outreach to teen victims to encourage them to get help.

What Makes a Great Campaign? Have TAP team members list all the great ad campaigns they can recall—both public service and commercial. Do they remember the "tag line"? What was the message of the campaign? Discuss as a group what makes these campaigns successful. For public service campaigns, what are their calls to action?

Why Conduct a Public Awareness and Outreach Campaign on Teen Victims?

Public awareness is important because there are many facts and dynamics involved in victimization that people may not know. This lack of knowledge contrib-

utes to victim-blaming in our society because people assume that victims can control things that they, in fact, cannot, such as the behavior of an abuser. Educating the general public, and teens in particular, about the dynamics of crimes like dating violence or bullying can be a big step toward helping everyone understand that victimization is not the fault of the victim.

Outreach to teen victims is also important. Teens who have been victimized may think that no one would understand what they're going through or that they will not be believed if they try to talk about it; or, they may want to talk to someone but not know about services that are available in their community. Outreach campaigns that let teen victims know they are not alone and that link them with safe, supportive, and confidential help can make the difference between living in pain and finding the strength and support to overcome victimization.

Steps in a Public Awareness or Outreach Campaign

Step One: Choose your topic. Your community assessment will have clarified what the topic of your outreach campaign will be. Even within particular crime categories, however, there may be particular sub-topics you specifically want to address in your campaign. Take a few minutes to brainstorm and list any sub-topics that you think might be worth including in your public awareness and outreach campaign under your main topic. For example, if your project focus is dating violence, sub-topics might include sexual assault in dating relationships, stalking, and dating violence in same-sex relationships.

Step Two: Define your goals. What do you want to accomplish through your campaign? What do you want to educate people about, and what is your call to action?

Step Three: Define your audience. Who are you trying to reach? Do you have more than one audience? Are you targeting some people for awareness and others for outreach? Once you've decided who you want to reach, try to learn as much as you can about the kinds of messages that will appeal to your audience.

Step Four: Craft your message. Decide on the communication messages of your campaign—the three or four main points that you want people to remember after they see or hear part of your campaign. Your messages will probably include one or two facts about your topic that you think most people don't know (public awareness) and at least one call to action for each audience you are trying to reach—such as teen victims, friends, and adults (outreach). Once you've defined the key points you want to communicate in your campaign, it helps to create an easily remembered phrase or tag line that relates to your messages, and include it in every piece of your campaign. For example, one TAP group used the tag line "Ain't no use for child abuse" for their campaign to educate children, youth, and adults in their community about types of abuse and where kids can get help. A consistent visual look or image also helps unify

all the pieces of the campaign, strengthening your message through repetition and reminding people of any other parts of it they have seen. This can be accomplished by using a consistent set of colors and/or developing a logo or icon that appears on every piece of your campaign (e.g., "McGruff the Crime Dog").

Step Five: Plan your campaign. Given your message, your target audience, your budget, and your community allies, decide which venues and methods will be the best for delivering your message. You can select from the methods that follow, but you may also come up with others. Be creative, be ambitious, and use your community relationships to make things happen!

Awareness and Outreach Methods

Public Service Announcements. Public service announcements, or PSAs, are a good way to reach a large audience through either the radio or television. A PSA can serve several purposes: it can announce an upcoming event of interest to the community, deliver an educational message, or target a specific group with a call to action (an outreach message). To keep PSAs short and simple, try to limit them to one or two purposes.

It's not as hard as you may think to be on television or the radio, especially if you live away from "major media market" metropolitan areas (such as New York City, Los Angeles, or Chicago). Even if you live in these urban markets, you can approach more local, community-based media with your PSA, including school-run media such as announcements and classroom TV. An easy PSA option is to simply create a script and ask local radio stations to have their on-air personalities read the script. A more time-consuming, but also more rewarding, approach is to have the youth act in the PSA. Try to secure donated studio time from radio or television stations (check your local college or university, or even a high school with a media program, in addition to professional media). Producing a professional-quality recording is probably the most challenging part of doing a PSA, but if you ask around and make some phone calls, you are likely to find someone in your community with the expertise or contacts to help you. Public service announcements are usually 15, 30, or 60 seconds long. The shorter your PSA, the more likely it is to be played multiple times.

Sample Event Radio PSA

(15-second script to be read by a radio announcer)

Youth Against Violence is holding a dance for teens to raise awareness of dating violence on Saturday, May 13, at 8:00 p.m. at Springfield High School. Entrance is free and the first hundred people through the door will receive a T-shirt. The dance will also include food, prizes, and a special guest DJ. Come join the fun and help stamp out dating violence!

Sample Educational Television PSA

Kirk Ferentz: Hi! I'm Kirk Ferentz, head coach of the University of Iowa Football Team. Being aggressive and dominating on the field is how the Hawkeyes win games. Our players have to be tough and hit hard!

VIDEO CLIP of big hit in football

Kirk Ferentz: But being aggressive and dominating in a relationship is NOT OK!

YOUTH 1: Teenagers are twice as likely as other age groups to become victims of violent crimes.

YOUTH 2: One in three teenagers will experience violence in a dating relationship.

Kirk Ferentz: Dating violence is not OK and can include using hurtful words, controlling another person, using physical violence, and unwanted sexual contact. If you or someone you know is a victim of dating violence, please seek help. Talk to an adult you trust or call one of the many agencies in your community. You are not alone, and there is help.

CLOSE:
(With a dating violence mural in the background, the following print is shown):

To get help or for more information call 800-FYI-CALL, or in Iowa City 800-284-7821, and in Cedar Rapids call 319-363-2093.

This announcement was made possible in part by funding from the Office for Victims of Crime, in conjunction with the National Crime Prevention Council and the National Center for Victims of Crime.

Source: Video PSA by the Youth Outreach for Victim Assistance (YOVA) team of the Community Corrections Improvement Association of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Youth Outreach for Victim Assistance is a program of the National Center for Victims of Crime and the National Crime Prevention Council.

Awareness Events. One way to reach many people at one time with your awareness and outreach messages is to participate in a community event or hold your own event. Street festivals, health fairs, county fairs, "mall days," and even art shows can be great places to set up a booth, hold a performance, or hand out your campaign literature. Becoming part of a community event that is already planned has several advantages, such as being guaranteed a large audience (especially if it's an annual event that many people attend), and not having to promote the event to get participation. The drawbacks are that the community event may not be tailored to the specific audience you want to reach, and your message will likely be just one of many that people hear that day. You can also create your own awareness event. Some youth-led groups have sponsored poetry slams, lock-ins, and dances at their high schools or other community locations. Planning your own event can be exciting because your group gets to make all the decisions, from the theme colors and art to the schedule of events and the list of performers. Planning an event is hard work, and special attention should be paid to promoting the event to get good attendance.

Media. Besides creating public service announcements, another way to get your message in the media is to have local media organizations (newspapers, radio stations, television stations) feature your program or event. Compile a list of media contacts (list names of specific reporters, editors, or producers if possible), and then make a practice of sending them a media advisory or news release whenever you hold an event or start a new initiative.

In a *media advisory*, you simply give the media the basic information about an upcoming event that you want them to cover. Media advisories are short and include the basic details (who, what, when, where, why) and a contact number. This is a tool to help the media quickly decide whether or not to cover an event. Send the advisory at least one week in advance of the event, and then call a day before

Promoting Your Event or Cause: Tips for Effective Fliers and Leaflets

- Have a clear and simple headline that explains what the flier is about.
- Keep your message short and simple.
- Make sure the purpose of the flier is clear. (What are you asking people to do?)
- If there are facts on your flier, double check that they are correct.
- Include the name of your organization or group and contact information.
- Pick up litter caused by your fliers.
- If someone is interested, ask for their name, address, and phone number for future support.

Adapted from *Active Citizenship Today: Field Guide*, (Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2005), 99.

the event to find out whether the reporter has any questions or needs any additional information.

A **media advisory** is a way of saying to your local press, "There is an important event coming up that your paper (or station) should cover."

A **news release** is a way of saying to your local press, "Something happened (or is about to happen) that is worthy of a news story in your paper (or on your show). We are informing you about current events in the community."

If you learn that a member of the media is planning to attend your program event, your group should nominate one or two teens to be the spokespersons for the group, and these people should be well prepared for possible interviews. (See box below.) You should also designate someone to be the media guide or ambassador—greeting media representatives as they arrive, explaining what's happening, and introducing them to the people you want them to speak with.

Use a *news release* to announce something news worthy, such as the launch of a new program, the findings of your community assessment, or the receipt of an award by a member of your team. A news release generally covers something that has just happened. If the media decide to "pick up" the story, they may contact your group for interviews for more information. If they don't have time to hold interviews but think the item is interesting, they may print text directly from your news release, so be sure the writing is clear and concise and conveys important details. Try to highlight the most newsworthy aspects of your program or event—for example, being part of a larger national effort, addressing a new "hot topic" or trend, or using innovative methods.

Remember that despite the best efforts at getting publicity, sometimes events occur that cause the media to drop stories (i.e., your event) at the last minute to cover others. While this can be disappointing, it's simply the way the news media works. Do not give up—keep sending releases whenever you have news to share, and stay in touch with the reporters who intended to cover your event but did not make it there. They may make an effort to visit your group and interview the youth when other news slows down.

Be Prepared for Interviews with the Media

Sample questions to prepare for:

- What have you learned from your experience with this project?
- When did you first get involved with this cause?
- What motivated you to get involved?
- What is your group trying to accomplish?
- Why are you focusing on this particular problem? How big a problem is it in this community?

Tips for giving a good interview:

- Make sure you have all your facts and information straight (including the name of your group and sponsors, and what any acronyms stand for).
- Let people know how they can help.
- Stick to important information about your project—try not to get sidetracked by irrelevant questions. (You can say something like "that's a good question, but what people really need to know is ….")
- Have a story or anecdote to share.
- Never say "No comment" or "go off the record."
- If you don't know the answer to a question, don't make one up. It's OK to say "I don't know." Offer to get back to the reporter with additional information.
- For television interviews, speak clearly and look at the reporter, not the camera.

For a helpful pre-interview checklist, see YouthActionNet's toolkit on communication at *www.youthactionnet.org/toolkit/communicate.cfm*.

The Nuts and Bolts of Writing a News Release

- Keep the release to no more than two pages, double-spaced.
- Create a short headline (8-10 words) that captures the essence of your announcement.
- Be sure to include a contact name, phone number, and e-mail in case the reporter needs more information.
- Include a release date (e.g., FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, or RELEASE DATE: MAY 21, 2007).
- Be sure your release answers the five W's (who, what, where, when, why).
- Include one or two quotations from youth involved in the project and/or adult project leaders or community leaders.
- Type "###" at the end of the release (to let the reader know he or she has reached the end).

For more information, see the news release and media advisory formats in the Media Stations exercise (Exercise 11, page 80) at the end of this chapter, and check out YouthActionNet's communications toolkit at *www.youthactionnet.org/toolkit/communicate.cfm*.

Print Materials. Good old-fashioned posters and brochures definitely have their place in public awareness and outreach. Some people are more comfortable taking information with them that they can read over in private, and posters in a high-traffic area that are read over and over again are a great low-cost way to get a message out. Important things to consider are the reading level of the target audience and creating materials that are eye-catching enough to make someone want to read them. The size and location of materials are also factors to consider. For example, small "palm cards" can be subtly picked up or given out without drawing attention, which may be important for teens who don't want others to know or think they have been victimized. Posters should be large enough to be read from some distance. Consider placing both posters and take-away materials in semi-private locations such as bathroom stalls or fitting rooms to give people an opportunity to jot down sensitive information or take a brochure without being seen.

Classroom Presentations. A classroom is a great place to start educating other teens about your chosen victimization topic. You may start with your own school or even with one teacher who is willing to give you a class period. Usually the best place to start is with a health or life skills class. Preparation is key: students should practice their presentation several times, plan for various scenarios (for example, a peer who challenges their statements and people with

short attention spans), and learn techniques of effective public speaking. Using a loud and clear voice, facing and engaging the audience, and making the presentation interactive will help keep the attention of the audience. Teachers and others will spread the word about effective youth-led presentations, and youth often end up presenting at schools other than their own (which is sometimes easier, as there may be less pressure when presenting to people you don't know).

Educational Theater. Theater is a great way to convey information while retaining the attention of a younger audience. Avoid creating skits that provide a superficial treatment of the topic and wrap up neatly with a happy ending; teens will dismiss these as unrealistic. Instead, have the youth performers come up with real situations from their experience and dramatize the uncertainties, conflicting emotions, pressures, and choices faced by teens in relation to the skit topic. As an additional step, involve the audience by inviting them to enter into the skit and modify its outcome, and/or have the performers remain in character for a post-skit discussion in which the audience is invited to question the characters' actions, motivations, or failure to act. This type of work is challenging and requires extensive practice and preparation on the part of the youth actors.

This sampling of outreach methods is just a starting point. Your group may come up with other creative outreach methods or venues for your campaign. Evaluate the potential for reaching your target audience with your message, check your budget, and go for it! See the box below for an example of a TAP for Teen Victims outreach campaign.

TAP for Teen Victims in Action: Aberdeen, Maryland

Youth in Aberdeen, Maryland, wanted to educate their community about child abuse and teach kids who were being harmed where they could get help. The group created a coloring book with simple line drawings and phrases to illustrate the different types of child abuse in ways young children could understand. They distributed hundreds of the books, along with small packs of crayons, at community events and festivals, local after-school programs, churches, and convenience stores. To reach teens and adults, they created an informational brochure, which they distributed through some of the same venues. Each piece of their campaign included both facts about child abuse and resources for victims to get help. Finally, they created a skit which they performed at a community fair. The skit depicted a teen victim of physical abuse talking to a friend at school. Instead of showing the scenario's end, the actors stopped performing and encouraged the audience to come up with different endings for the skit based on how they thought the friend might be most helpful.

Exercise 11

Media Stations: Creating a Mock Awareness and Outreach Campaign

Materials:

- Campaign planning worksheets (Handout 10) (one for each group plus some extras)
- Instructions for each station (Handouts 11-14)
- Paper and pens for skit and news release stations (a computer in the news release station is helpful, if feasible)
- Tape recorder or digital voice recorder for PSA station
- Poster board, colored paper, markers, magazines, scissors, glue, and pencils in the print materials station

Time: *Preparation:* 30 minutes (plus time to gather or acquire materials)
Exercise: About 3-½ hours total, can be broken into two parts:

- Stations: 2-½ hours
- Practice and Presentation of mock campaigns: 45-60 minutes

Preparation

1. Set up four media stations with work space, materials, and copies of the station instructions as described below. Your large group will be divided into four smaller groups, so prepare each space to accommodate one-fourth of the entire group.

A. Skits—Space large enough for the group to move around. Tables and chairs are not necessary, but the group may want pens and paper or chart paper taped to the wall to plan their skit. (Handouts 10 and 11)

B. Audio public service announcement—Space with minimal background noise, preferably in a room with a door that can be closed. Tables and chairs optional. Audio cassette recorder with tape (plus batteries or electrical outlet) or digital voice recorder, paper, and pens. (Handouts 10 and 12)

C. Print materials—Work space with tables and chairs. Youth will want to spread out to work on their creations in this station. Poster board, colored paper, markers, magazines, scissors, glue, and pencils. (Handouts 10 and 13)

D. News release—A computer station or laptop is ideal, but if not feasible, have plenty of paper and pens for drafts of the news release. (Handouts 10 and 14)

2. Plan a rotation scheme, deciding the order in which groups will rotate through the four stations. If your group is very large and the stations are spread out, you might want to have signs indicating where each station is located.

Exercise 11 cont.

General Instructions

1. **Explanation of the exercise (10 minutes).** With the entire group gathered together, explain that they will be divided into four sub-groups. Each sub-group will be assigned (or will choose) a topic and will create a mock awareness/outreach campaign by rotating through four media stations. Each group will create an audio PSA, some posters and other written materials, a news release, and a skit to educate the public and reach out to victims on their selected topic. Emphasize that the groups will have just 20 minutes in each station, and the goal of the exercise is simply for them to practice the various outreach methods, not to come away with a perfect, finished campaign. While they may decide to use elements of what they create in this exercise in their actual campaign, they will have much more time to work on that campaign together as a group. This exercise just provides a taste of what they can do.
2. **Break up into 4 sub-groups (5 minutes).** You may want to assign sub-groups based on the particular dynamics and talents of your team, or you can just have everyone "number off" from one to four.
3. **Select the topics of the mock campaigns (5 minutes).** The topic may be assigned, you may let the groups choose, or you may have them pick a topic "out of a hat." The presentations will be more interesting if each group chooses a different topic. However, if your group has already decided the focus of its campaign, you might want to have the groups stick with that topic or different aspects of it. You can use the fact sheets in Section 10 as handouts, so the groups have basic information on their topics to use in creating their mock campaigns.
4. **Plan the mock campaign (20 minutes).** Each group goes to its first station and completes the *Creating Your Public Awareness Campaign* worksheet (Handout 10). Encourage the groups not to get too hung up on details. The worksheet is just an overview of the things they will need to think about when planning their real campaign. The most important decisions to be made during this period regard the audience and the message of the mock campaign.
5. **Station rotation (20 minutes per station, approximately 1-½ hours total).** It is helpful to have an adult facilitator (or an experienced teen) in each station to guide the groups through the exercise. Facilitators should be careful, though, not to take over the group or give too many directions. They are only present to be sure the group understands the task and to remind them of time limits.
6. **Break (15 minutes).** If you plan to continue with the practice and presentation of mock campaigns, give everyone a 15-minute break, then have them re-group in their small groups.
7. **Practice presentation (20 minutes max).** Have the small groups plan how to present their mock campaign to the rest of the group. They should decide who will present each element of the

campaign and in what order. They may want to do some last touch-ups on their posters or other materials, but remind them that this is only practice for the real campaign.

8. **Mock campaign presentations (20-30 minutes).** Each small group presents its mock campaign. After each presentation, the facilitator should ask for feedback from the rest of the group on the strong points of the campaign. Remind the youth that they can incorporate the best elements of the mock campaigns into their actual campaign.

Handout 10

Creating Your Public Awareness Campaign

Topic: _____

Research: Who is your audience? What do members of this audience currently think about your topic? How do they currently behave?

Objective: What do you hope to accomplish? What do you want your audience to learn about the topic? How do you want them to change their behavior?

Theme/Message: What message do you want to communicate to your audience? Try to make this as clear and specific as possible.

Implementation: How will you get your message out to your audience? What specific tactics or strategies will you use?

Challenges: What are the possible challenges you may face? Do you have alternate plans if your ideal strategies don't work out?

Evaluation: How will you know if you have reached your objectives? How can you measure the impact of your campaign?

Handout 11

Skit Instructions

Create a short drama to illustrate the issues; it may eventually develop into a longer play or TV public service announcement. The skit should show:

- What exactly the crime is.
- Possible feelings and other consequences that might result from being a victim of that particular crime.
- A scene depicting the victim reaching out to a trusted adult or friend for help or support.
- Some type of resolution. (The whole problem won't be solved in a five-minute skit, but try to end on a hopeful note. Make it believable.)

Keep these theater tips in mind when practicing and presenting your skit:

- Never turn your back to the audience.
- Speak with a loud and clear voice.
- Don't talk over each other.
- Don't have action going on in two places at once; the audience won't know where to focus. If you have simultaneous action, try having one group freeze while the other acts its part, and vice versa.
- Try to keep it realistic (not corny), and don't laugh if the scene isn't funny. Show others that you take the topic seriously.

Handout 12

Audio Public Service Announcement Instructions

Create a short PSA that could be played on the radio or the school public announcement system, or made into an audio Webcast or podcast. Keep these things in mind:

- PSAs are brief: the maximum air time on radio is usually 60 seconds, but it will probably be played more often if it's just 15 to 30 seconds.
- The PSA should have a clear concise point, which is usually best captured in a memorable tag line.
- The message of the PSA should educate as well as call the listener to action.
- Remember to always let people know how to get additional information or support (such as through a phone number, Web site, or both).
- Write out the script first; practice it a couple of times; tape the spot; and then review it.

Handout 13

Print Materials Instructions

Print materials include posters, palm cards, bookmarks, and brochures.

- Create at least two items from the list above.
- Each item should contain images and words that illustrate your campaign message.
- Use the print materials both to raise awareness of the topic and to let teen victims know where to get more support or information.
- Make your items eye-catching.
- Too many words or images can make the materials "busy" and hard to read. Keep it simple.
- Be bold, be daring, be creative!

Handout 14

Media Advisory and News Release Instructions

A media advisory briefly announces an upcoming event that the media might want to cover, while a news release explains to the media the significance of something that has just happened.

Use the following formats to write a media advisory about an event your team will hold (you can make one up for this exercise) and a news release to announce the launch of your TAP for Teen Victims project or your community assessment results.

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE
Contact:
Name
Organization/School Name
Telephone Number
Fax Number
E-mail Address
Web site

HEADLINE (e.g., Dance to Highlight Dangers of Abusive Teen Dating Relationships)

Who:
What:
When:
Where:
Why:

One to two sentences that describe your group.

# # #

Handout 14 cont.

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE

Contact:
Name
Organization/School Name
Telephone Number
Fax Number
E-mail Address
Web site

Headline (e.g., Local Teens Launch Effort to Aid Youth Victims)

City, State, Date — Opening paragraph (should contain: who, what, when, where, why).

Remainder of body text: include any relevant information about your event or organization. Also include quotations from youth, community members, and others who benefit from your work. Use the "inverted pyramid" format: put the most important information first, followed by supporting information, then quotations, and possibly a few statistics.

If there is more than one page, use:

-more-

(The top of the next page):
Abbreviated headline (page 2)

Remainder of text.

Brief paragraph or blurb on your group or organization.

# # #
(indicates news release is finished)

6 Policy Advocacy

What Is Policy Advocacy?

To advocate, according to *American Heritage Dictionary*, is "to speak, plead, or argue in favor of."[8] Advocacy can be done by individuals or groups, on behalf of individuals, groups, or ideas. In individual advocacy, one person advocates for another, usually because that person is not in a position to "speak, plead, or argue" on his or her own behalf. In this section of the toolkit, however, we will discuss advocating as a group in favor of changes to policies that affect teen victims. In a sense, your group is advocating for teen victims (arguing for their needs to be met) by advocating for policy change.

Policies can be laws, rules, or regulations that are defined by federal or state legislatures, other branches of government, institutions, or even heads of households. (What's the policy in your home about teen curfews?) These policies are basically statements (both written and unwritten) about what will or should be done in certain circumstances. Let's take the issue of bullying, for example, and look at different types of policies that might affect youth who are bullied.

At the **federal** level, civil rights laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age. These policies can help bullying victims who are targeted for these reasons. (In some court cases, gender identity and sexual orientation have been determined to be aspects of "sex" for purposes of determining a victim's rights under civil rights law).

Many **state** governments have recently passed laws requiring all public schools to have anti-bullying policies in place. You can check to see whether your state has

8 *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=advocate (accessed September 11, 2006).

such a law, and advocate for one if it doesn't. Criminal law is also defined at the **state** level, so your state laws will determine whether a bully's actions—such as assault, robbery, or stalking—are illegal and will indicate what the potential consequences are for breaking those laws.

At the **local** level, your school system may or may not have a policy specifically about bullying, but it probably defines what types of conduct are not permissible in the student code of conduct. You can check to see if your school district has a policy about bullying, and see whether the policy holds students who bully accountable and is sensitive to victims' rights to safety and support.

Institutional policies can include those of your work place, after-school program, or youth group, for example. Is bullying prohibited in these settings? How is the behavior defined, and what are the consequences for the bully and the options for the victim?

Why Advocate for Policy Change?

As described above, there are many different types and levels of policies that affect teen victims of crime. Nearly all of the policies that affect teen victims were developed without input from teens, and some do not even take youth—or victims—into account. (For example, policies about victims' rights to confidentiality are not always applied to teen victims, even if the law makes no distinction about the age of the victim.) Some policies have bad effects on teen victims because they do not recognize the dynamics of victimization—for example, policies that refer all cases of bullying to a mediation program without regard to the power difference between a bully and a victim or to the victim's safety before, during, and after the mediation. Sometimes a *lack of policy* has a bad

About Power

"It's easy to believe myths about power. Adults have it, young people don't. Rich people have it, low income people don't. Police officers have it. Doctors and lawyers have it. People of color don't. Fast-food cooks don't. 'Having power' depends a lot on perception—what you THINK about other people, and what stereotypes and images exist about them.

"Understanding power and dispelling the myth that only a special few can have it are the first steps toward effective organizing for change. . . . The key to making substantive change is getting power. And the keys to getting power are getting informed, getting organized, getting allies, getting resources, and getting smart about how to shift your relationship with decision makers."

From *The Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change*, by Leigh Dingerson and Sarah H. Hay, (Washington, DC: Alliance for Justice, 1998), 9.

effect because victims have no standing to demand safety or support if these rights are not explicitly given to them in writing. A lack of policy can also contribute to inconsistent and confusing responses to victimization, leaving victims with no assurance that their situation will be handled in a way that is helpful rather than harmful.

Advocating for good policies is one way to make lasting change in your community. If you are successful in advocating for a new and improved policy, the impact of that change should last well beyond the end of your project.

Policy advocacy requires analyzing current policies on your topic, deciding as a group what kind of change you think is required, learning who has the power to make that change, and then developing and executing a strategy to convince the decision maker(s) to make the change you seek.

Steps in Policy Advocacy

Step One: Review your assessment findings and ask questions. Look at the conclusions you made at the end of your community assessment, and use each statement as a prompt for questions. Write the assessment finding up on the board (e.g., "Teens do not know about existing services"). Then, as a group, brainstorm questions prompted by that statement. (For example, you might come up with questions such as: why don't they know? Are the services actually available to them? Is someone failing to provide information, or is information being intentionally withheld?) The process of generating questions will lead you to think more deeply about what other information you need and what policies might need to be changed to improve the current situation.[9]

Step Two: Analyze current policies. Research what policies are already in place at the different levels mentioned above (federal, state, local, and institutional) that relate to your chosen crime topic and the questions you generated in Step One. If policies do exist, ask yourself if they help or hurt victims, whether there is room for improvement, and if the policies are being fully implemented. If there are no policies related to your topic, think about what an ideal policy would look like. (You can look to other towns or states for examples.) If existing policies aren't being followed, think about what would need to happen for the policies to be enforced.

Step Three: Review your goals and decide what type of change is needed, and at what level. If your goal is for teen victims to be safer and to receive the support they need, think about what types of changes to current policies will help achieve those goals. You may decide to concentrate on an institutional policy, such as in your own school or organization, or you may

9 For more on the technique of generating questions as a form of advocacy, see the Right Question Project, Inc., at *www.rightquestion.org*.

decide to mount a campaign to change your state's law. You might decide to divide into committees and work for change at different levels at the same time. But be careful not to spread your team too thin. Policy work can be daunting, and everyone will need to give and receive a lot of mutual support. Most importantly, be sure to choose a change that your group cares about and really believes is important. This will make the work more meaningful and help keep everyone motivated.

On Choosing Your Advocacy Issue

❝ It is important to choose an issue that is winnable. Focus on concrete solutions that lie in the hands of people you can directly persuade or influence. If the person who will ultimately decide whether you win or lose is five states away, your campaign will suffer from a lack of direct contact with the decision maker. ❞

From *The Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change,* by Leigh Dingerson and Sarah H. Hay, (Washington, DC: Alliance for Justice, 1998), 25.

Step Four: Find out who has the power to make the change you want. This person or persons may be more or less evident. If you want to change a state law, the decision makers are your state legislators and governor. If you want to change school policy, you may start with the principal but find out that the real decision-making power sits with the superintendent or the school board. If the school board is appointed by the mayor, you may need to get the mayor on your side. If the school board members are elected, you will have to take politics into consideration. Vocal parents almost always have influence over school board decisions, so think about getting yours on your side.

Step Five: Find out the current position of the decision makers and what pressures and influences they are susceptible to. Are the decision makers likely to be for, opposed, or indifferent to the change you are proposing? Develop a strategy based on sharing with the decision maker why your change is the right thing to do (moral appeal) and why it is also in his or her best interest as a policy maker (self-interest or political appeal). Because your proposed change will benefit youth, it can help to find out if the decision makers have children or grandchildren and ask them to think about how the policy would benefit the children and teens in their lives.

Step Six: Recruit influential allies. By this point in the project, you have probably talked to a considerable number of people in the community who support your efforts. Review your list of contacts and highlight anyone who may have influence over the decision makers you are trying to persuade. Brainstorm the names of other people who might have influence and add them to your list as well. It's usually only helpful to approach these people if you already have a

contact or "in" with them. If the influential contact is just as difficult to approach as the decision maker, then don't bother—focus your efforts on the decision maker.

Step Seven: Determine the best approach to the decision makers. On the continuum from friendly to confrontational, what type of approach is most likely to move the decision makers you need to influence? If you feel that they simply need to be educated about the potential benefits of your proposed policy change and they will see the light (they just hadn't thought about it this way before), then take a friendly approach. If the evidence tells you that the decision makers are already dead-set against the change you want to make, you might skip right to a more confrontational approach (but first consider whether the decision makers can be budged at all. If not, you may want to choose a more winnable change). If you're unsure where the decision makers stand, start with a respectful and friendly approach and be ready to escalate your efforts if you don't get the response you want. After an initial negative response, you might want to let the decision makers know that you have a full-fledged campaign that you are ready to implement. If they see that you're organized and serious, they may give a second look to your request before you take your actions to the next level. Even if you determine that a confrontational approach is the best way to go, keep it positive and non-violent. It would set a poor example for an anti-violence group to try to bully someone into making change! See the specific tactics listed below for more information on the different ways to approach decision makers.

Step Eight: Choose your tactics. Below is a list of possible tactics to advocate for policy change, loosely organized from friendly to confrontational. A creative group of youth will probably come up with several additional tactics. Be sure that any tactic you choose fits with your overall approach and makes the best use of your knowledge about the decision makers you are trying to influence. Be prepared with a Plan A and Plan B (and maybe even a Plan C). Policy change often takes hard work and a long-term commitment, but you can maximize your effectiveness with a good strategy, strong allies, and well-executed tactics that match your goals and strategy.

Advocacy Tactics

One-on-One Meeting. If there is one primary decision maker to influence, try to get an appointment to meet with that person individually. One individual or a small group can go to speak to the person. If you go as a group, be clear about the roles of each person in the meeting. Keep in mind that you may only get five minutes of the person's time, so it's essential to be well-prepared and organized. Practice making a two-minute pitch that includes:

- the issue you want to discuss,
- why it is important to you,
- the change you are seeking,

- how your change will improve the situation,
- what you are asking the decision maker to do,
- and why he or she should do it. (Remember to appeal to both the decision maker's sense of moral fairness and his or her self-interest.)

The decision maker will probably appreciate having written information that supports your presentation, so bring along your materials or send them in advance—or both. Be prepared to answer any questions with facts you have discovered through research (including your community assessment and Internet research on how other communities are handling the issue). Remember to thank the person for their time before you leave. You should also follow up with a written thank-you note within a week of the meeting.

Presentation to a Group. If you are trying to influence a group of decision makers, such as a city council or a school board, try to get on the agenda of one of their meetings to make a brief (5- to 10-minute) presentation. For your presentation, you will want to include the same elements of your argument that you would for an individual meeting (see above), but the delivery will be different. Clear and well-designed visual aids can help convey information to a group, but be sure not to present so much visual information that the audience is overwhelmed. A simple PowerPoint presentation, and photographs, charts, or maps showing your community assessment data can help the listeners focus on the main points of your presentation. The presentation may be made by one individual or a small group, but everyone's role should be well defined, and the presenters should practice several times in advance of the meeting. It's also a good idea to have concise handouts containing the main points of your presentation for both the decision makers and the audience to take home.

If the meeting is open to the public, other members of the group can attend to show support for the presenters and for the proposed policy change. Be sure to stay until the end of the meeting. There may be additional allies in the room who will want to talk to you after the meeting to offer their support. By the same token, if you see people in the audience that you would like to have as allies, strike up a conversation with them before or after the meeting. Making these contacts is called *networking* and is an important skill in all types of advocacy.

Letters and Petitions. If you cannot schedule a face-to-face meeting, or the meeting is unsuccessful, try a letter-writing campaign or petition drive to reach the decision makers. The more people who write letters or sign your petition, the more impact this tactic will have. When communicating in writing with legislators or other decision makers, keep in mind:

- Hard-copy letters in hand-addressed envelopes usually receive the most attention.
- If time is short, e-mail and faxes will do the job more quickly, but you'll need to collect more of them to make an impact.

- People in public office are kept there or removed by *voters*. Therefore, collect as many signatures as possible from registered voters ages 18 and older. Where youth under 18 are signing, they should indicate when they will be eligible to vote and that they intend to exercise their civic duty to vote as soon as they are able.
- Use the proper term of respect when addressing your letter (e.g., "The Honorable [name]" or "Dear Representative X").
- Verify the address, fax number, or e-mail address where you will be sending your correspondence. It would be a shame for your efforts to be wasted because your correspondence didn't reach its destination.
- If you do not receive a response within a week, follow up with a phone call, making reference to your correspondence.

Sample Phone Call Script

Hello, my name is Charles Brown, and I live in Jefferson. I mailed the senator a letter last week asking for her support for Bill X. I would like to know her position on this legislation.

Public Information Campaigns. Just as you use the media to try to reach crime victims and encourage them to get help, you can use the media to try to influence decision makers to support your policy proposal. Follow the steps outlined in Section 5 on public awareness and outreach campaigns, keeping in mind your goal of policy change and your audience of decision makers (and the people who can influence them). Public information campaigns are especially useful with elected officials, as they need public good will to be re-elected. Use their dependence on votes to your advantage by getting the public on board with your policy proposal and putting political pressure on your official(s) to support the change you seek.

Marches, Rallies, and Sit-ins. These are tactics of protest to be used when decision makers are unmoved, unresponsive, or opposed to your policy proposal. These tactics require gathering a large number of participants and keeping the protest non-violent to work; violent protestors tend to discredit themselves in the eyes of both the general public and the decision makers, which is counterproductive to winning support for your issue. The rights to peaceably assemble and to petition the government are protected in the Constitution, but you may need a permit to hold your event in a public space. Check with your local police.

Remember that one tactic is not a campaign. You need to put careful thought into your goals and overall strategy, and be prepared to try several different tactics to achieve your goals. Be sure to celebrate small wins along the way to keep up your spirits and your momentum. (See the following box for an example of a TAP advocacy project and Section 8 for celebration ideas.)

TAP for Teen Victims in Action: Round Rock, Texas

Adolescents Against Abuse, a group of high school students from McNeil High School in Round Rock, Texas, developed the following policy recommendations as part of their participation in TAP. The group was facilitated locally by SafePlace in Austin, Texas.

To develop their policy recommendations, the youth studied their school's sexual harassment policy and other related policies and interviewed the principal, campus police officer, assistant principal, counselor, and band director about how school staff would handle a sexual assault taking place during a school activity (such as a band trip). They also spoke with two students at their school who had been sexually assaulted to learn about their perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of current school policy and practice.

Their recommendations were:

1. Information regarding peer-to-peer sexual assault should be added to the student handbook. This information (based on the policies of their district) should include the following facts that most students are not aware of:

    A. There is a zero tolerance policy regarding retaliation from any students (to protect the victim and encourage reporting).

    B. During the school investigation and any court proceedings, the accused is sent to the alternative high school in the district.

    C. A sexual assault can be reported to any school counselor, principal, assistant principal, or campus police officer.

2. Sexual assault should be included in the definition of sexual harassment so that all provisions of the sexual harassment policy also apply to any case of sexual assault against a student on campus or at a school-sponsored activity.

3. All adults who travel with youth should be aware that sexual assaults do happen at away events, and they need to know how to handle the situation both legally and sensitively, supporting the victim and keeping him or her safe from the perpetrator and any retaliation from other students. Adult supervisors must know:

    A. An assault must be reported to the police in the location where it occurred.

    B. Parents should be notified right away.

    C. Anything else that protects the rights of the victim.

4. Adults who travel with students should do the following:

    A. Minimize any opportunities for sexual assault to happen during away events and have that be part of their planning.

    B. Talk to students who travel for school events about sexual assault, what to do if it happens to them, and how students can minimize their risk. Also, outline the consequences faced by someone who sexually assaults another person.

    C. Define sexual assault and mention the types of "hazing" that fall within that category and that those behaviors will not be tolerated.

    D. Mention the types of support that are available at school and in the community if you are sexually assaulted.

Exercise 12

Advocacy Role Play

Materials: Handout 15 or board to write up scenarios

Time: *Long version:* 1 hour
Short version: 30 minutes

Long Version

1. Have youth divide into groups of three.
2. Hand out scenarios (Handout 15) or write them on the board.
3. Have each group pick one scenario to begin. One person should play the teen, one should play the decision maker, and the third person should observe the interaction and give feedback on what went well and what could have been done better.
4. Within each group of three, rotate roles and act out a different scenario, until all three people have had a chance to play all three roles, and each group has worked on each scenario.
5. Gather as a large group to debrief the exercise by discussing what was difficult about speaking to busy and indifferent decision makers, and what the observers thought worked well. You can make a list of guidelines as a group based on everyone's observations of the role plays.

Short Version

1. Divide into pairs and assign one role play to each pair.
2. Each pair practices their role play for five minutes and then performs it for the whole group.
3. The whole group gives feedback on what was successful and what to improve.

Note: The person playing the decision maker should make the teen work to get their attention. Be busy, indifferent, dismissive—but don't make it impossible. If you think the teen is presenting a convincing argument, then give a positive response.

Handout 15

Advocacy Scenarios

1. You want to interview the school principal about the school's sexual harassment policy. (You can play out setting up the interview appointment, conducting the interview, or both.)

2. You have made an appointment with your state senator to discuss a bill that would require all school districts in your state to have specific anti-bullying policies and programs in place. You want your senator to support the bill.

3. You approach the executive director of the local rape crisis agency to find out what its policy is about teen victims' rights to confidentiality.

7 Peer Victim Service

What Is Peer Victim Service?

Peer victim service is exactly what it sounds like—young people providing services to their victimized peers. It can take many different forms, but the basic idea is youth helping youth overcome the pain of victimization.

Although teens commonly talk to each other about their problems, peer victim service is NOT something that teens should begin doing on their own. Victim service is difficult work and, to be done well and not harm the helper, requires good training and supervision. Therefore, if you don't have one already, you'll need to form a partnership with a victim service organization in your area that is willing to accept your help and provide the training and support the youth need to be competent and healthy peer helpers.

Peer victim service can take many forms, including one-on-one help, co-leading support or educational groups, or serving as a peer hotline counselor. It is possible that your local victim service providers will tell you that they are not prepared to accept youth as direct service volunteers at this time. If so, another option is for the youth in your team to serve as advisors to the victim service provider, helping to evaluate the services provided by their adult staff and volunteers and make them more teen-friendly.

Why Do Peer Victim Service?

Many teens become involved with TAP for Teen Victims because they want to help their victimized peers, and peer victim service provides a chance for TAP teens to offer that help directly. In addition, youth can be great resources to their peers, and some teen victims will feel much more comfortable initially talking with someone their own age than talking to an adult. If a victim-serving organization has never before involved youth as volunteers or staff, it can learn a great deal by getting the

perspective of youth on its services for teens. When victim service organizations act on the recommendations of their youth advisors, their services to teen victims are sure to improve, and they may start to attract more teen clients.

Steps in Developing a Peer Victim Service Project

This part of TAP for Teen Victims largely depends on the readiness of your victim service organization to work with you. Your TAP group may, in fact, already be sponsored by a victim-serving organization, in which case you're off to a great start. If your group is working in another context (such as a school or an after-school program), then you will need to build a relationship with the agencies in your community that serve victims.

Step One: Find a partner agency. Go back to the resource inventory you compiled as part of your community assessment. You should have a good list of agencies in your community that help teen victims in some way—sexual assault and domestic violence centers, comprehensive crime victim assistance centers, mental health agencies, homicide survivor groups, police departments, social service agencies, child protective services, hospitals, or others. An urban area may provide many agencies to choose from, while a rural area may have more limited options. Consider the following questions when deciding which agency to approach with your proposal to provide peer victim service:

- What agency deals most directly or most often with the particular crime we have chosen as our focus?
- Which agency works the most with teens?
- Which agency most needs our help?
- Which agency will welcome our help?
- Which individuals in the community have been supportive of our project, and what are their connections to victim-serving organizations?

Don't overlook your school as a possible place to provide peer victim service. However, your group will still need training and guidance from a professional—perhaps a school counselor or school social worker, who will ideally bring in a local victim advocate to help train your group to be sure the youth are well prepared to handle discussions about victimization with peers.[10]

Step Two: Approach the potential partner with several ideas. While your team may have specific ideas about how it wants to support victimized teens, remember to be flexible and recognize the constraints of the sponsoring organization. That said, if your team wants to propose something specific, such as a youth-led teen support group, go for it. Just be sure to research other organizations or communities that have programs similar to the one you're proposing,

10 If there is no victim-serving agency in your community that can provide training to youth as peer helpers, contact the National Center for Victims of Crime at 202-467-8700 to inquire about training.

and know what your peer helpers will need from the partnering agency, and what they will bring to it. Think ahead about some of the practical challenges involved in implementing your idea, and research solutions to create a solid proposal.

As mentioned above, an agency may be more receptive to teens as advisors (such as on a youth advisory council) than as direct service providers, and some youth may also be more comfortable in this role. Teens can provide important feedback to the agency and educate the adult professionals about how to make their services more acceptable to teens. This advice is both a form of peer service and a type of advocacy because your work is likely to create lasting change in the way the agency handles teen clients, including policy changes.

Step Three: Work it out! You may engage in a period of discussion or negotiation as the youth and the agency define what role the teens will play. The arrangement can take many different forms, but no matter how the youth are involved in serving victims, a few basics apply:

- Teen volunteers (or staff members) need training on the same topics that adult staff and volunteers do before working directly with victims. These topics include the basic dynamics of victimization, victim empathy, the empowerment approach to serving victims, boundaries and self-care, and confidentiality and its exceptions.
- Once trained, teens will also need quality supervision—just as any other staff member or volunteer would. The main purposes of supervision are to give the volunteer or staff member an opportunity to debrief difficult interactions, to make sure that good practice is being followed, and to make sure the helper is also taking care of him or herself. All victim service workers need this type of support from a supervisor, but it is especially critical when serving peers (including adults who work with their own peers), because of the potential for overlap between the personal and the helping relationship. The dynamics can be complicated, so it's essential to establish and maintain clear boundaries and guidelines.

Step Four: Evaluate. When you start on your peer service venture, make an agreement with the agency or school to meet regularly to review both progress and difficulties. Be sure to include opportunities for two-way feedback: both the teens and the adults will need to evaluate themselves and each other on good points and areas for improvement. Making the arrangement work should not be the burden of one party; both sides have to put time and energy into the project for a good outcome.

What's in a Name?

Many phrases are used to describe different forms of peer helping relationships, but they can generally be grouped into a few categories.

Peer Listening, Peer Helping, Peer Mentoring. These are general assistance programs that focus on listening, support, and helping to solve problems. Visit the National Association of Peer Programs (*www.peerprograms.org*) to learn more about general peer helping programs.

Peer Counseling. Peer counseling is similar to the general programs mentioned above, but usually includes a more defined role for the peer counselor and more in-depth training. Sometimes the term "peer counselor" confuses people, because most counselors have professional training and many are licensed. Because youth do not meet those criteria, a school or agency may be reluctant to use the term peer counselor or to give youth counseling responsibilities. Peer listeners or peer helpers may be more acceptable roles for youth in these settings. For more information on peer counseling programs, see Peer Resources (*www.peer.ca*).

Peer Mediation. In many schools around the country, trained peer mediators resolve arguments and fights between other students. An important thing to keep in mind about peer mediation is that it is only appropriate for situations where the students involved in the conflict have roughly equal power—not just physical power, but also social power, which is often overlooked. Where one student is much more powerful than another (older, stronger, more popular, more favored by adults), mediation puts the student with less power in an even more vulnerable position. Peer mediation is not appropriate for some types of victimization, such as bullying or sexual assault.

Teen Hotlines. Teen-to-teen phone lines can be a great way for young people to support their peers. Some communities have developed teen lines that operate during the after-school hours, such as from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m., where youth can call and speak to someone their own age about anything. As with all other forms of peer helping, peer hotline workers need to be well trained and supported. A teen hotline should always have an adult supervisor on duty who can take over crisis calls if necessary. For a list of hotlines for youth (and some staffed by youth), see the resources in Section 11.

Youth Advisory Councils, Youth on Boards, Youth Evaluators. These are all ways for youth to be involved in the decision-making of an organization. Organizations that want to improve their services and programs for youth are increasingly involving youth in the decisions about how to make those programs better. Youth can serve in advisory and decision-making roles at all types of organizations, including victim-serving organizations. For more information and resources on this type of peer service/youth advocacy, check out Youth on Board (*www.youthonboard.org*).

8 Reflection and Celebration

TAP for Teen Victims is a program designed to involve youth in service to their peers and their communities by understanding and responding to the problem of teen victimization, advocating for change, and becoming personally involved in making sure victimized teens get the help they need. The work can be challenging, exhausting, and exhilarating.

Be sure to take time to reflect on the work your team is doing. Learn from both challenges and successes—not only the practical lessons about undertaking similar efforts in the future, but the larger life lessons as well, for the youth leader, the adult ally, other teens, and the community-at-large. Following are some ideas for encouraging reflection and stimulating the moral-spiritual-intellectual growth of the members of your TAP team.

- Have team members create journals as an icebreaking art activity at the beginning of the program; then, regularly include time at meetings to write in the journals about their experiences with the program.
- Begin and/or end each meeting by sitting in a circle and having everyone share one thought about that day's or week's TAP-related tasks.
- Once or twice a year, hold an all-day or overnight retreat with facilitated opportunities for youth to reflect on the process, content, and meaning of their work in the program.
- If working in a faith-based setting, provide regular times for reflecting on the work and its connection to meaningful scriptures or religious teachings.
- Consider devoting every fourth or fifth meeting entirely to reflection, incorporating art activities, music, writing, or other creative forms of expression as a way to change the pace and spark new reflection on the work. Rotate responsibility for planning these sessions among the youth leaders, with support from the adult facilitator. (The adult

facilitator may want to lead the first one as a way of offering something special to the youth and for them to see what a reflection meeting can be like. The adult can then watch the teens' creativity take off as they plan subsequent events.)

> "Even though people come from very far apart, they can be very much alike."
> Lindsey, 12, from Connecticut

Youth-led social change is hard work with lots of heavy lifting. It doesn't always go as smoothly or as easily as people hope. There are plenty of peaks and valleys, and it's important to celebrate the successes—large and small—along the way to stay motivated. Following are some ideas for celebrating the youth, their efforts, and the successes of the project:

- Regularly affirm and appreciate the time and energy the youth are devoting to the project with verbal feedback and encouragement.
- Use certificates and awards to honor special achievements and efforts.
- Research awards, honors, and scholarships offered by the government, foundations, and associations, and nominate the youth in your group for those that are appropriate.
- Offer snacks at meetings as a thank-you and a pick-me-up.
- Plan a party—at the end of the year, after an especially time-consuming piece of work is finished, or anytime as a surprise—to celebrate and recognize their hard work.
- Invite local celebrities, politicians, and other "big shots" to come and speak to the youth about the importance of what they are doing. These individuals may be flattered by a speaking invitation, and being affirmed by "important" people can make the youth feel important, too.
- Stay upbeat and encouraging after setbacks, and take opportunities to educate youth about "the way the world works" when a particular opportunity falls through or an event doesn't go well.
- DON'T make up meaningless recognitions or praise them so constantly that it seems insincere. Youth can smell "sugar coating" a mile away, and they only feel worse when recognized for reasons they believe are not genuine. You shouldn't have to look hard to find actual accomplishments and efforts to recognize and celebrate at appropriate times.

Evaluation and Sustainability

Evaluation

How do you know if your efforts are working? Evaluation as a concept may be intimidating for people who haven't done it before. Evaluation, however, doesn't have to be expensive or sophisticated. It just takes matching up your goals and objectives with your outputs and outcomes. In other words, did you do what you set out to do, and did you accomplish what you were hoping to accomplish? What changed as a result of your efforts? Do you have any numbers you can point to? How about anecdotes—stories of success? Are there, as a result of your TAP for Teen Victims project:

- More teens getting information about victimization?
- More teens getting help from victim service providers?
- Better policies in place for teen victims?
- Better services in place for teen victims?

Don't overlook the outcomes of the program on the participating TAP youth themselves. You can do a quick pre- and post-test to help gauge the impact of participating in the program on the youth leaders (and adults too!). And don't forget to collect stories of how the program has affected people individually. What do the youth report learning from doing the project? Did it change any of their opinions? Are they more inclined to become involved in community problem-solving in the future? Has the program had an effect on their future academic or career plans? Has it affected their current motivation and attachment to school?

The Harvard Family Research Project's Out-of-School Time Program Evaluation Database is a great resource for looking at how other programs have been evaluated, and can be found at *www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html*.

Sustainability

If you find that TAP for Teen Victims is a good model for your school or program, you will want to think about how to keep it going and perhaps formally incorporate it into the structure under which you are working. Sustainability, however, is not something to be tacked on to the end of your effort; it requires some thinking and planning from the very beginning of the program. Sustaining and institutionalizing a youth-led program require several things:

- commitment from the lead or host agency or organization (this may be "in spirit" but it's even better if it's in writing, for example, in the organization's mission or strategic plan),
- buy-in from important stakeholders within and outside of the organization,
- dedicated staff or volunteers to facilitate the program,
- assurance that the organization will keep running the program if the responsible staff member or volunteer moves on,
- a plan for continually recruiting new youth participants as some age out or leave the program,
- transfer of leadership from outgoing youth to continuing youth, and
- financial resources.

Evaluation data, as described above, can help you make and win arguments to sustain the program and secure funding for it. In general, the more "hard data" you have that shows that the program is achieving its goals, the more likely you'll be able to keep it going and funded year after year. Some funding possibilities to explore include:

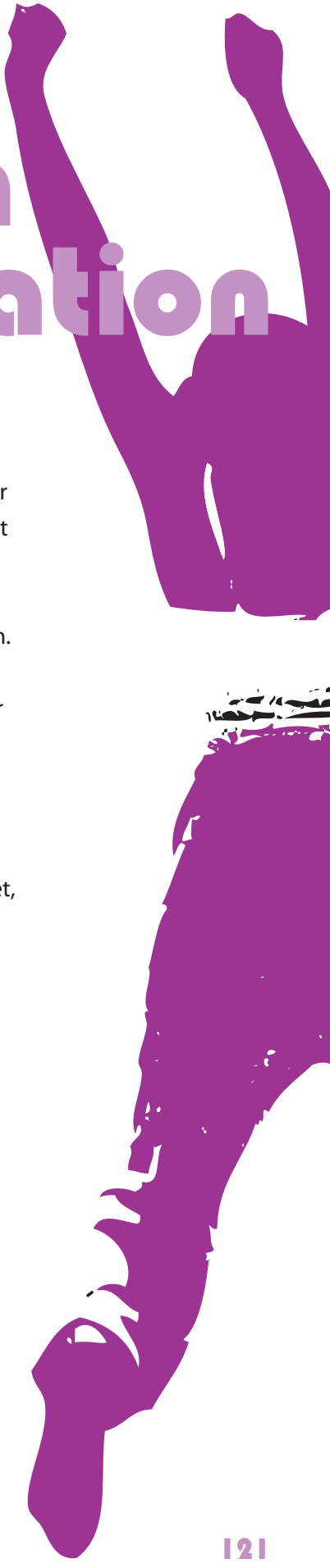
- the local chamber of commerce;
- fraternal organizations such as the Lions, Elks, Rotary, Kiwanis, Knights of Columbus, or Amvets;
- local and national grant-making foundations that have program focus areas related to youth leadership, after-school programs, civic engagement, youth violence, or other topics related to the work of TAP for Teen Victims (check out the Foundation Center's basic on-line directory at *http://fconline.fdncenter.org*);
- local government allocations, including through the school system, the city or county council, the board of health, or other local bodies;
- state government, including the Attorney General's Office and the Departments of Health, Education, Welfare, Housing, and others; and
- local colleges and universities, which are often eager to form partnerships with communities to address social problems.

The key to funding success will be to identify any and all sources of support that are interested in crime, victims, youth, or any combination of these. In addition to financial resources, in-kind contributions can greatly enhance your program and reduce the amount of funding needed

to continue it. For example, local businesses may donate copying or printing services, airtime or studio space for PSAs, volunteer hours to help with advocacy efforts, food for training or outreach events.... The list goes on. When youth are well organized and prepared with a good "pitch," almost anyone finds it hard to say no.

Take care that your sustainability strategy focuses not only on resources, but also addresses all the other points mentioned above. People and institutions, not just money, keep a program going and make it successful. Institutional buy-in is especially important when it comes to youth work because of the relatively high rate of staff turnover. If the program's existence in an agency is wholly dependent on one individual, and that individual leaves, the program is likely to fold. If there is any doubt about institutional investment in the program, the youth can put their TAP advocacy skills into action on behalf of their own program to ensure it continues! This too, will be a lesson learned and a positive outcome for the youth participants: advocacy may begin "at home."

10 Fact Sheets on Teen Victimization



This section consists of a series of fact sheets developed by the National Center for Victims of Crime to educate teens, parents, and other adult allies about crimes that commonly affect teens. Your team can use these fact sheets in several ways, such as:

- Read them to get a foundation of knowledge about teen victimization.
- Reproduce them to educate other teens and the community.
- Use them as a list of potential topics to help you choose your focus for this project.

Entire books have been written about each of these topics, so consider the fact sheets as just a starting point. Once the youth have zeroed in on the issue they want to address, they can do more extensive research at the library, on the Internet, and by talking with local community experts on that issue.

Fact sheets included here are:

- Assault
- Bullying and Harassment
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Dating Violence
- Hate Crimes
- Robbery and Property Crime
- Sexual Assault
- Stalking
- Crime, Teens, and Trauma
- Just for Friends
- Just for Parents

Assault

"Someone attacked me."

What Is It?

Assault is a physical attack or a threat that causes fear of an attack. Victims of assault may be attacked by one person or a group. An assault may include one or more types of harm, such as pushing, shoving, slapping, punching, or kicking. It may also include the use of weapons like knives, sticks, bottles, or bats. Common injuries from an assault include bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, and broken bones. Victims may even be killed during an assault. However, it's still an assault if there was no injury.

There are many laws used to classify different kinds of assault. The classification can be based on injury, weapons used, or other circumstances of the crime. Any assault victim, though, injured or not, may experience emotional reactions to the crime.

Assault can happen to anyone. Most teen victims of assault report that they know who attacked them, and often the attacker is a family member, friend, or someone the victim knows from school or the neighborhood. If someone assaults you, it is important to tell an adult you trust and to contact the police.

If you are a victim of assault, you might:

- Be shocked, angry, or afraid.
- Feel helpless because you could not prevent the assault.
- Have nightmares or flashbacks about the assault.
- Want to hurt the attacker(s).
- Think that you did something to cause the attack.
- Feel embarrassed about telling your family and friends.
- Feel any or all of the above, whether you were physically injured or not.

You're Not Alone

- Assault is the most common violent crime in the United States. [1]
- In 2005, more than 1.2 million teens were victims of assault.[2]
- In 2005, slightly more males than females were victims of simple assault.[3]

Get Help

Being assaulted is not your fault. It is important to remember that assault is a crime, and as

an assault victim, you do not have to deal with this alone. There are people in your community who can help you.

To find someone who can help you, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL or a crisis hotline in your area. You might also talk to a trusted family member, a friend's parent, an adult neighbor or friend, an older sibling or cousin, or other experienced person you trust.

- Consider calling the police.
- Some adults, such as teachers, counselors, and social workers, are required to talk to another authority about abuse of children and teens. You always have the right to ask whom your information will be shared with before you tell someone what happened.

Help Yourself

- If you sense that you may not be safe, try to get to a safer place or to safer people.
- Try to stay in areas where there are other people around.
- If you are attacked and need medical treatment, call 911 and let your parent or another adult know as soon as possible.
- If you are attacked and you do not know the attacker, try to remember what the person looked like. It will be useful when you call the police.

Help Someone Else

If you see or know someone who has been assaulted, you can:

- Call the police.
- Get a parent, teacher, or other adult to come help.
- Talk to the person who was assaulted. Tell them you want to help them, and encourage them to talk to a supportive adult.

If You Want to Read More…

- about assault, or
- about assaults related to your race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability (hate crimes)

...see our GET HELP series bulletins at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

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1 Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2005: Statistical Tables,* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006), Table 3.
2 Ibid, Table 1.
3 Ibid., Table 3.

Bullying and Harassment

"Someone is picking on me."

What Is It?

Bullying is when one person hurts or threatens someone in their peer group. Anyone can be a bully, and bullying can be carried out in different ways. Physical bullying may include shoving, pushing, and hitting. Words and non-verbal behavior can also be used to hurt someone by spreading rumors, taking part in gossip, or threatening someone with looks, notes, or pictures. Bullies may choose to pick on peers who are smaller or younger than they are, or who are from a different race or culture, or they may pick on someone who is different in some other way.

Bullying might happen once or over and over again. If bullying includes physical or sexual harm or damage to property, makes you feel intimidated or afraid to go to school, or disrupts school, it is probably also assault or harassment. These behaviors are against school rules and many are also against the law. If a bully attacks you or steals something from you, you can report the incident to the police. You can also report school-related bullying to your school, and you should expect the school to take action to confront the behaviors, discipline the bully, and ensure your safety at school, traveling to and from school, and at school activities. Check with an adult in your school to find out more about your rights.

If You Are a Victim of Bullying, You Might:

- Feel angry, sad, lonely, or depressed.
- Feel like you have no friends.
- Find that you are getting into fights.
- Want to hurt someone else or yourself.
- Feel like taking steps to defend yourself.
- Feel helpless to stop the bullying.
- Feel hopeless that anything can be done.
- Be afraid to go to school, or feel anxious all the time.
- Feel bad about yourself.

You're Not Alone

- Almost 30 percent of teens in the United States (or over 5.7 million) are estimated to be involved in bullying as either a bully, a target of bullying, or both.[1]

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- 5.4% of high school students (about 864,000 teens) report staying home at least one day a month because they fear for their safety. [2]

Get Help

Being bullied is not your fault, and it is wrong. No matter what you say, how you look, or what you believe, nothing gives anyone else the right to make fun of or hurt you.

- Tell your parents and talk with them about how they can help you be safe.
- Tell a teacher, counselor, or your school's principal. They can take action to stop the bullying.
- Most schools are required to have a policy on bullying. If you feel that nobody in your school is helping you, find out what the policy is, and talk with the principal about how the policy applies to your case.
- If there is no policy in your school, talk with friends, a teacher, or the principal about creating one.

Help Yourself

You have a right to be safe. There is no one right way to respond to a bully. It is not your fault if a bully continues to pick on you. Do the best you can to cope with bullying while it is happening and get support from adults to help you stay safe and support you emotionally.

Help Someone Else

If you see bullying happening in your school, you can help put a stop to it.

- Refuse to join in teasing someone.
- Get a teacher, parent, or another adult to come help. You won't be snitching; you'll be taking a stand against bullying.
- Talk to the person being bullied. Tell the person you want to help him or her, and encourage him or her to talk to a supportive adult. Offer to go with the person.
- Report the bullying to an adult you trust.

If You Want to Read More...

- about crimes that happen in schools, or
- about people being targeted because of their race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability (hate crimes),

...see our GET HELP series bulletins at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

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1 T.R. Nansel et al., "Bullying Behaviors among U.S. Youth: Prevalence and Association with Psychosocial Adjustment," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 285, no.16 (2001): 2094-2100.

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Surveillance Summaries," *MMWR* 53, no. Ss-2 (2004).

Child Sexual Abuse

"Someone touched me in a way that made me feel bad."

What Is It?

Child sexual abuse refers to any sexual contact with a child or teen. It includes many different acts. Some of these are touching the vagina, penis, or anus of a child; having a child touch the abuser's vagina, penis, or anus; putting an object, penis, or finger into the vagina or anus of a child; and showing a child pictures or movies of other people undressed or having sex. There are also other forms of child sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse can happen to boys or girls of any race, ethnicity, or economic background. Sexual abuse is not a child's fault. The only person responsible for this kind of behavior is the abuser.

People who sexually abuse children usually know the victims before making sexual contact. Abusers can be anyone, even someone the victim used to look up to, like, or trust, such as neighbors, babysitters, friends, or members of the family or household.

Most of the time, because abusers are often older, bigger, or more powerful than the victims, children are afraid of what will happen if they don't cooperate with the abuse or if they tell. Sometimes abusers will threaten or hurt victims in other ways to make them do what they want.

The age of children protected by child sexual abuse laws is different from state to state. In most states, sexual contact between an adult (18 years or older) and someone under 16 years old is child sexual abuse and is against the law, even if the abuser believes the young person agreed to the sexual activity. Children and young teens are protected from any sexual contact by adults and older teens because, when there is such a difference in power, sexual contact is harmful.

If You Are a Victim of Child Sexual Abuse, You Might:

- Feel angry, sad, lonely, or depressed.
- Feel like you have no friends.
- Feel guilty, even though the abuse is not your fault.
- Want to hurt someone else or yourself.
- Feel like taking steps to defend yourself.

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- Feel helpless to stop the abuser.
- Feel hopeless about whether anything can be done.
- Feel anxious all the time.
- Feel bad about yourself or your body.

You're Not Alone

- Research suggests that child sexual abuse is common and highly underreported.
- Child sexual abuse has been reported up to 80,000 times a year. [1]
- Approximately 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 7 boys are sexually abused during childhood.[2]

Get Help

Being sexually abused is not your fault. Nothing about what you say, the way you look, or your behavior gives anyone the right to use or hurt you. You have a right to ask for help.

- If you are sexually abused, you may need medical care. Try to get to a safer place and call 911. Tell a trusted parent or adult as soon as possible.
- Abuse is not a secret you have to keep. Keep telling until you get the help you need to feel safe.
- Tell a teacher, counselor, or principal at school if there is no one you can trust at home.
- Contact the police, a sexual assault or rape crisis counseling center, or child protective services for help. If you need help finding someone to call, contact our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL.
- Some adults, such as teachers, counselors, and social workers, are required to talk to another authority about abuse of children and teens. You always have the right to ask whom your information will be shared with before you tell someone what happened.

Help Yourself

You have the right to emotional support and counseling to heal from child sexual abuse.

Help Someone Else

Child sexual abuse is a serious crime. If you know a child or teen who is being sexually abused, you can help put a stop to it.

- If a friend tells you that he or she was sexually abused, listen patiently and respectfully. Avoid being judgmental and believe what your friend tells you.
- Ask a teacher, parent, or another adult to help. You won't be snitching; you'll be taking a stand against abuse.

- Tell your friend that you want to help, and encourage him or her to talk to a supportive adult. Offer to go with your friend.
- Report the abuser to an adult you trust.
- Learn more about child sexual abuse and the healing process for victims.

If You Want to Read More ...

- about adult survivors of child sexual abuse,
- about sexual assault,
- about male rape, or
- about incest,

...see our GET HELP series bulletins at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

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1 American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, "Facts for Families: Child Sexual Abuse," no. 9 (2004), http://www.aacap.org/page.ww?name=Child+Sexual+Abuse&section=Facts+for+Families (accessed April 24, 2007).

2 John Briere and Diana M. Eliot, "Prevalence and Psychological Sequelae of Self-Reported Childhood Physical and Sexual Abuse in a General Population Sample of Men and Women," *Child Abuse and Neglect* 27, no. 10 (2003): 1205-1222.

Dating Violence

"The person I'm going out with scares me sometimes."

What Is It?

Dating violence is controlling, abusive, and aggressive behavior in a romantic relationship. It can happen in straight or gay relationships. It can include verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, or a combination.

Controlling behavior may include:

- Not letting you hang out with your friends
- Calling or paging you frequently to find out where you are, whom you're with, and what you're doing
- Telling you what to wear
- Having to be with you all the time

Verbal and emotional abuse may include:

- Calling you names
- Jealousy
- Belittling you (cutting you down)
- Threatening to hurt you, someone in your family, or himself or herself if you don't do what he or she wants

Physical abuse may include:

- Shoving
- Punching
- Slapping
- Pinching
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Hair pulling
- Strangling

Sexual abuse may include:

- Unwanted touching and kissing
- Forcing you to have sex
- Not letting you use birth control
- Forcing you to do other sexual things

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Anyone can be a victim of dating violence. Both boys and girls are victims, but boys and girls abuse their partners in different ways. Girls are more likely to yell, threaten to hurt themselves, pinch, slap, scratch, or kick. Boys injure girls more and are more likely to punch their partner and force them to participate in unwanted sexual activity. Some teen victims experience violence occasionally. Others are abused more often, sometimes daily.

If You Are a Victim of Dating Violence, You Might…

- Think it's your fault.
- Feel angry, sad, lonely, depressed, or confused.
- Feel helpless to stop the abuse.
- Feel threatened or humiliated.
- Feel anxious.
- Not know what might happen next.
- Feel like you can't talk to family and friends.
- Be afraid of getting hurt more seriously.
- Feel protective of your boyfriend or girlfriend.

You're Not Alone

- One in five teens in a serious relationship reports having been hit, slapped, or pushed by a partner.[1]
- 50–80% of teens have reported knowing others who were involved in violent relationships.[2]
- Teens identifying as gay, lesbian, and bisexual are as likely to experience violence in same-sex dating relationships as youths involved in opposite sex dating.[3]
- Many studies indicate that, as a dating relationship becomes more serious, the potential for and nature of violent behavior escalates.[4]
- Young women, ages 16 to 24 years, experience the highest rates of relationship violence.[5]

Get Help

Being a victim of dating violence is not your fault. Nothing you say, wear, or do gives anyone the right to hurt you.

- If you think you are in an abusive relationship, get help immediately. Don't keep your concerns to yourself.
- Talk to someone you trust like a parent, teacher, school principal, counselor, or nurse.
- If you choose to tell, you should know that some adults are mandated reporters. This means they are legally required to report neglect or abuse to someone else,

such as the police or child protective services. You can ask people if they are mandated reporters and then decide what you want to do. Some examples of mandated reporters are teachers, counselors, doctors, social workers, and in some cases, even coaches or activity leaders. If you want help deciding whom to talk to, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL or an anonymous crisis line in your area. You might also want to talk to a trusted family member, a friend's parent, an adult neighbor or friend, an older sibling or cousin, or other experienced person who you trust.

Help Yourself

Think about ways you can be safer. This means thinking about what to do, where to go for help, and who to call ahead of time.

- Where can you go for help?
- Who can you call?
- Who will help you?
- How will you escape a violent situation?

Here are other precautions you can take:

- Let friends or family know when you are afraid or need help.
- When you go out, say where you are going and when you'll be back.
- In an emergency, call 911 or your local police department.
- Memorize important phone numbers, such as the people to contact or places to go in an emergency.
- Keep spare change, calling cards, or a cell phone handy for immediate access to communication.
- Go out in a group or with other couples.
- Have money available for transportation if you need to take a taxi, bus, or subway to escape.

Help Someone Else

If you know someone who might be in an abusive relationship, you can help.

- Tell the person that you are worried.
- Be a good listener.
- Offer your friendship and support.
- Ask how you can help.
- Encourage your friend to seek help.
- Educate yourself about dating violence and healthy relationships.

- Avoid any confrontations with the abuser. This could be dangerous for you and your friend.

If You Want to Read More...

...about dating violence, read our GET HELP series bulletin at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

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1 Liz Claiborne Inc., "Study on Teen Dating Abuse," (Teenage Research Unlimited, 2005), http://www.loveisnotabuse.com (accessed March 1, 2007).
2 Ibid.
3 L.L. Kupper et al., "Prevalence of Partner Violence in Same-Sex Romantic and Sexual Relationships in a National Sample of Adolescents," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 35 (2004): 124-131.
4 *Teen Dating Violence Resource Manual*, (Denver: National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1997), 17.
5 C. M. Rennison and S. Welchans, "BJS Special Report: Intimate Partner Violence," (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000).

Hate Crimes

"Why am I being bullied because of my skin color, religion, sexual orientation?"

What Is It?

A hate crime is the victimization of an individual based on that individual's race, religion, national origin, ethnic identification, gender, or sexual orientation. Hate crimes may include acts such as:

- Physical assaults
- Assaults with weapons
- Harassment
- Vandalism
- Robbery
- Rape
- Verbal harassment
- Attacks on homes or places of worship

Hate crimes can occur anywhere: in schools, the workplace, public places, or the home. Those who commit these acts come from all social/economic backgrounds and represent different age groups.[1] Unfortunately, these acts of violence are common in American society and part of the daily experience of many members of minority groups.[2]

If You Are a Victim of a Hate Crime, You Might:

- Feel angry.
- Feel a deep sense of personal hurt and betrayal.
- Have feelings of powerlessness, isolation, sadness, and suspicion.
- Fear for your own safety and for your family's safety.
- Notice changes in your lifestyle such as where you walk and your reactions to strangers.

You're Not Alone

- In 2005, 7,163 hate crime incidents were reported to law enforcement. Approximately 62% of bias-motivated offenses were committed against persons, and 37% were offenses against property.[3]
- Of reported crimes, 55% of hate crime incidents were motivated by race, 17% by religion, 14% by sexual orientation, 13% by ethnicity, and 0.7% by disability.[4]

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- According to one study, 1,985 incidents of anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) violence were reported to victim service providers in 13 locations in 2005, almost twice the number reported to the police in the entire United States.[5]
- The Anti-Defamation League reported more than 1,700 anti-Semitic incidents in 2005.[6]
- Acts of harassment (threats and assaults against individuals or institutions) accounted for approximately one-third (617) of anti-Semitic incidents in 2005, and acts of vandalism (property damage, cemetery desecration, or anti-Semitic graffiti) accounted for approximately two-thirds (1140).[7]

Get Help

It is important to remember that hate crimes are against the law, and as a crime victim, you do not have to cope with this alone. There are people in your community who want to help you.

- If you want advice about whom to talk to, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL or a crisis hotline in your area. You might also want to talk to a trusted family member, a friend's parent, an adult neighbor or friend, an older sibling or cousin, or other experienced person you trust.
- Consider calling the police.

Help Yourself

- If you sense that something is about to happen, try to get to a safe place.
- Try to stay in areas where other people are around.
- If you are attacked and need medical treatment, call 911, and let your parent or another adult know as soon as possible.
- If you are attacked and you do not know the attacker(s), try to remember what the person looked like. It will be useful when you call the police.

Help Someone Else

If you see or know someone who has been a victim of a hate crime, you can:

- Call the police.
- Get a parent, teacher, or other adult to come help.
- Talk to the person who was the victim, let the person know you want to help him or her, and encourage the victim to talk to a supportive adult.

If You Want to Read More…

...about hate crimes, read our GET HELP series bulletin at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

1 Lance Bradley and Kevin Berrill, "Safety and Fitness Exchange," (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 1986).
2 National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence, "The Ethnoviolence Project Pilot Study," *Institute Report* no. 1 (Baltimore, MD: 1986).
3 Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2005,* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006).
4 Ibid.
5 Clarence Patton, "Anti-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Violence in 2005: A Report of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs," (New York: National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2006).
6 Anti-Defamation League, "Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents," (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 2005).
7 Ibid.

Robbery and Property Crime

"Someone stole something from me."

What Is It?

Robbery is when someone takes something you own from you by force or by threatening you. Because of the use or threat of force, robbery is considered a violent crime (even if you are not physically hurt in the act).

Theft is when someone takes something you own away from you without you knowing it, like stealing something from your locker or picking your pocket. Theft is called a "property crime." If someone breaks, damages, or vandalizes something of yours, that is also a property crime.

If You Are a Victim of Robbery or Property Crime, You Might:

- Feel shocked, confused, angry, sad, powerless, or embarrassed.
- Be very upset, even if what was taken wasn't worth a lot of money.
- Feel hopeless about whether anything can be done to get your property back.
- Be afraid to go back to (or near) the place where the crime happened.
- Feel suspicious of everyone around you.

You're Not Alone

One study found that for every 1,000 teens, 166 had reported a property crime, compared to 118 adults.[1] More than half of property crime doesn't get reported at all.[2]

Get Help

Being robbed or having your property stolen or damaged is not your fault. Nothing you say or do gives anyone else the right to take or destroy your stuff.

- Tell a trusted adult or report the crime to the police. The person might be punished and you might get your stuff back. These things are not guaranteed, but if you don't tell anyone, you may never recover what was stolen or hold the offender accountable.
- If you are experiencing any of the reactions listed previously, a victim assistance professional or counselor might be able to help you. If you don't know who to call, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL, and we will give you the names and phone numbers of people in your community who can help.

Help Yourself

- Do not carry lots of money or expensive things with you.
- Try to stay in areas where other students and teachers are around.
- Keep your locker locked. Double-check the lock before you walk away.
- Don't keep money or valuables in your locker, especially overnight or over the weekend.
- If you have a bike, get a solid U-shaped lock, and lock it in an area with other bikes. If one of the tires is removable, secure it to the U-lock with a chain or extension lock. If the seat is removable, you might want to take it off and keep it in your backpack or bag.
- Be aware of what you are carrying, and hold your purse or backpack close to your body.
- Be aware of your surroundings, especially if you are walking down the street by yourself. If you see someone suspicious, cross the street or go into a store.
- Do not try to get revenge. This could very well make things worse, and you might end up in trouble.

Help Someone Else

Share this information with your friends.

If someone takes or destroys something that belongs to your friend:

- Encourage your friend to report it to school authorities or the police.
- Let your friend know that it is normal to feel upset, angry, or sad. Tell him or her that help is available if he or she wants it (1-800-FYI-CALL).
- Do not try to help your friend get revenge—this can get you both in trouble and make a bad situation worse.
- Listen to your friend and be supportive.

If You Want to Read More...

...about robbery or property crime, read our GET HELP series bulletin at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp.*

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1 D. Finkelhor and R. Ormrod, "Juvenile Victims of Property Crimes [Abstract]," Proceedings of the American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, (San Francisco: 2000).

2 Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2005: Statistical Tables*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006), Table 93a.

Sexual Assault

"I didn't want to have sex with him."

What Is It?

For sexual activity to be all right, it must be consensual, which means that both people want it to happen. Sexual assault is when any person forces you to participate in a sexual act when you don't want to. This can include touching or penetrating the vagina, mouth, or anus of the victim (often called rape); touching the penis of the victim; or forcing the victim to touch the attacker's vagina, penis, or anus. Touching can mean with a hand, finger, mouth, penis, or just about anything else, including objects.

It doesn't always take physical force to sexually assault a victim. Attackers can use threats or intimidation to make a victim feel afraid or unable to refuse them. It is also sexual assault if the victim is drunk, drugged, unconscious, or too young (ages of consent differ from state to state) or mentally disabled to be legally able to agree to sexual contact.

Most victims are assaulted by someone they know: a friend, date, acquaintance, or boyfriend or girlfriend. Dating or being sexually involved with someone does not give that person the right to force you to have sexual contact you don't want. Even if you have had sex before, you have the right to say "NO" at any time. You are also allowed to change your mind at any time. Being sexually assaulted is never your fault.

Most perpetrators of sexual assault are male, whether the victim is female or male. Victims can be males or females of any age, race, social class, appearance, or sexual orientation. The majority of sexual assault victims are women and girls, but many men and boys are sexually assaulted, too.

Sometimes people will use manipulation to get someone to give into sex. They might say things such as "If you really loved me, you'd do it" or "I'm going to tell everyone we did it anyway, so you might as well." This kind of behavior can be hurtful, although it often doesn't meet the legal definition of sexual assault, and is a sign of a controlling or emotionally abusive partner. The same is true of a partner who won't (or won't let you) use birth control when you want to. People who experience this kind of behavior can have similar reactions to people who have been sexually assaulted. If this is happening to you, consider seeking help.

If You Are a Victim of Sexual Assault, You Might:

- Feel afraid, ashamed, angry, sad, lonely, betrayed, or depressed.
- Feel guilty and confused if you knew or had a relationship with the attacker, even though the assault was not your fault.
- Feel like you have no friends or that your friends won't believe you.
- Want to hurt someone else or yourself.
- Feel like taking steps to defend yourself.
- Feel helpless to stop the assault.
- Feel hopeless about whether anything can be done.
- Be afraid to go anywhere that the attacker might be.
- Feel anxious all the time.
- Feel bad about yourself or your body.

You're Not Alone

- Sexual assault is a widespread and underreported crime.
- In 2005, law enforcement received 69,370 reports of rapes.[1]
- In 2005, more than 170,000 women and 15,000 men were victims of attempted or completed rapes.[2]
- More teens are raped by people they know than they are by strangers.[3]

Get Help

Being a victim of sexual assault is not your fault. Nothing in what you say, the way you look, where you are, or who you are with gives anyone else the right to hurt you. It does not matter if you are dating or have ever been intimate with the person who sexually assaulted you; it does not give that person the right to force you to participate in sexual acts if you don't want to, even if you have had sexual activity of any sort with them in the past. It's still wrong.

- Seek immediate medical attention, preferably at an emergency room. Medical personnel are trained to perform a "rape kit" exam, where they are able to gather evidence while examining the victim to help police and prosecutors find and charge the perpetrator. If you might ever want to report the assault, it is important that you do not shower, change clothes, or clean up in any way before going to the hospital, in order not to disturb any evidence medical staff might be able to collect for the police. Sometimes this process can be easier if you have a trusted friend, adult, or victim advocate with you.
- Even if you don't want to report the assault to police right now, it is still important to have a medical exam to make sure you are all right. Sometimes people change their minds and want to report to the police later. Also, in addition to treating injuries, medical personnel can test for pregnancy and whether or not you may have

been drugged. They can also give you drugs to reduce your chances of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or getting pregnant.

- Tell a trusted friend or adult. See if someone can go with you to get medical treatment.
- Call a local victim service provider, such as a rape crisis center. You may be able to find a number to call in your local phone book. If you cannot find one, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL or the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE. If you want to report the assault, call the police.
- If you choose to tell, you should know that some adults are mandated reporters. This means they are legally required to report neglect or abuse to someone else, such as the police or child protective services. You can ask people if they are mandated reporters and then decide what you want to do. Some examples of mandated reporters are teachers, counselors, doctors, social workers, and in some cases, even coaches or activity leaders.
- If you want help deciding whom to talk to, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL, or an anonymous crisis line in your area. You might also want to talk to a trusted family member, a friend's parent, an adult neighbor or friend, an older sibling or cousin, or another experienced person who you trust.

Help Yourself

- Try to avoid being alone, especially with your attacker, and be alert to your surroundings.
- Think about getting help making a safety plan to avoid or escape a dangerous situation, especially if you know your attacker.
- Make sure you have a safe place to stay.
- Think about talking to a rape crisis center or other victim assistance counselor about what happened to you, so they can help you find a safe place to stay, give you counseling, and help you understand your options, such as what medical staff will do during a "rape kit" exam or what might happen while going through the criminal justice system.

Help Someone Else

If you know someone who has been the victim of sexual assault, you can help.

- If your friend tells you that she or he has been assaulted, remember that it is not your friend's fault. Help him or her get to a safe place. Listen patiently and without judgment. Offer your support and encouragement in getting help.
- Talk to your friend and try to get him or her to also talk to an adult and get medical attention. Offer to go with the person. If your friend is badly injured, call 911. Encourage your friend to have a rape kit exam whether or not he or she intends to

report the crime to police. Your friend can always make the decision about whether or not to report the crime later.

- Report the assault to an adult you trust.

If You Want to Read More...

- about male rape, or
- about child sexual abuse,

...see our GET HELP series bulletins at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

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1 Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2005*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006).
2 Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2005: Statistical Tables*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006), Table 2.
3 Ibid., Table 29.

Stalking

"Someone won't leave me alone."

What Is It?

Stalking is a pattern of behavior that makes you feel afraid, nervous, harassed, or in danger. It is when someone repeatedly contacts you, follows you, sends you things, talks to you when you don't want them to, or threatens you. Stalking behaviors can include:

- Writing letters.
- Damaging your property.
- Knowing your schedule.
- Showing up at places you go.
- Sending mail, e-mail, and pictures.
- Creating a Web site about you.
- Sending gifts.
- Stealing things that belong to you.
- Calling you repeatedly.
- Any other actions that the stalker takes to contact, harass, track, or frighten you.

You can be stalked by someone you know casually, a current boyfriend or girlfriend, someone you dated in the past, or a stranger. Getting notes and gifts at your home, in your locker, or other places might seem sweet and harmless to other people, but if you don't want the gifts, phone calls, messages, letters, or e-mails, it doesn't feel sweet or harmless. It can be scary and frustrating.

Sometimes people stalk their boyfriends or girlfriends while they're dating. They check up on them, page or call them all the time and expect instant responses, follow them, and generally keep track of them even when they haven't made plans to be together. These stalking behaviors can be part of an abusive relationship. If this is happening to you or someone you know, you should talk to someone.

Stalking is a crime and can be dangerous. The legal definition of stalking and possible punishment for it is different in every state. Contact a victim service provider or your local police to learn about stalking laws in your state and how you can protect yourself.

If You Are Being Stalked, You Might:

- Feel helpless, anxious, fearful, angry or depressed.
- Feel like you can never get away from the stalker.
- Think the stalker is always watching you.
- Feel frustrated that the stalker won't leave you alone.
- Have difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
- Have nightmares.
- Lose or gain weight.
- Not know what might happen next.

You're Not Alone

- 1,006,970 women and 370, 990 men are stalked annually in the United States.[1]
- 77% of female and 64% of male victims know their stalker.[2]
- The average length of time victims are stalked is 1.3 years.[3]
- One study of stalker found that 82% of stalkers who pursued female victims followed them, spied on them, stood outside their home, workplace, or place of recreation; 61% of stalkers made unwanted phone calls; 33% sent or left unwanted letters or items; 29% percent vandalized property; and 9% killed or threatened to kill a family pet.[4]
- A survey of university undergraduates revealed that 20% had been stalked or harassed by a former dating partner; 8% had initiated stalking or harassment; and 1% had been both the target and the initiator.[5]

Get Help

If you are stalked, it is not your fault. Stalkers are responsible for their behavior, not the victims. If you believe that someone is stalking you, you can:

- Contact the police.
- Tell your parent, friend, school principal, or another person you can trust.
- If you don't know where to go for help, contact our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL or *gethelp@nvcv.org*.

Help Yourself

Think about ways you can be safer. This means thinking about what to do, where to go for help, and who to call ahead of time.

- Where can you go for help?
- Who can you call?
- Who will help you?
- How will you escape a violent situation?

Here are other things you can do:

- Let friends or family members know when you are afraid or need help.
- When you go out, tell someone where you are going and when you'll be back.
- In an emergency, call 911 or your local police department.
- Memorize the phone numbers of people to contact or places to go in an emergency.
- Keep spare change, calling cards, or a cell phone handy.
- Save notes, letters, or other items that the stalker sends to you and keep a record of all contact that the stalker has with you. These items will be very useful to the police.
- If you choose to tell someone, you should know that some adults are mandated reporters. This means they are legally required to report neglect or abuse to someone else, such as the police or child protective services. You can ask people if they are mandated reporters and then decide what you want to do. Some examples of mandated reporters are teachers, counselors, doctors, social workers, and in some cases, even coaches or activity leaders.
- If you want help deciding whom to talk to, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL, or an anonymous crisis line in your area. You might also want to talk to a trusted family member, a friend's parent, an adult neighbor or friend, an older sibling or cousin, or another experienced person who you trust.

Help Someone Else

If you know someone who is being stalked, you can:

- Encourage your friend to seek help.
- Be a good listener.
- Offer your support.
- Ask how you can help.
- Educate yourself about stalking. Avoid any confrontations with the stalker. This could be dangerous for you and your friend.

If You Want to Read More...

- about stalking, protective orders, a stalking safety plan, and a stalking log, or
- about dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and teen dating violence,

...see our GET HELP series bulletins at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

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1 Tjaden and Thoennes, "Stalking in America," (Washington, DC: NIJ, 2006).
2 Ibid.
3 Kris Mohandie et al., "The RECON Typology of Stalking: Reliability and Validity Based upon a Large Sample of North American Stalkers," *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 51 (2006): 152.
4 Ibid.
5 Jeffrey J. Haugaard and Lisa G. Seri, "Stalking and Other Forms of Intrusive Contact after the Dissolution of Adolescent Dating or Romantic Relationships," *Violence and Victims* 18 (2004): 3.

Crime, Teens, and Trauma

"Why do I feel like this?"

What Is It?

We say something is traumatic when it is shocking, upsetting, disturbing, painful, or harmful. Being a victim of crime is often a traumatic event and can have an effect on people for a long time.

If You Have Been a Victim of Crime, You Might:

- Feel angry, sad, lonely, or depressed.
- Have trouble sleeping.
- Feel like no one understands.
- Think it's your fault.
- Feel sick to your stomach or not want to eat.
- Feel like you have no friends.
- Find that you are always getting into fights.
- Want to hurt someone else or yourself.
- Feel like taking steps to defend yourself.
- Feel hopeless about whether anything can be done.
- Feel bad about yourself.
- Be afraid to go out.
- Feel anxious all the time.

Being a victim of crime when you're a teenager can really affect how you develop and mature as an adult. What follows are some of the normal phases teens go through, and how they can be affected by victimization. If you are dealing with some of the issues described below, you should know that you don't have to feel this way forever. It is important to remember that, with help, you can begin to feel better. Call the National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL for help.

Body Focus

You have probably been taught about the changes your body goes through during the period called puberty, or adolescence. Although awkward and uncomfortable, these changes are healthy and normal. Teens who are victimized (especially sexually) during puberty may feel unclean or devalued. You might think there is something strange about your body. You may think that the changes in your shape or size caused or encouraged the abuse and that

you have no control over what happens to you. You might think that the only way to get attention is by using your body to attract it. You may feel that your body is worthless or "only good for one thing."

Peer Involvement

Younger children are closely connected to their families and caretakers. Adults fulfill their needs for guidance, help, comfort, companionship, food, shelter, and safety. As you get older, however, your need for your parents decreases, and your emotional dependence on your friends increases. Most teens test limits set by their parents, look for social and emotional support from friends, and become more concerned about the acceptance of friends than family.

Teens who have been victimized, though, often feel different from their friends. You may feel that no one else understands what you are going through. You might feel separated and isolated from your friends. You might feel like your friends are judging you or blowing you off, or harassing you. You may want to withdraw from your friends, or find a new group of friends where you feel more accepted.

Critical Thinking Skills

One of the most important life skills you begin to learn as a teen is critical thinking. Critical thinking is the ability to think about what is happening in a situation and to anticipate several different ways it could turn out. If during your teen years you become a victim of crime, you may start to think that bad things will continue to happen. You may start believing that you will always feel lonely, hurt, or confused and that you can't do anything to change it. You might feel hopeless and helpless, or even think about hurting yourself or dying. But if you can begin to think critically, you can start to figure out several different possible outcomes to your situation and ways to get beyond the bad times.

Abstract Thinking

During normal development, adolescents begin learning to think abstractly. They also analyze the relationships between cause and effect, learn to predict outcomes, and identify and explore values. If you are victimized during the development of these skills, you might begin to mistrust your own values and judgment and wonder if something you did "caused" the victimization. You may believe that you are responsible for what happened or that you are bad or should expect nothing better than this kind of treatment. You may feel that your personal choices and desires are meaningless and may begin to expect to be hurt and used by other people.

Risk-Taking

Part of growing up is learning to evaluate risks. It's looking at choices you make, figuring out what might happen, and deciding if it's worth doing. A risk might be making a friend of a different ethnic background, trying out for a sport, exploring career and educational opportunities, or deciding who to date. Victimized teens sometimes have a hard time thinking about these choices and don't see when things are dangerous or have a long-term impact. You might have used drugs or alcohol, had unprotected sex, driven after drinking, gotten into fights, or started stealing. You might not recognize, appreciate, or care about the long-term consequences of your choices.

You're Not Alone

More than 1.5 million teens become victims of violent crime each year. Teens are:

- 14% of the general population;[1]
- 28% of victims of violent crime; and[2]
- twice as likely as adults to become victims of crime.[3]

Get Help

Having bad things happen to you is not your fault. Nothing about what you say, the way you look, or what you believe gives anyone the right to hurt you.

- Tell your parents, and talk with them about ways that they can help you be safe.
- Tell a teacher, counselor, or trusted adult to see how they can help you. Talk with friends. You might find you're not the only one who has had these kinds of experiences.
- If you are having difficulty finding help, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL for free, confidential assistance, information, and referrals to local resources. You can also e-mail us at *gethelp@ncvc.org*.

Where can teen victims find help?

- Parents
- Teachers
- School counselors
- School resource officers
- Coaches
- Clergy
- Youth program staff
- Victim service providers
- Rape crisis centers
- Community mental health agencies
- Social workers

- Police
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Relatives

About Confidentiality

If you choose to tell someone, you should know that some adults are "mandated reporters." This means they are legally required to report neglect or abuse to someone else, such as the police or child protective services. You can ask people if they are mandated reporters and then decide what you want to do. Some examples of mandated reporters are teachers, counselors, doctors, social workers, and in some cases, even coaches or activity leaders.

Help Yourself

The most important thing is your safety. Seek out persons or resources in your community that can help you reduce your risk of being victimized again. Find healthy things that help you express how you feel: write in a journal, talk to friends, paint or draw, or exercise. It doesn't matter very much what it is, as long as it doesn't hurt you or anyone else, and it makes you feel better.

Help Someone Else

Sometimes it's hard to know what to do or say if a friend has been the victim of a crime. He or she might not know how to talk about it either. Let your friend know that you care. Stay calm, and don't judge their choices or behavior. Believe your friend, and just listen. Sometimes letting them vent and not needing to have answers for everything can help a lot.

Sometimes the family and friends of victims also feel the impact of the crime and experience emotional and physical reactions. This is called secondary victimization. If this is happening to you, help is available for you, too.

If You Want to Read More…

...about specific crimes, read our GET HELP series bulletins at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*.

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1 Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2005: Statistical Tables," (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006), Table 3.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.

Just for friends

"I'm worried about my friend."

If Your Friend Is a Victim of Crime

Sometimes it's hard to know what to do or say if a friend has been a victim of crime. Understand that your friend is probably dealing with many different emotions and might not know how to talk about it either.

Reading this is a great start to helping your friend. This might not answer all your questions, but it should help you understand how your friend might be feeling and good things to say and do, as well as things to avoid. For more information about helping your friend, contact our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL or *gethelp@ncvc.org* or talk to a trusted adult.

People react to the trauma caused by crime in many ways. You might see your friend doing or saying things you're not used to. If your friend is changing in ways that worry you, talk to a trusted adult or call our National Crime Victim Helpline about how to handle it.

Some changes you might see are:

- New eating or sleeping habits
- Being angry all the time
- Taking lots of risks
- Doing badly in school
- Skipping school
- Feeling hopeless and helpless
- Having lots of headaches or stomachaches
- Having a hard time concentrating
- Mood swings
- Clinginess
- Nervousness
- Depression
- Using drugs or alcohol

Things that can help:

- Let your friend know you care.
- Try to stay calm. Remember that your friend will be aware of your reactions.
- Don't judge your friend.

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR Victims of Crime

1-800-FYI-CALL
TTY 1-800-211-7996
need help?
www.ncvc.org
gethelp@ncvc.org

- Just listen—let your friend vent and don't try to have answers for everything.
- Tell your friend that you are sorry that it happened.
- Ask your friend to talk about how he or she reacted to the crime.
- Understand that your friend might have mood swings.
- Give your friend time to heal. Don't expect your friend to "snap out of it" quickly.
- Help find other people who can help—other friends, teachers, coaches, and family members who can support your friend.
- Don't confront the person who hurt your friend. Though you might want to fix the situation or get back at them, this could make things worse, for you and your friend.

Good things to say:

- Nothing you did (or didn't do) makes you deserve this.
- I'm glad you told me.
- How can I/we help you feel safer?
- I'm proud of you.
- This happens to other people. Would it help to talk to someone who counsels those people?
- I'm sorry this happened.
- I believe you.
- I'll support your decisions.

Things not to say:

- This wouldn't have happened if you hadn't _____.
- I told you not to: go to that party, date that person, hang out with those people.
- Just forget it ever happened.
- Get over it.
- This is private. Don't tell anyone what happened.
- Try not to think about it.
- I want to kill the person who hurt you.

About Confidentiality

If you choose to talk to someone else about your friend, you should know that some adults are mandated reporters. This means they are legally required to report neglect or abuse to someone else, like the police or child protective services. Some examples of mandated reporters are teachers, counselors, doctors, social workers, coaches, and activity leaders. If you want help deciding whom to talk to, call our confidential National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL.

This Might Affect You, Too

Sometimes the family and friends of victims also feel the impact of the crime and experience emotional and physical reactions. This is called secondary victimization. If you have experienced crime or other traumatic events in the past, your friend's experience might bring up memories and feelings of that time. Talk to a counselor, teacher, victim services provider, or other trusted adult to see what kind of help is available for you.

If you are having difficulty finding help, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL for free, confidential assistance, information, and referrals to local resources. You can also e-mail us at *gethelp@ncvc.org.*

The National Center Web site contains informational bulletins on different types of crime and the laws in each state. For information on different crimes, see our GET HELP series at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*. For more information about the laws in your state, visit our Public Policy department at *www.ncvc.org/policy*.

Just for Parents

"Someone hurt my child."

If Your Teen Is a Victim of Crime

Teens are very vulnerable to crime and, unfortunately, become victims of crime more than any other age group. They experience all the same crimes that adults do—from robbery, sexual assault, and car theft to relationship violence, assaults, and bullying. How you—and other adults—respond can make a big difference in how your child copes with and recovers from the event.

Trauma and victimization affect people in different ways, but there are some behaviors to look for with your teen. Some common reactions to experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event include:

- Change in eating or sleeping habits
- Acting out: aggressive or inappropriate behavior
- Attention-seeking behavior
- Increased risk taking
- Deteriorating school performance
- Fear of attending school
- Poor peer relations, withdrawal
- Physical signs of stress: headache, stomachache
- Nightmares
- Anger
- Hopelessness
- Helplessness
- Loss of control or powerlessness
- Concentration difficulties
- Clinginess
- Mood swings
- Depression
- Anxiety

Rapid behavior changes can also be indicators of victimization and trauma, for example: a child who was always deeply concerned about looks and appearance, who stops being interested in how people view her; a strong student who no longer is interested in achievement; or a child who now expresses fear about doing something, such as taking the bus, attending school, or going somewhere frequented in the past.

Although keeping a child's victimization quiet or trying to forget about it can be an instinctive response, a victim has little chance of healing from the experience if they want to talk about it with someone but can't. Forcing a person to suppress feelings and memories can damage a person's emotional, psychological, and even physical health.

Things that can help:

- Remain calm in front of your teen.
- Remember that your teen will be aware of and affected by your reactions.
- Focus on what your teen needs.
- Avoid being judgmental. Everyone makes mistakes. Everyone makes bad decisions. This NEVER means it's all right for one person to harm another.
- Just listen—let your child vent and don't try to have answers for everything.
- Validate that the crime was horrible and that you are sorry it happened.
- Ask your child to talk about how he or she reacted to the event.
- Accept that your teen may be acting differently, but set appropriate limits. For instance, your teen may be expressing a lot of anger, but it is still inappropriate for him or her to throw things, break things, or be violent.
- Give your teen time to process what happened.
- Help your teen mobilize his or her own resources—friends, teachers, coaches, siblings, and other family members who can be supportive.

Good things to say:

- Nothing you did (or didn't do) makes you deserve this.
- I'm glad you told me.
- How can I/we help you feel safer?
- I love you.
- I'm proud of you.
- This happens to other people. Would it help to talk with some of them?
- I'm sorry this happened.
- I believe you.
- I'll support your decisions.

Things not to say:

- This wouldn't have happened if you hadn't _____.
- I told you not to: go to that party, date that person, hang out with those people.
- Just forget it ever happened.
- Get over it.
- This is private. Don't tell anyone what happened.

- Try not to think about it.
- This is all my fault.
- I want to kill the person who hurt you.

Exploring Options

Explore options for addressing the situation with your child. Options for addressing safety and holding perpetrators accountable for the crime include:

- Contacting victim service providers for emotional support, safety planning, and more information about other resources and legal rights.
- Reporting to police and beginning the criminal justice process.
- Reporting to school authorities.
- Accessing mental health and medical services.
- Considering civil justice options (filing a civil suit against the perpetrator or other responsible parties).

Explore what will happen with each choice and make decisions together. Also prepare for every step of the process. Victim service providers can give you information about what to expect at different points, such as when making a police report or during court hearings. Understand that children, especially teens, may be extremely concerned about how peers and classmates will respond.

Family and Friends

Sometimes the family and friends of victims also feel the impact of the crime, and experience emotional and physical reactions. This is called secondary victimization. If you or any other members of your family have experienced crime or other traumatic events in the past, the victimization of a child may trigger memories and feelings of that time. Explore support options for you and your teen, individually and together. Local victim service providers, mental health programs, or religious organizations can often work with the victim, family, and friends to help you through this time.

If you are having difficulty finding services for you or your child, call our National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL for assistance, information, and referrals to local resources. You can also e-mail us at *gethelp@ncvc.org*.

The National Center Web site contains informational bulletins on different types of crime and the laws in each state. For information on different crimes and their effects, see our GET HELP series at *www.ncvc.org/gethelp*. For more information about the laws in your state, visit *www.ncvc.org/policy*.

Resources

The following list includes resources that were consulted during the development of this toolkit as well as other sources of information, training, and technical assistance that can supplement the information in this book.

Toolkits, Guides, and Curricula

Andrea Carlson, Judith A. Zimmer, and Eleanor Green, *Community Works: Smart Youth Make Safer Communities*, (Washington, DC: National Crime Prevention Council, 2006).

Allen Creighton and Paul Kivel, *Helping Teens Stop Violence: A Practical Guide for Counselors, Educators, and Parents,* (Alameda, CA: Hunter House, 1992).

Patrick E. Davis, *Creating a Caring Community: Empowering Youth and Adults in California for Peacemaking*, A Project of California Council of Churches and American Jewish Congress, http://www.calchurches.org/publication_pdfs/vpc.pdf (accessed September 14, 2006).

Charles Degelman, *Take Charge: A Youth Guide to Community Change,* (Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2002).

Charles Degelman, Keri Doggett, and Bill Hayes, *Active Citizenship Today: Teacher Handbook,* (Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation and Close Up Foundation, 2005).

Leigh Dingerson and Sarah H. Hay, *The Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change,* (Washington, DC: Alliance for Justice, 2001).

Bill Hayes and Charles Degelman, *Active Citizenship Today: Field Guide,* (Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation and Close Up Foundation, 2005).

Erin Donovan Hull, *Youth Act Adult Leader Guide,* (Washington, DC: Street Law, Inc., 2003).

Erin Donovan Hull, *Youth Act Kit,* (Washington, DC: Street Law, Inc., 2003).

The Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development and National 4-H Council, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change,* (Chevy Chase, MD: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development/Tides Center, 2001).

The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities, *Youth Engaged in Leadership & Learning (Y.E.L.L.): A Handbook for Supporting Community Youth Researchers,* (Stanford, CA: Gardner Center, 2001).

Jonna Justinianno and Cynthia Scherer, *Youth Voice: A Guide for Engaging Youth in Leadership and Decision-Making in Service-Learning Programs,* (Washington, DC: Points of Light Foundation, 2001).

Mariam G. MacGregor, *Designing Student Leadership Programs: Transforming the Leadership Potential of Youth,* (Denver, CO: Youthleadership.com, 2001).

National Crime Prevention Council, *Youth Safety Corps: Project Implementation Toolkit,* (Washington, DC: NCPC, 2003).

Parkland Community Futures Development Corporation and Dauphin Youth Service Canada, *Get Involved: How Youth Can Create Community-Based Initiatives*, http://www.getinvolved.ca (accessed September 14, 2006).

Raul Ratcliffe, Eric J. Kilbride, Richard Murphy, *Community YouthMapping: Guide,* (Washington, DC: AED, 2001).

Raul Ratcliffe, Eric J. Kilbride, Richard Murphy, *Community YouthMapping: Toolkit,* (Washington, DC: AED, 2001).

Luz Santana, Dan Rothstein, and Ana Karchmer, *The Question Formulation Technique,* (Cambridge, MA: The Right Question Project, 2000).

Luz Santana, Dan Rothstein, and Ana Karchmer, *Teaching Students to Formulate Their Own Questions: A Teachers Guide,* (Cambridge, MA: The Right Question Project, 2000).

Sandra J. Sydlo et al., *Participatory Action Research: Curriculum for Empowering Youth,* (Hartford, CT: Institute for Community Research, 2000).

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, *Student-led Crime Prevention: A Real Resource with Powerful Promise,* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2002).

Julie Whitman, *Reaching and Serving Teen Victims: A Practical Handbook,* (Washington, DC: National Crime Prevention Council and National Center for Victims of Crime, 2005).

Reports, Articles, and Books

Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer Appleton Gootman, eds., *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development,* (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2002).

María A. Fernández, "Creating Community Change: Challenges and Tensions in Community Youth Research," *JGC Issue Brief* (October 2002), http://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/youth-dev-resources/jgc-publications.html (accessed September 14, 2006).

Jeffrey J. Froh and Matthew D. Jacofsky, "Enhancing our 'Natural' Resources: Introducing Natural Helpers," http://www.nhny.org/clinical_study.htm (accessed September 14, 2006).

Benjamin Kirshner, Jennifer L. O'Donoghue, and Milbrey McLaughlin, eds., "Youth Participation: Improving Institutions and Communities," *New Directions for Youth Development* 96 (2002).

Heather Lewis-Charp et al., *Extending the Reach of Youth Development Through Civic Activism: Outcomes of the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative*, (Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates, 2003).

Scott Menard, "Short- and Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Victimization," *Youth Violence Research Bulletin* (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002).

William R. Penual, James H. Gray, and Deborah Kim, "Integrating Technology into Community Youth Research," *JGC Issue Brief* (January 2004), http://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/youth-dev-resources/jgc-publications.html (accessed September 14, 2006).

Christine B. Siegfried, Susan J. Ko, and Ann Kelley, *Victimization and Juvenile Offending,* (Los Angeles: National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2004).

Madeline Wordes and Michell Nunez, *Our Vulnerable Teenagers: Their Victimization, Its Consequences, and Directions for Prevention and Intervention,* (Oakland, CA: National Council on Crime and Delinquency and the National Center for Victims of Crime, 2002).

Organizations and Web Sites

Community Tool Box, University of Kansas, *http://ctb.ku.edu*

Connect for Kids, *www.connectforkids.org*

Do Something, *www.dosomething.org*

Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), STOP the Violence Program, *www.fcclainc.org*

Federal Youth Court Program, *www.youthcourt.net*

Harvard Family Research Project, *www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/*

John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities, Stanford University, *http://gardnercenter.stanford.edu*

The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *www.theinnovationcenter.org*

National 4-H Council, *www.fourhcouncil.edu*

National Association of Peer Programs, *www.peerprograms.org*

National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, *www.nascc.org*

National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE), *www.nationalsave.org*

National Center for Victims of Crime, *www.ncvc.org*

- Dating Violence Resource Center, *www.ncvc.org/dvrc*
- Stalking Resource Center, *www.ncvc.org/src*
- Teen Victim Initiative, *www.ncvc.org/tvp*

National Child Traumatic Stress Network, *www.nctsn.org*

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, *www.ncadv.org*

National Crime Prevention Council, *www.ncpc.org*

National Organizations for Youth Safety, *www.noys.org*

National Sexual Violence Resource Center, *www.nsvrc.org*

National Youth Leadership Council, *www.nylc.org*

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center, *www.safeyouth.org*

Peer Resources, *www.peer.ca*

Stop Bullying Now! Campaign, *http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov*

U.S. Census Bureau, *www.census.gov*

U.S. Department of Justice, *www.usdoj.gov*

- Bureau of Justice Statistics, *www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs*
- Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), *www.cops.usdoj.gov*
- Office for Victims of Crime, *www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc*
- Office on Violence Against Women, *www.usdoj.gov/ovw*

Whitman College Peer Listeners, *www.whitman.edu/peer_listeners*

The Youth Activism Project, *www.youthactivism.com*

Youth Alive! *www.youthalive.org*

Youth Crime Watch of America, *www.ycwa.org*

Youth On Board, *www.youthonboard.org*

Youth Service America, *www.ysa.org*

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR
Victims of Crime

2000 M Street, NW, Suite 480
Washington, DC 20036
202.467.8700 ph | 202.467.8701 fax
www.ncvc.org

National Crime Victim Helpline
800.FYI.CALL | TTY 800.211.7996
gethelp@ncvc.org

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
1100 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details on COPS programs, call the
COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770

Visit COPS Online at the address listed below.
www.cops.usdoj.gov

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