



Victims of Crime NT

Newsletter November - December

Mission Statement:

To support survivors of crime whilst creating a broader awareness of the need for this community to assist victims to rebuild their lives

Victims of Crime NT is funded by the **Department of Justice**. As well as providing this funding the Department of Justice assists us with an operating premises and invaluable advice. This on-going support allows us to continue to provide a crucial support, information and referral service to crime victims in the Northern Territory. This agency extends its thanks to the Northern Territory Government and the Department of Justice.

Victims of Crime NT receives sponsorship from **Fort Knox Locksmiths**. Our partnership allows us to respond quickly to the needs of victims of break and enter and to ensure that their premises are professionally re-secured in a cost efficient manner. This agency extends its thanks to Troy and the staff of Fort Knox Locksmiths for their on-going support.

Managers Report



Good day to all.

It is with regret that I have to report a substantial increase in the frequency of victims of violent crime seeking support services from this agency.

This concerning trend has not gone unnoticed in the community and has precipitated a range of responses from increased police levels to harsher penalties from the court system. Unfortunately these responses tend to occur after a crime has been perpetrated and focus on punishment rather than prevention.

Victims of Crime NT is committed to the best possible outcome for crime victims and the best possible outcome is a long-term reduction in the number of victims presenting for services. Experience in overseas jurisdictions suggest that increasing the length or rate of incarceration for offenders does little to reduce the incidence of offending. The NT already has far in away the highest incarceration rate in Australia...and the highest level of violent crime.

Responses that substantially reduce the number of victims of violent crime are preventive, long-term strategies which focus on the root causes of social dysfunction. Parenting support, youth diversion, mentoring, job placement, youth engagement, social

programmes in schools, and a raft of other social intervention strategies have been shown to be effective in turning mal-adaptive (violent) behaviour into productive and healthy community focused behaviours.

Victims of Crime NT remains absolutely committed to the welfare of victims of all crime, including those victims of violent crime. We know that other agencies and governments are also committed to the welfare of victims of violent crime and recommend that they consider reducing the dollars committed to enforcement/punitive crime reduction strategies and increasing the amount applied to the development of a society which is based on non-violent values and a commitment to social justice.

Regards
Mike Campbell

Victims of Crime NT provide:

- Crisis Support
- Referral
- Information
- Court Support
- Representation
- Advocacy
- Assistance to resecure a home following a breakin



From the Coordinator



Hi and welcome to the resurrection of our bi-monthly Victims Of Crime newsletter! We have been busy over the past few months with a variety of projects including: the establishment of the Alice Springs office; the recruitment to both VOC offices of new volunteers; re-establishing our court support service; holding our AGM and; organising stands and promotional merchandising. We have now to focus on increasing membership and our volunteer pool before Christmas. Interestingly some of our volunteers have been working very effectively from remote locations interstate so this may set a precedent for our building a cohesive team across the top and central Northern Territory regions.

Freds Pass and Royal Darwin Shows 2008.

Situated at the top of the Foskey Pavilion along with Neighbourhood Watch, Victims Of Crime Inc. had some interesting little give-aways that attracted much attention. A simple quiz sheet also saw people passing the stand stop, read and talk to us about crime support services in the Territory. This year saw a great response to our stalls at the shows. We attracted interest in the range of services offered to crime victims as well as in encouraging people to join our team of volunteer Victim Assistance Workers. The Freds Pass Rural Show also had our appearance in with Neighbourhood Watch. Many thanks to Sgt. Jeff Mosel from Neighbourhood Watch for putting up with our incursion so well!

Regards
Chris Fearn

VOLUNTEERS...

A Word from Fran:

I began as a Victim Assistance Worker in early 2007. Training was 40 Hours spread over 6 weeks of Saturdays and Tuesday nights and back then we were called Volunteer Support Counsellors.

Since that time I have seen many Volunteers come and go and 3 changes in the Volunteer Coordinator position.

I have worked the roster of evenings and weekends. Daytime weekends were when I received the most calls. The calls were predominantly telephone referrals from home invasion and unlawful entry.

This year I became involved in the Victims of Crime Court Support service alongside the Witness Assistance Program. Volunteers have had some get-togethers since I've been part of the team.

While I'm urging you all to participate, I have to tell about our library. It's worth a look, there is an extensive list of very interesting resources for VOC workers and Victims.

I hope I'll see you at the next social gathering.

Fran W



Victims Of Crime NT office on the corner of Mitchell and Knuckey Streets in Darwin City

Kind words are short but the echoes are longer...

- Mother Theresa

Life is not holding a good hand; Life is playing a poor hand well

-Danish proverb



Your Safety: Sexual Assault

- Whenever possible, park in a well lighted area.
 - Always keep the car locked when driving and when parked
 - Rapists look for persons who appear vulnerable and apparently inattentive to their surroundings. Keep alert and walk with a purpose. Present an air of confidence, but avoid showing a superior attitude, as the rapist may "want to pull you off your pedestal". Use common sense, but display enough concern not to appear to be a vulnerable target.
 - Avoid walking alone, especially if you are depressed, exhausted, or intoxicated.
 - If you think someone is following you, change your route, walk faster, slower, or cross the street. If you sense danger, go to a well lighted public area, an open store, or lighted private residence and draw attention to yourself.
 - Never hitchhike or accept rides from strangers. Once you've done this, you've lost almost all control over your situation.
- Be honest with your friends, dates, or acquaintances. When you mean "No," say "No." Some people will find a "maybe" or a "yes" if you are not clear and take advantage of it.
 - If you are in the habit of using laundromats, go with a neighbor or friend. These are high risk areas for sexual assaults.
 - If you are ever approached or observe something suspicious, obtain a description of any person or vehicle involved, including license number. This information can be valuable for law enforcement purposes.

(Ref: Univ of Wisconsin Oskosh Police Dept)

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (08) 89 227 156

The Darwin Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) provides counselling to both adults and children who may have experienced (recently or many years ago) any form of sexual assault. Sexual assault can range from verbal harassment, unwanted touching or exhibitionism, to a violent attack. If you have or suspect that you have been sexually assaulted please contact SARC as quickly as possible.

A call for Volunteers



1800 672 242

Victims of Crime NT is a community-based service agency. We provide 24 hour support, counselling and information services to victims of crime in the Northern Territory. Currently we are looking for volunteer support workers in the Darwin and Alice Springs regions. Our volunteers are valued, fully trained and professionally supported. Be a part of our unique, dynamic and crucial team!

Crimestoppers

If you have any information which may assist police in the investigation of a crime, please call Crime Stoppers, toll free at any time or any day on **1800 333 000**.

If matter is urgent or life threatening, call 000 without delay to receive immediate assistance from Police.

'If you see something, or if you hear something, please SAY something'





Victims of Crime NT

Safety Tips from Neighbourhood Watch



Just nipping down the street for a few minutes?

Lock up

Don't try to relate your home security to the length of time you anticipate being away. All too often those short five minute outings turn into a chance meeting with a friend, car trouble, or some other distraction that keeps you away from home long enough for a thief to get in and out of your home, with your possessions.

Keep the jungle down

Beware the hiding places in your garden. Housebreakers and prowlers rely on them. Thieves do not usually target homes that have an unrestricted view from the street.

Keep your unwanted visitors in view

Give careful consideration to the positioning of trees and shrubs around your home. Keep shrubbery well trimmed. Give serious consideration to installing garden lighting. Not only does it enhance the appearance of your garden; it provides you with additional security lighting at night.

Clear concise house numbers

Your house number should be clearly visible from the street. Avoid the temptation to use roman numerals or fancy lettering that may be hard to read. Reflective numerals are a good idea as they can be seen at night with just a small should be facing the street named in your actual address. If your house is quite a distance from the road, place your number at the

entrance of the property. In an emergency, services such as Police, Fire and Ambulance need to be in no doubt as to the address.

Messages on the door

Messages left on the door says only one thing: that you are out and when you might expect to return. Ask friends not to leave notes on the door and pay them the same courtesy. If they feel they must leave a note, pre-arrange that they slip them under the door out of view. Ensure that deliverymen don't leave packages unattended on your doorstep. If need be, arrange for a neighbour to take delivery for you, or organise to collect the package from the delivery depot.

Security screen your home

Ensure you deal through a reputable company. It is important for doors and frames to be correctly fitted. Consider using easy exit screens on windows and reinforce to all inhabitants of the house where the key is located in case of emergency.



Neighbourhood Watch and Victims of Crime NT information stall at the Darwin Show.
Pictured Sergeant Jeff Mosel and Chris Fearn.

Joke: "Make a Sentence"

Children were called upon in a classroom to make sentences with words chosen by the teacher. The teacher gave Jack the words "Defeat", "Deduct", "Defence", "Detail".
Jack stood seriously for a while and then said
"Defeat of Deduct went over Defence before Detail"



Upcoming local events

1 Jan 2008 - 1 Jan 2009

Free Community English Classes

Do you need to improve your English Skills for free? Classes run on Saturdays, 10.30am to 12.30pm. Classes are held in the training room at Palmerston Library, Palmerston.

Contact: Dean Drummond Phone: 0404597208

6-7 November 2008

Territory Tidy Towns Forum

Territory Towns Forum, open to all communities to attend, no charge. Contact Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NT) PH: 8981 5535 Fax: 8981 9719 Email: po1@kabcnt.org.au Web: <http://www.kab.org.au/nt/>

29 November 2008

Thank You Day

Say thank you to the health and medical researchers who dedicate their lives to saving ours. Send a message of thanks before November 29 through the Research Australia Thank You Day website or SMS messaging service (0428THANKS)

Victims of Crime NT

Victims of Crime NT Inc. provides information, support and understanding to victims in order to help them feel safe and to assist in enabling them to try and regain control of their lives.

A group of concerned citizens who felt that offenders were getting more rights than victims of crime started Victims of Crime NT (formerly known as VOCAL) in 1995. As a community organization, the NT Government in 1996 gave us funding to operate an office manned by volunteers and the organisation became an incorporated body. It was then in February 2004 that the name change occurred and Victims of Crime NT Inc. was 'born'.

Since those early days the organization has become a 24-hour, 365 days a year service, and last year expanded yet again with a part-time coordinator being engaged in Alice Springs to develop a response service for the region.

Victims of Crime NT Values Statement

Respect: Respect for the inherent value of all humans in pain and in need to receive social justice as valued members of this community.

Integrity: To behave in a manner expected of us by the community.

Care: Acting with empathy and sympathy toward all victims of crime and others affected by crime by supporting all victims to regain where possible the strengths and resources they had before they were affected by a crime.

Commitment: A commitment to the provision of support and advocacy to all victims of crime and to our volunteer network.

Equality: Treating all victims of crime in accordance with their needs, irrespective of race, religion, gender.....

Professionalism: A commitment to life-long learning for our staff and volunteers to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge to deliver the services and support required to meet the needs of all victims.