

**Letter to Planning Participants:
Needs Assessment
for the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy**

Dear Participants:

Thank you for your willingness to work toward the planning of a victim assistance academy. Your input will shape the content and structure of the academy in ways that will most benefit you. Please take a few moments to respond to these questions, and then return them to me. It will greatly help me focus our work for our planning day on February 2, 2001.

The Center for Crime Victim Services is exploring a state model for a victim assistance academy. The goal is to better serve victims/survivors of crime by developing a mechanism that supports sustainable, cutting-edge training on victim/survivor issues for all those working with victims/survivors. Please respond to the questions below so that we may undertake this process with your specific needs as a guide.

Name:

Agency:

Job Title:

1. Do you support the idea of having sustainable, consistent, and current training on victim-related topics offered throughout the state for those who work with victims of crime?
2. Which institutions or groups in the state do you think would be the ideal "owners" of an academy?
3. Do you have ideas related to the ideal logistical and physical setup? Please circle Yes or No for each of the following questions.
 - a) Should it be located in one place? Yes No

Comments:

- a) Should it be organized in one place and delivered regionally? Yes No

Comments:

- c) Should it be delivered through existing training sites that you are familiar with? Yes No

Comments:

4. Please list five topics that you would like included in the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy curriculum. You may be responding as a group that has developed trainings to be offered, or as a group that is identifying these needs for people you work with. You may also identify topics you would like included for yourself as an advocate.

Please write “trainer” next to your topic suggestions if you are a trainer who has something to offer in the academy setting. Below is a list of topics you may choose from. Feel free to add your own topics if you have additional ideas. You may have already identified these with me in person. If so, please indicate this and go to the next section.

Please indicate the level at which instruction should be focused for each topic. “B” is basic and “A” is advanced:

Topic	Level of Instruction (circle one)	
Topic 1:	B	A
Topic 2:	B	A
Topic 3:	B	A
Topic 4:	B	A
Topic 5:	B	A

The current national academy curriculum (which we have) highlights the following topics. Please highlight which of these would be of interest to you or the people for which you organize training:

- The Scope of Crime and Historical Review of the Victims’ Rights Discipline
- The Criminal Justice System
- Specific Justice Systems and Victims’ Rights
- Restorative Justice/Community Justice
- Financial Assistance for Victims of Crime
- Mental Health Needs of Victims

- Specific Victim Topics: underserved crime victims, sexual assault, domestic violence, child victimization, homicide, drunk driving, victimization of the elderly, victimization of individuals with disabilities, and financial crime
- Research and Evaluation
- The News Media's Coverage of Crime and Victimization
- Collaboration for Victims' Rights and Services
- Professionalizing the Discipline of Victim Services
- Innovative Technologies and the Information Age
- New Developments on Specific Issues: hate and bias crimes, stalking, workplace violence, victims of gang violence, campus crime and victimization, rural victims, international issues in victim assistance, and funding for victim services

5. We would like to know your preferences about format, timing, and location.

a) How long should the academy session be? (Mark your first choice with a 1, your second choice with a 2, etc.,)

- a. _____ 1 day
- b. _____ 2 day
- c. _____ 3 day
- d. _____ 1 week
- e. _____ 2 weeks

b) When are these programs best scheduled? (Select one in each row.)

_____ 1. Weekends or _____ 2. Weekdays

_____ 1. Summers only or _____ 2. Throughout the year

_____ 1. Once a year _____ 2. Twice a year or _____ 3. Quarterly

c) If they were available, would you like to participate in academy training programs via the Internet?

Circle one: Yes No

d) I would be interested in obtaining professional certification/CLEs/ continuing education credits for completion of courses in this academy. Please circle Yes or No.

Yes

Comments:

No

Comments:

- e) I would like to see intensive courses for victim advocates offered, rather than having all courses held in a multidisciplinary format. Please circle Yes or No.

Yes

Comments:

No

Comments:

- f) I would be willing to join one or more of the following subcommittees:
1. Credentialing and Certification
 2. Curriculum and Standards
 3. Relationship to Tri-State Training Efforts (Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont)
 4. General working group for topic to be defined. (I am interested but not sure about which topics I am interested in.)
- g) I am interested in participating in the 1-day collaborative planning session on February 2, 2001. Please circle Yes or No.

Yes

Comments:

No

Comments:

Additional thoughts/comments:

Thank you once again for your participation.

Sincerely,

JAC Patrissi
Training Director