



Victim Awareness Course



Notes
for
Trainers

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Contents

Purpose of this training	Page 03
How this training works	Page 03
How to Use this Pack	Page 03 & 04
Course Outline	Page 05

Trainer's Notes

Session 01 Welcome and Introductions	Page 06
Session 02 Victims of Crime, their experience and reactions	Page 09
Session 03 "What Works" Video	Page 13
Session 04 Introduction to Domestic Violence	Page 18
Session 05 Introduction to Hate Crime	Page 21
Session 06 Drawing game - Communication Skills	Page 23
Session 07 Wrap-Up session	Page 25
Your Notes	Page 26

Purpose of this Training

Victim Support London received funding from the Community Fund in October 2001 for a three year project to design a training programme for London's diverse community groups. The aim of the training is to enable others in the voluntary sector to give high quality and informed support to victims of crimes. The project focuses on London's refugee community groups, women's groups and the lesbian/gay/bisexual and transgendered focused-groups as the communities served by these organisations are underserved by the Victim Support schemes in London.

The training covers three areas: general knowledge about the impact of crimes on victims, developing listening skills through an interactive exercise and specific information about domestic violence and hate crimes.

How this Training Works

Victim Support London (VSL) designs training sessions that are participative and interactive. This gives participants a chance to learn from each other as well as from the trainer input. The sessions vary in format using methods like small groups, games, large group discussions and a video in order to keep participants interested and involved.

How to Use This Pack

The packs consists of:

- A video
- Notes for trainers
- A diskette with:
 - Handouts
 - Activity sheets
 - Activity cards



How to Use This Pack continued..

The handouts can be assembled together and given to participants all at once at the beginning of the day. This gives them the opportunity to follow along with the trainer input exercises. However, you should ask them not to look ahead as some of the handouts answer the questions you will be posing during sessions.

The activity sheets can be given out as needed.

The activity cards are for the listening exercise. It is important that the participants do not see them before the exercise.

At the beginning of each session you will see in these notes for trainers the materials that are required for delivering that session including the handouts, activity sheets and cards.

Course Outline

10.00	Welcome and Introductions	(45 min)
10.45	Victims of Crime	(45 min)
11.30	BREAK	
11.45	"What Works" Video Session	(1 hr)
12.45	LUNCH	
1.30	Introduction to Domestic Violence	(45 min)
2.15	BREAK	
2.30	Introduction to Hate Crime	(1 hr)
3.30	Drawing Game - Communication Skills	(45 min)
4.15	Wrap-up Session	(15 min)
4.30	CLOSE	



Session One

45 mins

Welcome and Introductions

Trainers Note: It will be important to set the scene carefully and spell out what the training will be like to allow participants to set their expectations for the day.

- Aim:** To set the scene for the day and promote a welcoming atmosphere. It is important that you are open, warm and thorough
- Method:** Group Discussion, Trainer Input
- Materials:** Handout
 - o Objectives/outline of the day (p.1)
 - o Victim Support (p.2-3)

How you should work through this session:

Introduce yourselves and explain your experience.

Discuss the course timings, toilets, smoking policy, lunch and other breaks and fire alarms.

Why This Training:

National Crime Survey Statistics show that only a very small percentage - about 3% - report crimes to the police - the major source of referrals to Victim Support(VS).

VSL has identified the need to take the skills and experience of their training out to reach the other 97% of victims, wherever they look for help.

VSL recognises that particularly vulnerable people will often contact Community agencies that work with the group they are part of rather than report crime to the police.

VSL designed this training to raise awareness about the impact that crime can have on its victims and help you provide a suitable service to victims.

(drawing on 30 years experience of working with victims of crime).

The Community Fund funded the development of this training, which was targeted at:

- o Refugee and Asylum Seekers' organisations
- o Women's groups
- o Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual groups

It is important to note that victims often experience more than one type of crime. Even though a community organisation might think of itself as providing support for one group there are differences within groups and individuals experience a variety of crimes. A woman in a refuge might have experienced homophobic crime because of her sexuality. A refugee might have been the victim of a racist incident and also be the victim of domestic violence at home.

Victim Support's Training:

Explain the VSL method of being very interactive and allowing them to explore their own views and understanding of the issues as an individual and as a group.

Brief explanation of Victim Support and dispel any myths, include:

- o a voluntary organisation - not attached to the Police but most of the referrals to Schemes are from victims of crime who have reported to the police. Has existed for 30 years
- o Supports victims of all crimes
- o Witness Service in Crown Courts and Magistrates Courts
- o Volunteers from all walks of life



Who VSL is and its responsibilities

- o Area office for the London Victim Support Charities (Schemes) and Magistrates Courts Witness Service. There are 31 Schemes in London - distributed one per borough
- o Work centres on advocacy for Schemes and Witness Services and training - volunteers receive intensive training prior to supporting victims of crimes such as rape and sexual assault, racist crime, homophobic crime, domestic violence and murder

Finally, acknowledge the skills they already have to support people but that this training will finely tune their skills to support victims of crime.

They should feel free to contact the training team of Victim Support London with feedback about the course.

Go through the Course Objectives for the day.

Introduction of participants:

Encourage participants to work in pairs and talk to each other. 5 minutes each person so as to find out:

- o Their name
- o Their Agency and their position/role
- o Their Personal objective for the day
- o Their favourite colour and what that says about them! (or similar question)

Partners then introduce each other to the rest of the group in the plenary

Session Two

45 mins

Victims of Crime, their experience and reactions

- Aim:** To familiarise participants with common reactions to crime and factors that affect recovery
- Method:** Small group activity, group discussion, trainer input
- Materials:** Handout - The impact of crime (p.4-10) Flipchart and markers

How you should work through this session:

Divide learners into small groups and give each group one of the following questions to discuss:

- a) If you have been the victim of a crime and had a certain reaction, how will you avoid assuming everyone's reaction will be the same?
- b) If you have been the victim of a 'serious crime' how will you react to someone who is very upset by a 'less serious' crime?
- c) If you have been the victim of a crime, how might this affect your work if someone approaches you about his or her own victimisation? If you have never been the victim of a crime, how might this affect your work as a volunteer/worker?

The groups should be asked to prepare a presentation of their findings.

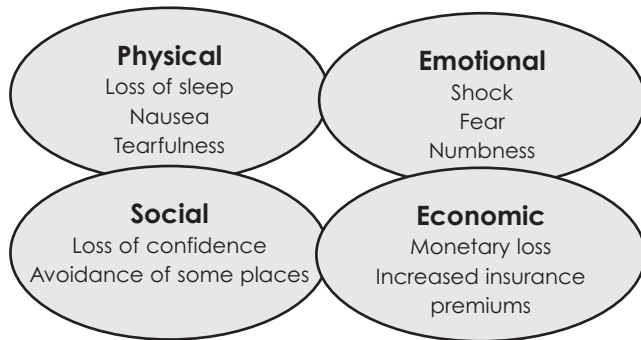
Reconvene the whole group and ask each group to present their findings.

Facilitate a short discussion of each to deal with any questions or issues that are raised.



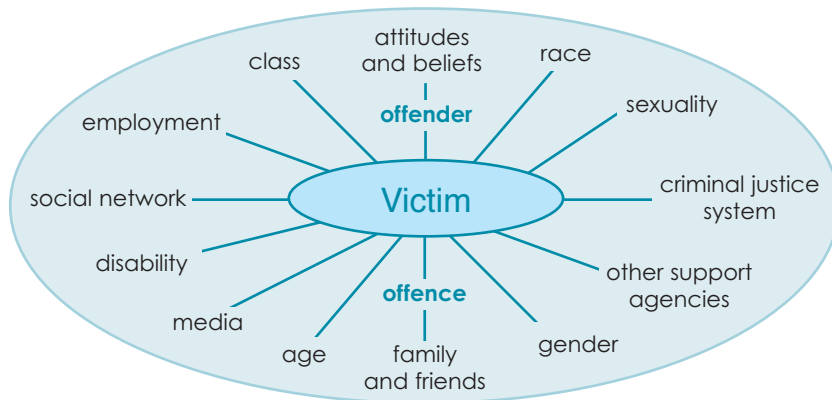
Begin the input session by explaining that crime can affect people physically, emotionally, socially and financially.

Use a prepared flipchart showing the four headings in their circles and ask learners to call out their suggestions for each:



Write the word Victim in the centre of a flip chart sheet and the words offence and offender elsewhere on the sheet.

Ask learners to call out what other factors may influence recovery and note these on the flip chart. Their responses will often be similar to those illustrated in the diagram below. Often referred to as 'The circle of influences' the diagram shows how the crime cannot be seen in isolation:



The reactions of victims are likely to be influenced by the nature of the offence and their relationship to the offender

Briefly explore these relationships, bringing out points such as:

- 1. the effect it might have on a victim who knows the offender;**
 - loss of trust in people, suspicious, lose contact with social group
- 2. the effect it might have on the victim who comes into contact with the offender during the crime;**
 - worried about strangers, stereotyping of people of similar appearance, avoid the area
- 3. the effect it might have of not knowing or seeing the offender might have;**
 - obsessing about figuring out who it was, feeling guilty for not being able to identify them

NB: You should check that learners realise that these reactions can be seen in victims of all types of crime. It is not the perceived seriousness of the crime that dictates how the victim(s) will react.

Also if you have time you may wish to talk about:

Repeat victimisation

Repeat victimisation describes the repeat occurrence of crime. 4% of victims experience 41% of all crimes (Farrell & Pease). This can be linked to low-income areas and often to a minority group (eg disabled, black or gay victims).



Features of repeat victimisation are:

- o Victims may react differently (ie may seem to be relatively less distressed or at times more distressed)
- and**
- o Victims may not be as ready to report the crime. Forty percent of repeat crime is not reported (British Crime Survey)

Repeat victimisation often occurs in the area of burglary and is a feature of domestic violence and racist crime.

Research by Farrell and Pease (1993) *Once Bitten, Twice Bitten: Repeat Victimisation and its Implications for Crime Prevention*, Home Office Police Department) has shown that if you are a victim of crime once, you are more likely to become a victim again (and often within a short time period). Little is known about the effect of this on victims.

Session Three

60 mins

'What Works' Video

Aim:	To demonstrate different approaches to supporting victims
Method:	Watching a video and feeding back on observations
Materials:	Video Activity Sheet - What works? (Activity Sheet 1)

How to work through this session:

Turn to the activity sheet and ask participants to read it through carefully and to clarify anything that they don't understand.

Ask them to watch the video and to take notes about what the two workers do, using the headings on the activity sheet.

Explain that the video does not show the best or the only way to do it - it simply gives two examples in order to prompt discussion about good practice.

Play the video. There are 3 stop points:

Stop Point 1 - After 'how to begin' stop the tape and ask participants to share what they've noted for part 1.

Ensure the following points are covered:

- o How they introduce themselves - Note that they both only gave their first names. Is this the case in your organisation? Is it important to tell them whether you're a volunteer or a member of staff? How do you feel about this?



- o How they described the service - this is important as the client may not have a clear idea of what the organisation can offer. It sets boundaries and shows limits as well as what can be offered. It is important to say at this point whether the service is free, roughly how long they can access the service for, the main activities of the organisation. (Does your organisation have a standard way to explain the service? If so then now would be a good time to provide that information to the participants)
- o Confidentiality - very few services can offer complete confidentiality. There are laws that compel us from time to time to break confidentiality (eg. Prevention of terrorism). Victim Support feels its important to tell people that, although the service is confidential most of the time, there may be occasions when we'd have to break this if we were compelled to by law, or by an over-riding moral concern. Also, the confidentiality in Victim Support is between the client and the Scheme, and not just between the client and the worker. If this is the case with your organisation too, then this should be explained to clients. You might also want to consider telling them that records will be stored securely
- o Safety - The safety of both the worker and client are important to consider. Note that Natalia shows Michael the chair furthest away from the door. She sits near the door - her escape route should she need it. Note that Suzanne is careful to check that she's talking to Maria and no-one else. Rather than asking "Is that Maria" when a woman answers the phone she says "Can I speak to Maria please?" This subtle difference is important as she doesn't assume that the person answering is the person she wants to talk to. She also asked "is it a safe time to talk?" which gives Maria the chance to say "no" and hang up

Stop Point 2 - After "Talk to me" stop the tape and ask participants to share their answers for part 2

Ensure the following points are covered:

- o Using open questions - this is a good way to move the focus on from the setting the scene part of the meeting to the reason for why you are there. Suzanne asks "how have you been since the incident?" which is a good example. Natalia had to be a little more overt and asked Michael in his own words to explain the situation
- o Using encouraging noises - such as "u-huh" or "right" or "I see" help the conversation along and reassure the speaker that the listener is attending to what they are saying, without interrupting. This is especially important on the telephone. Note also that when Suzanne is on the phone she tells Natalia what she's doing - ie "Let me just have a think" so that Maria is not put off by a long pause
- o Eye-contact - Natalia and Suzanne both demonstrate this well. They don't stare at the client but keep their eyes on the client's face, only moving their eyes away very occasionally. This shows interest and attention. Participants need to be aware that in some cultures this may not be acceptable and to be on the look out for anyone finding this uncomfortable
- o Furniture and environment - Natalia has the room set-up so that the two chairs are at an angle to each other - this is ideal. Front-on will feel too confrontational and side by side may feel awkward or too close. Note that the table was to the side of the chairs, so didn't form a barrier between them. In the park Suzanne was unable to move the furniture to suit her needs. She sat at a reasonable distance from Maria, allowing her some personal space, but turned her body towards her in order to make eye-contact possible



- o Body-language - Its important to keep an open body posture, which means un-crossed legs, un-crossed arms and hands in your lap. Its also important to feel comfortable, so whenever possible, choose furniture which allows you to sit comfortably with open body language. Leaning too far back may make you seem disinterested and leaning too far forward may make you seem confrontational so sit up straight and lean forwards slightly, if you can. Try not to fiddle or fidget
- o Allowing emotions - When Maria gets upset, Suzanne allows her to cry. Its tempting to say to people "don't cry" but this is not helpful. People rarely want to cry. They are doing so because they can't help it - the emotion is overwhelming them. By asking them not to cry we are suggesting to them that either they're putting it on, its not that bad, or that we ourselves can't deal with them crying. That's not very supportive. It's also tempting to say "its going to be ok". We don't know this and so should not say it. It rarely makes people feel any better because they know that its an empty promise. Notice that Suzanne gave Maria a tissue, but that she didn't do this immediately. If you pass them a tissue too soon it has the effect of telling them to stop crying, and they will feel that you can't cope with them crying
- o Reflective responses - Suzanne uses a few of these at various stages. On the 'phone she says "this is a very difficult time for you isn't it?", and later, in the park, she says "I hear that you have very little resources". The words used are a little difficult for someone who doesn't understand English well but the technique is there. Ask the group for an alternative that they might use instead. An example might be:

"So you have no money and no safe place to stay"

Stop Point 3 - After "A way forward" - at the end of the video, stop the tape and ask participants to share their answers for Part 3.

Ensure the following points are covered:

- o Identifying needs - Natalia picked up on the main thing that Michael needs - to move house. Suzanne also identified that Maria needed a new place to live. They both confirmed/re-assured their clients that this was something that Victim Support may be able to help them with
- o Agreements - note that Natalia explains clearly the action that she will take, and asks Michael to do something too. She checks that this is ok with him and gives him a realistic idea of when she'll make the call
- o Making a record - note that Natalia does this and Suzanne doesn't. The reason for this is that Suzanne is supporting Maria who is a victim of Domestic Violence. Any record of this meeting may be found by the perpetrator and lead to further violence. Natalia notes down what both she and Michael have agreed to do and she gives a copy of the sheet to Michael to keep
- o Agreeing the next contact - This is essential as it shows the client that you are committed to helping them and they know when to expect a call. In cases of Domestic Violence it's important to discuss with them a safe method of contact, and to stick to this

At the end of the video clarify any outstanding issues or questions that participants may have. Re-emphasise that the video shows just two examples and that they are not to be seen as "the way to do it".



Session Four

45 mins

Introduction to Domestic Violence

Aims: To enable participants to explore and challenge commonly held perceptions about domestic violence and consider their own views in a safe environment

Methods: Syndicates and group discussion

Materials: Blank flipchart and pens
Agreement Signs
Handout: Myths and facts of domestic violence (p.11-14)
Activity Sheet: Case Studies (Activity 2)

How you should work through this session:

This session is in two parts. The first part involves exploring attitudes and the second involves exploring the myths behind the perception of why people don't leave violent partners.

In the four different corners of the room hang up the following signs:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree |
| Somewhat Disagree | Disagree Strongly |

Read out the statements and ask people to go and stand beside how they feel about the truth of the statement. Once they are in their corners give them a few minutes to discuss why they are there. Go around to the different areas and give each group a chance to discuss their position.

OR

If people in the group have mobility issues, give them cards with **Agree/Disagree** written on them and a chance to hold them up to show their responses and then have people take turns discussing their view.

Statements:

1. It can happen to anyone.
2. Some people attract violent partners.
3. The law protects female victims of DV.
4. A person who beats up his or her partner is not a threat to anyone else in society.
5. Domestic Violence is not a criminal offence.

25 mins

The purpose of the group work is to promote reflection and discussion and not come to conclusions.

Be clear that participants own attitudes and beliefs may be challenged in this session and refer them to the group agreement to ensure that challenging is handled sensitively.

Ensure participants are aware that DV happens in same-sex relationships as well and that men can be victims of female perpetrators. Acknowledge that the majority of cases are women assaulted by their male partners or ex-partners (about 80%).

Now divide the room into two groups.

Assign each group a case study from Activity Sheet page 2. Ask them to make a list of the positive things about leaving the relationship and the positive things about staying on a flipchart paper.

10 mins

Reconvene the groups and have them present their findings.

One positive about leaving may be the freedom from further violence but this needs to be balanced against the fact that statistically leaving is extremely dangerous, and most women who are killed in domestic violence situations, are in the very process of leaving.

Many people will be threatened with the loss of their children if they leave, although this is relatively rare, people cannot be certain of this until they have actually taken the risk.



The intangible gains are much harder for the children to grasp and they may be angry or resentful for the losses they sustain, especially if they retain feelings of care towards their parent's abuser.

If it hasn't been discussed mention the possibility of the threat of outing being used by one partner against the other or HIV status.

Conclude as follows by making the following key points:

- o That there are similar aspects between a decision to leave a violent relationship and other difficult decisions
- o People often want the relationship to continue but the violence, threats and abuse to stop
- o It is also necessary to consider the context in which many people are making their decision and realise that we cannot appreciate how difficult it is for them. Instead we should respect their understanding of their situation while still maintaining the ability to feedback and offer observations

10 mins

Session Five

60 mins

Introduction to Hate Crime

Aim:	To clarify what is meant by Hate Crime relating to Racist and Homophobic Crime and some of its characteristics
Methods:	Small group work, large group feedback and trainer input
Materials:	Blank flipchart and pens
Handout:	Definitions related to Racist Crime (p.15-16) Homophobic Crime Definitions (p.17)

How you should work through this session:

Begin by dividing into four groups, with each group discussing and documenting one of the following terms: prejudice, discrimination, homophobia and racism.

Reconvene as a whole group with each group presenting their definition. A group consensus for each term should be reached. If this is not possible and/or groups' definitions vary vastly then the definitions provided in the handout 'Defining Hate Crime should be used'.

15 mins

Ask the group to brainstorm some examples of hate related incidents. Ensure that you bring to light that any incident or type of crime can be racist/homophobic in nature applying the definition they came up with as a group.

15 mins



Ask the large group "What do the incidents you've **brainstormed** have in common?"

- o Repeat victimisation
- o Same perpetrator
- o Being specifically targeted
- o Question your identity
- o Affects the whole family

Have the group list some of the obstacles that prevent people from reporting hate crimes.

- o Social stigma
- o Worried about not being believed
- o Thinking that only they perceive it that way
- o Not seeing the point of bringing it up
- o Not realising it themselves
- o Not trusting the police
- o Worried it will make the perpetrator more likely to do it again

30 mins

End by pointing out that the police definition of racist homophobic incidents is any incident perceived to be racist or homophobic incidents by the victim or anyone else. It is not for the police to decide.

Session Six

45 mins

Drawing Game - Communication Skills

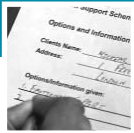
Aim:	To give participants an experience of how we do and don't communicate effectively
Methods:	Pair work and large group feedback
Materials:	Drawing Game Cards (Cards with drawings of abstract shapes) Blank sheets of paper Handout Questioning (p.18)

How you should work through this session:

- a) Divide group into pairs, sitting back to back. Explain that one of them will be given an abstract drawing and that it is their job to attempt to describe their drawing to their partner, to enable him/her to draw it accurately
- b) Tell group that the person drawing can ask questions, but that they must not look at the drawing until the time is up, or they have completed the task. Give the pairs 5 minutes to do this
- c) When they have compared drawings, swap them around, so that the person who was describing is now drawing

Write on flip

"What did you do to ensure you were communicating effectively?"



Describer	Person Drawing

o Answers should include:

Describer	Person Drawing
Being accurate	Actively Listening
Checking understanding	Concentrating
Using the same language / concepts	Asking questions to clarify
Explaining clearly	Not making assumptions
	Repeating back with different words to check understanding

Sum up with a discussion of above points, pointing out that, as they have observed, communication is a 2 way process and that it is the responsibility of both parties to ensure that understanding has taken place. Link this in with their work as a person who might work with a victim of crime, ie, they will need to explain what they can do to help, information they have about their own organisations and others etc.

Session Seven

15 mins

Wrap-Up Session

Aim:	To Wrap up the day
Materials:	Evaluations
Method:	Group Discussion

Ask everyone to say one thing that they learned on the course and hope to use in their work/volunteering.

You may wish to give out evaluations forms in order to collect feedback on the course.

{ Thank everyone for coming }



Your Notes

Your Notes