Not Just Feeling Words: *How Victim Services can Lead to Success in Law Enforcement*

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Disclaimer Slide

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Who’s in the room?

[Image of people in a room]
Why Victim Services?

- Law Enforcement
- Every Other Profession Known to Man

- Law Enforcement
- Social Services
At a Glance: Chattanooga Police Department

ABOUT CHATTANOOGA
Chattanooga Physical Size: 144.6 square miles
Hamilton County Population: 361,613 (2017)

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT:

Sworn Officers - 500
- Neighborhood Policing - 109
- Investigations - 142
- Special Operations - 61
- Administration/Professional Standards - 12
- Community & Department Services - 5

Professional Staff - 125

Sections: 3 (Adam, Baker, Charlie)
- Zones: 6 (Adam North & South, Baker North & South, Charlie North & South)
Calls for Service - 232,534 (2018)

Source: Chattanooga Visitors Bureau

In the beginning... (No, not that one.)

The Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims (ELERV) Grant was awarded to CPD in October 2015.
- The funds for the grant are administered through the Office for Victims of Crime and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.
- This grant originally funded the Victim Services & Chaplains Coordinator (VSCC).
- This effectively started the VSU for CPD.

We thought we were doing alright...
...until we weren’t.

Our research partners also asked community members through questionnaire surveys (quantitative) as well as focus groups (qualitative).

When asked about our department’s knowledge of victim services, these were a few direct quotes:

- “No, I wouldn’t wanna dare ask an officer, ‘which shelter should I go to? No.”
- “I never had a police tell me – they don’t tell the resources out there.”
- “Would you want an officer to tell you something that he really does not know?”
- “We didn’t know what to do. We weren’t told by anybody, whether it was law enforcement, or anybody, where to go, what do, how to get it.”
- “Because the officer’s just like, ‘Oh you just go to a shelter.”

Trauma Informed… policing?

Intervention: Policy

- OPS-18 (Notification Procedures),
- OPS-38 (Investigative Services),
- OPS-39 (Criminal Investigations),
- ADM-13 (Communications/PIO),
- OPS-10 (Hate Crimes),
- OPS-20 (Domestic Violence),
- ADM-43 (Performance Evaluation) and
- OPS-63 (Digital Recording Systems)
- SOP-15 (Victim Services Unit - Standard Operating Procedures)
  - Revisions
- OPS-17 (Property)**
  - Current project at CPD.
Intervention: Training

- Roll Call Training
  - ACEs training for all Roll Call/Law-ups
  - Lethality Assessment Protocol
  - FOIA and Communications
- In-Service Curriculum
  - 2017: Intro to VSU
  - 2018: Case Concepts
  - 2019: Language Pitfalls in Report Writing
- Ongoing VSU block in the Cadet Academy
  - Community Immersion Revamp
- Explorer’s Program
- Citizen’s Police Academy
- Professional Staff Training on VSU Topics*
- FTO Meetings
- Weekly Command Staff Meeting

Intervention: Training (cont.)

- Poverty Simulation - followed the model developed by Missouri Community Action Network
- Overall Vision
- We trained 28 cadets and 2 additional sworn personnel alongside 50 community members, partners, advocates and students.
  - 2 Debrief Groups were held afterward
- This is now an official portion of the CPD Cadet Academy Curriculum

Intervention: Direct Services
Intervention: Direct Services (cont.)

- Needs Assessment
- Follow up
- Information & Referral (Telephone and In-Person)
- Safety Planning
- Criminal Justice Support & Advocacy
- Personal Advocacy & Collaboration
- Court Accompaniment
- Crisis Counseling & Intervention
- Victim’s Compensation Fund
  - Application Assistance

In Action: The Case of Ro*

Shortly before 10:00pm on 3/24/2017, Ro* (victim) was shot on Rawlings Street. When officers found her, she was lying next to the vehicle suffering from a gunshot wound to her right side. She was taken to the hospital and listed in critical condition.

As Ro began to recover, it was determined that she was paralyzed from the waist down with little to no expectation of making a recovery. Furthermore, it was also discovered that Ro had also recently experienced the loss of a pregnancy.

When it came time for Ro to be finally discharged, she had to return home to a location that had previously been shot up before. Accessibility was critical for Ro as she is now permanently paralyzed and requires the use of a wheelchair. Lastly, being that the case was gang related there were significant concerns revolving around her active participation in the investigation, especially since an arrest was made in the case and Ro would be expected to testify in court.

In Action: The Case of Ro

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Services Provided</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previous GMI</td>
<td>Needs Assessment (On-going)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of cooperation, at first.</td>
<td>Victim’s Compensation</td>
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<td>Family influence</td>
<td>Disability / Medical Advocacy</td>
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<td>Change of Insurance after pregnancy loss</td>
<td>Transportation Advocacy &amp; Assistance</td>
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<td>No long term financial stability</td>
<td>Court Advocacy</td>
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<td>Permanent disability</td>
<td>Criminal Justice Support &amp; Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home health refused to provided services due to safety</td>
<td>Crisis Counseling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal complications (personal)</td>
<td>Referrals, referrals and more referrals.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In Action: Mass Casualty Response

What could be impacted?

- Community Engagement & Participation
  - Crime Stoppers
  - Rates of successful prosecution.

Source: Bruce Gardner/Chattanooga Fire Department
What could be impacted?

- Officer buy-in
  - VSU annual awards
  - 2019 In-Service

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>Avg</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VSU annual awards</td>
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<td>2019 In-Service</td>
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<td>Other Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
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- Clearance Rates*
  - When VSU started in 2016, the homicide clearance rate for the Violent Crimes Bureau was 41%.
  - We believe this a combination of multiple factors, which includes the VSU.

Q&A

Contact Us

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