

OVS MISSION

The Office of Victim Services is devoted to protecting the rights of victims of crime, assisting them in obtaining meaningful services, and locating appropriate resources throughout the community, while being sensitive to the needs of victims.

The Office of Victim Services further provides timely information and services aimed at enhancing and improving the victim's knowledge of New Jersey's correctional system.

The NJDOC acknowledges the need for incarcerated individuals to recognize the impact of crime on victims, victim survivors, the community, their own family, and society as a whole. The NJDOC provides a program entitled, **Focus on the Victim (FOV)** to educate inmates about the harm they have inflicted upon others and to curtail future destructive behavior. The program is voluntary and overseen by the NJDOC, Office of Victim Services (OVS).

The principles of restorative justice are employed as a fundamental component to the FOV process, which seeks to provide offenders with opportunities to examine the impact of crime on the victim and ways to make amends through the process of group discussions, videos, experiential learning activities, journal assignments and guest speaker presentations.

GUEST SPEAKERS' COMMENTS

"My family thinks I'm crazy, but this is my way of grieving, I am doing what I need to do."

"This is my way of honoring the memory of my loved one."

"Participating in this program makes me feel close to my loved one."

"If I can only reach one, then that is all that I ask."

"Please don't stop this program, it means so much to me and my family."

"Thank you for giving me back my spouse. Participating in this program has given him back his life".

"When I started speaking, I could not speak the month of my loved one's birthday, now I have spoken on his birthday. Each time helps."



NJ DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

DIVISION OF PROGRAMS & COMMUNITY SERVICES



FOCUS ON THE VICTIM PROGRAM (FOV)

(VICTIM IMPACT PROGRAMMING)

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

° Each program cycle is 14 weeks in duration and meets once a week for two hours per session.

° The 14 week cycle consists of a psycho-educational learning component via structured groups discussions, audio/visual aid, journal writing assignments, guest speaker presentations and role playing activities addressing the following offenses:

- Victimization
- Restorative Justice
- Property Crimes/ Robbery
- Drunk/Impaired Driving
- Hate/Bias Crimes
- Drugs & Society
- Domestic Violence
- Child Abuse
- Elder Abuse
- Sexual Assault
- Gun Violence/Violent Crimes
- Incarceration & Impact on the Family
- Homicide
- Victims' Emotions & making



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are some of the benefits of victims of crime volunteering as guest speakers for the Focus on the Victim Program?

Victims have expressed an overall sense of comfort with participating in the FOV Program and continue to request to speak at correctional institutions statewide. Victims have openly shared their need to memorialize their loved ones by sharing their experiences, to assist in the prevention of further victimization/re-victimization by offenders, as well as, find the release of sharing their experiences as feeling therapeutic.

What are some of the benefits to a professional guest speaker that participates in such a program?

Participating in this program provides an opportunity for professionals to educate inmates, as well as correctional staff, on the direct impact experienced by victims. There is a process that is needed in order for offenders to learn to accept accountability for their actions and understand that justice for victims does not solely lie in their incarceration.

Professional guest speakers, through their presentation provide offenders firsthand knowledge about what victims experience during their victimization. They provide greater insight in understanding that it is not about them – rather, it is about the impact of the crime that they have committed. Professionals also provide a significant contribution in relaying educational aspects of the impact of crime. This is especially significant in areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and elder abuse awareness.

What are some of the benefits for the offender participating in the Focus on the Victim Program, while incarcerated?

OVS recommends that the offender receive no extra privileges or incentives for participating in the FOV Program. However, this course content is complex and emotionally taxing and requires that participants work extremely hard to address their personal issues throughout the duration of the program. Upon successful completion of the program, participants receive a Certificate of Completion.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What role would a guest speaker play in this program?

One of the most unique and influential components of the FOV Program is the incorporation of presentations made to the inmates by actual victims/survivors and victim service professionals throughout the community.

The victim/survivors are provided the opportunity to share their personal account of how crime has impacted upon their own lives (physically, emotionally, financially, psychologically and spiritually) and the pain and loss they have endured as a result of being victimized.

Professional guest speakers lend their expertise and experiences working directly with victims to provide the FOV participants with a deeper awareness of how crime impacts upon the victim and how victims are impacted by the overall criminal justice system.

How do I participate in this program?

Your participation is valuable to us; for more information on our Volunteer Guest Speaker Network you may call or write to the following:

New Jersey Department of Corrections

Office of Victim Services

P.O. Box 863

Trenton, New Jersey 08625

(609) 292-4036 x5299

Toll free in NJ (800) 996-2029