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PCVI News

Issue 2 / Volume 1



Welcome

Since it was established in 2000, the Policy Centre for Victims Issues (PCVI) – Victims Fund has become an important tool in our efforts to improve the experience of victims of crime in the criminal justice system. Over the years the fund has supported a variety of innovative projects including community-based awareness events, assistance with implementation of *Criminal Code* provisions and activities at the international level. This issue of the E-newsletter provides an overview of the Victims Fund and also a snapshot of activities we have recently supported. For more information on the Victims Fund, please visit our website at: <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/pb-dgp/prog/vf-fv.html>.

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Save the Date:

*National Victims of Crime
Awareness Week will be held from
April 26 to May 2, 2009.*

Sign up for the mailing list

by emailing:

*victimswEEK-semainedesvictimes
@justice.gc.ca*

Overview of the Victims Fund:

In fulfilling its commitment to victims of crime, the Government of Canada provides funding to improve the experience of victims in the criminal justice system and ensure support and services are available when needed. The Victims Fund, co-managed by the Policy Centre for Victim Issues and Programs Branch at the Department of Justice Canada, supports community groups, non-governmental organizations, provincial and territorial governments, and in certain cases, victims of crime.

Funding Envelopes

There are three components of the Victims Fund: Provincial and Territorial Implementation; Projects and Activities; and Financial Assistance

Provincial and Territorial Implementation:

The provinces and territories, who are responsible for the majority of victim service delivery, are eligible for funding to encourage implementation of federal and provincial/territorial legislation for victims of crime. This includes support for: improving victim service worker capacity to meet gaps in services to victims; providing financial assistance to victims to attend sentencing hearings to present a victim impact statement; and enhancing or expanding services to currently underserved victims.

Projects and Activities:

Governmental and non-governmental organizations are eligible to receive funding for projects and activities that encourage the development of new approaches, promote access to justice for victims of crime, improve the capacity of victims service providers, establish referral networks and increase awareness of services available. Under the Projects

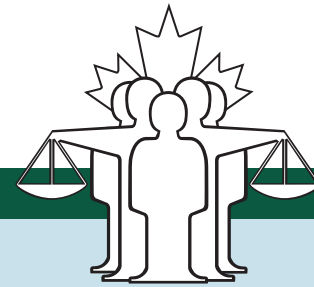
and Activities component, funding is also made available to support community based activities commemorating National Victims of Crime Awareness Week.

Financial Assistance:

Under the Victims Fund, financial assistance is made available to victims of crime under specific circumstances:

- limited emergency financial assistance to victims or family members in exceptional circumstances where no other source of funding is available
- limited financial assistance to Canadians who are victims of serious violent crime abroad and may incur unanticipated or exceptional expenses resulting from their victimization where no other source of funding is available.
- to defray the travel costs of registered victims and a support person who wish to attend National Parole Board hearings of offenders under federal supervision who harmed them.





Victims Fund By The Numbers – 2007/2008

The Victims Fund supports a variety of initiatives across the country on an annual basis. Victims Fund highlights from 2007/2008 include:

Provincial / Territorial Component:

The Provincial/Territorial Component provided \$2.7 Million in grants and contributions to 9 jurisdictions to aid them in the implementation of victim-related legislation.

Also, over \$500,000 was approved for 8 jurisdictions to implement services to underserved victims of crime.

Under this new “Underserved Victims” component, over \$350,000 was made available over 4 years to the Province of Saskatchewan to establish a Northern Program Manager to enhance victim service delivery in northern Saskatchewan.

Project and Activities Component:

As part of National Victims of Crime Awareness Week 2008, over 40 community based-projects received funding for activities that ranged from victim-centered training sessions to media and awareness-raising campaigns.

The Victims Fund has supported projects in various jurisdictions that aim to implement new amendments to the *Criminal Code* and the *Canada Evidence Act* making

it easier for children and vulnerable victims and witnesses to testify in court.

Financial Assistance Component:

410 registered victims and 75 support persons received more than \$320,000 in assistance from the Victims Fund to travel to a parole board hearing and to pay for expenses such as meals, mileage, accommodation and childcare.

The Canadians Victimized Abroad program, established April 1, 2007, makes over \$1M available per year to individual Canadians who are victims of specified serious violent crimes in a foreign jurisdiction.

Interview



Q What is the project that you have developed with the assistance of the Victims Fund?

A The project supported the design of a national mobile training module for frontline workers who work in Women’s Shelters in Inuit communities across Canada, the development of a national training module and subsequent train-the-trainer module that can be adapted to the unique needs of each community and increases the knowledge transfer to shelter workers. This module assists frontline workers in delivering effective support to victims of abuse and family violence. In turn, this improves services to victims in Inuit communities across Canada.

Another goal of this project component was to maximize the participation of victim advocates and victim services on the National Advisory Committee and to ensure their needs and perspectives are reflected in the

framework for an Inuit Strategy for Abuse Prevention.

In the next phase, Pauktuutit will begin development of an additional tool, addressing the needs of children who witness family violence, to be incorporated into the training module. The Phase III project activities will maintain ongoing networks and partnerships and build upon the initial findings of the pilot.

Q How has the Victims Fund helped you get this project off the ground?

A As a result of accessing the Victims Fund and other federal funding agencies Pauktuutit has been able to provide on-going technical support to the Shelter workers. It is critical that the Victims Fund and other family violence initiatives within the federal government continue supporting victims service providers with culturally relevant materials, training, resources/tools.

Q How has this project impacted the community?

A There is limited support and training for front line workers who work with

victims. The training module will increase the capacity of participants to understand the complexity of the issues they are dealing with. It also provides an opportunity to build skills and network. This will have a positive impact on the victims, their families, front-line workers and ultimately the community.

Q Where do you see this project in 5 years?

A Ongoing training and support for frontline workers who work with victims of violence is required in our remote, isolated communities. We are anticipating that this training module also be expanded to other service/agency providers in Inuit communities across Canada. As well, we are anticipating that the funding partnerships and adaptations of the module will be transferred to provincial and territorial partners. Pauktuutit will expand this initiative to include additional components: trauma support counseling, specialized counseling and referral for child sexual abuse, etc.