

# **Crime Victims Needs Assessment**

*Prepared for*

**The Wisconsin Department of Justice  
Office of Crime Victim Services**

**and**

**Citizens of Judicial District 10**

*by:*

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# Introduction

In 2005 the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Office of Crime Victim Services began a journey to develop a Crime Victim Needs Assessment process to document all crime related services across the State of Wisconsin and to understand the needs of counties and tribal communities. The goal is to document crime victims' unmet needs and communities' priorities related to crime victim services. As such, this project:

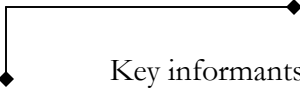
- ✓ Gathers comprehensive/consistent information from Wisconsin counties and tribes
- ✓ Assists communities to collaboratively set priorities
- ✓ Disseminates results in user-friendly format
- ✓ Reflects viewpoints of crime victims

In 2006 World Bridge Research began assisting the State of Wisconsin with this Crime Victim Needs Assessment effort using an approach called Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR was developed in contrast to conventional research approaches. PAR is characterized by having three primary components: 1) an iterative process for conducting research that includes reflection and action; 2) having community members and stakeholders involved with the research process; and 3) using findings to promote positive community change. These three approaches are interwoven throughout the project design and provide for a richer and more culturally sensitive assessment than a researcher directed traditional approach. Essentially PAR is research which involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current action (which they experience as problematic) in order to change and improve it.

*Essentially Participatory Action Research (PAR) is research which involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current action (which they experience as problematic) in order to change and improve it.*

To document all crime related services and unmet needs across the State of Wisconsin, the Needs Assessment project began by interviewing key informants (victim/witness specialists/coordinators, law enforcement agencies (county, tribal and municipal), community service providers and representatives from local departments of human services) in each county and tribal community. Appointments were made with individuals and groups to ask them questions about:

- ✓ Community composition
- ✓ Services available to victims of crime
- ✓ Community assets
- ✓ Unmet needs of crime victims
- ✓ The underserved
- ✓ Crime trends
- ✓ Victim rights
- ✓ Innovative programs



Key informants were also asked to fill out a questionnaire about unmet needs at the end of the interview. The survey and interview questions shared some similar topics with the interviews providing an opportunity for the research team to learn the insights and reasons behind interviewees' perspectives. A second round of key informant interviews were held with named victim service agencies and other agencies or groups providing victim services programming that were deemed innovative but not known by victim service grant makers.

To build upon the iterative process for assessment and action, findings from the key informant interviews and surveys were presented at the District 10 meeting. The meeting featured two parts – reflection and discussion about the findings from the interviews and surveys followed by a consensus building method using group participation technologies to identify recommendations for funding priorities for crime victim services needs and gaps.

*The three initial steps – interviews and surveys, district meeting and on-line survey – are summarized in this report.*

In a final step for the district, the emerging recommendations were incorporated into an internet based survey tool which sought to prioritize the recommendations. Interviewed key informants, participants of the district meeting and all other known service providers in the district were asked to complete the survey.

The three initial steps – interviews and surveys, district meeting and on-line survey – are summarized in this report.

These key informant interviews and surveys are to be rounded out with interviews and focus groups with victims/survivors of crime, members of underserved communities and representatives of statewide organizations. Also an advisory group of victims, former victims and survivors from across the state oversees various aspects of the Needs Assessment's implementation.

# Summary

Judicial District 10 is made of the following 13 Wisconsin counties: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Polk, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer and Washburn. Every county in the district was represented in the needs assessment process with 55 individuals interviewed, 23 participating at the district meeting and 11 responding to the follow-up online survey.

The following summaries were created from the key informant interviews and surveys collected in District 10.

## **Crime trends:**

- ✓ Crimes relating to drugs including methamphetamines, alcohol, prescription drugs, cocaine and methadone
- ✓ Automobile sabotage and vehicle vandalism
- ✓ Identity theft
- ✓ The severity of juvenile crime
- ✓ Sexual assault

## **Assets: commonly referred to services:**

- ✓ Transitional housing programs
- ✓ Food shelves
- ✓ Mental health services
- ✓ Victim witness programs
- ✓ Shelters for domestic abuse
- ✓ Sexual assault teams
- ✓ Alcohol abuse centers
- ✓ Churches
- ✓ Family support centers

## **Underserved crime victims:**

- ✓ Child victims of sexual abuse and sexual assault victims in general
- ✓ Victims with mental health issues
- ✓ Rural victims of crime
- ✓ Children and the elderly
- ✓ New immigrant communities
- ✓ The “uninsured”
- ✓ Runaway and throwaway teens
- ✓ Victims with developmental disabilities
- ✓ Domestic violence victims

## **Existing innovative services:**

- ✓ Crisis response programs
- ✓ Child advocacy centers
- ✓ Family support programs/resource centers
- ✓ School-based programs
- ✓ Licensed day cares
- ✓ Video taping children’s testimony in child sexual abuse cases

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**Programs on key informants' "wishlist" include:**

- ✓ Violence prevention programs including school resource officers
- ✓ Supervised visitation/exchange centers
- ✓ SANE programs complete with nurses and equipment
- ✓ Drug programs for youth
- ✓ Sexual assault programs for youth
- ✓ Restorative justice programs
- ✓ A free store for items crime victims need
- ✓ Video taping sexual assault victims' testimony in sexual assault cases

**A**t the district meeting, participants reflected on the above findings and using a consensus process answered the question "What are our recommendations for 2008 funding priorities for victim services?" In a follow-up online survey District 10 residents were asked to prioritize the recommendations. The ranked recommendations were:

1. Medical and Mental Health Services and Availability of Basic Needs (tie for first)
2. Prevention Education
3. Restitution Collection Enforcement
4. Victim Rights Funding
5. Services for Special/Underserved Populations
6. Develop and Maintain Professional and Program Standards
7. Universal Legal Representation including Family Law
8. Victim Led Community and System Change



A complete depiction of the ideas and victim needs that make up each funding recommendation can be found in Appendix A.

## Findings from Key Informant Interviews

Key informants from District 10 representing victim/witness specialists/coordinators, sheriff's offices, community service providers and departments of human services were interviewed from January 2007 – April 2007. A total of 55 individuals were interviewed (35 women and 20 men). The following summarizes the themes that emerged from these interviews.

### **Crime Trends**

Some of the emerging crime trends that were discussed by key informants include: crimes relating to drugs including methamphetamines, alcohol, prescription drugs, cocaine and methadone; automobile sabotage and vehicle vandalism; identity theft; the severity of juvenile crime; and sexual assault.

Drugs: Many informants believe that the problem of methamphetamine manufacturing has been virtually eliminated in most communities. However, use and abuse is as high as it has ever been and the costs to buy the drug are rising. Some of the emerging crime trends related to “meth” include burglaries and thefts by users needing money to purchase the drug, addicted persons abusing and neglecting their children and increased domestic violence among “meth” addicted couples. One informant states,

*“Abuse, neglect, domestic violence are all tied in to increase in ‘meth’. [We] have a very aggressive attack against ‘meth’ use, but it is a constant battle.”*

“Abuse, neglect, domestic violence are all tied in to increase in ‘meth’. [We] have a very aggressive attack against ‘meth’ use, but it is a constant battle.”

Though there is a perception that “meth-related” crime trends are a big problem it is important to note that many sheriffs talk about how the jail population now has less “meth-related” inmates than a few years ago. One sheriff states, “the jail population three years ago [was] 70% meth-related, now [it is] 30%.”

In some counties cocaine, marijuana and prescription drugs are the most popular drugs of choice. Key informants indicate that prescription drugs are easy to get from various sources and can be procured for free or little money. However, in some communities pharmacies have been the target of a rash of burglaries.

The role of alcohol in domestic violence cases is a topic that was discussed by many key informants. One key informant states,

“Alcohol is the biggest problem in the county. With domestics it is always alcohol-related.”

Vehicle Vandalism: Other crimes on the rise related to domestic violence include automobile sabotage and vehicle vandalism. Transportation in many rural communities is viewed to be an important commodity. As such automobile sabotage and vehicle vandalism is a crime trend that is perceived by some key informants as a way to limit the mobility of others.

Identity Theft: Though identity theft and other kinds of financial fraud are not perceived to be large problems in terms of volume, when it is encountered, law enforcement and other victim service providers indicate that they are working with a big learning curve to assist victims. Some agencies are seeking out specialized training to understand the nuances of--in some cases--sophisticated scams. The elderly are often the ones victimized.

Juvenile Crime: Many key informants indicate the numbers for juvenile crime are staying the same or decreasing in their community. However, there is a perception that the severity of violence juveniles are involved in when committing crimes is increasing. Some key informants believe this may be due to the use of “meth” or other drugs while others see it in relation to unmet mental health needs of juvenile perpetrators.

Sexual Assault: Reporting of sexual assaults appears to be rising, particularly assaults of children and by teens. There is a perception in some communities that child victims are younger than ever before. However, most key informants talked about sexual assault victims in the context of “who is underserved?”

### ***Underserved Populations***


**I**n key informant interviews those viewed as underserved include child victims of sexual abuse, sexual assault victims in general, rural victims of crime, new immigrant communities, those who are “uninsured” and children and elderly in general.

Sexual Assault: Many see sexual assault victims in general as underserved because there are not enough services available. In many communities the availability of Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs), SANE programs and support groups is perceived as lacking.

*Many see sexual assault victims in general as underserved because there are not enough services available.*

One of the reasons child victims of sexual abuse are perceived to be underserved is that investigations of non-caregiver abuse is now handled by law enforcement and not human services. At the same time, many key informants say they cannot notice differences in how things are handled.

Rural Victims: Many perceive the most underserved population are those who live in rural, isolated areas. One informant states, “Most underserved people are in farming,



dairy and beef and rural areas. Those people are private and keep to themselves.” The biggest barrier here is identified as transportation.

New Immigrant Communities: Some key informants talked about small Asian communities, Somali women, Latino migrant communities and other Spanish speaking citizens as being underserved due to language barriers and a perception that new immigrant communities want to keep to themselves as well.

The “Uninsured”: Another group perceived to be the most underserved is the “uninsured”. This is particularly challenging for individuals and families with mental health needs. They experience barriers to services due to lack of insurance and long waiting lists with county social services.


Children and the Elderly: Children and the elderly were also identified as underserved by many key informants. For children there is a perception that the issues related to abuse and families is complex and there are not enough of the right services available to assist with these needs. For elders it is thought that the older adult population is increasing, yet there are not enough programs for assistance.

### ***Innovative Services and “Wishlists”***

**W**hen asked what kinds of services victims are commonly referred to for assistance and support, many key informants indicated: transitional housing programs, food pantries, mental health services, victim witness programs, shelters for domestic abuse, sexual assault teams, alcohol abuse centers, churches and family support centers. Key informants think of these services as important, but not out of the ordinary or innovative.

Some communities did identify a few programs perceived to be unique or innovative:

1. A crisis response program that uses a group of professionally trained volunteers for on-scene crisis intervention services.
2. Child advocacy centers that assist parents and children when abuse occurs.
3. Family support programs/resource centers that assist families with domestic or sexual violence.
4. A school-based program where students can talk with counselors about sexual assault and domestic violence issues during the school day.
5. One domestic violence program developed a licensed day care. It is thought that the day care really helps women take control of their lives because they can deal with other aspects of problems knowing their children are safe.
6. Video taping children’s testimony in child sexual abuse cases.



On the same note key informants also identified programs and services they wish they had available in their local community. In some cases these services were once available, but are no longer due to local funding reductions:

1. Violence prevention programs including school resource officers
2. Supervised visitation/exchange centers
3. SANE programs complete with nurses and equipment
4. Drug programs for youth
5. Sexual assault programs for youth
6. Restorative justice programs
7. A free store for items crime victims need
8. Video taping sexual assault victims' testimony in sexual assault cases

Assets key informants wish were available include:

1. Affordable housing
2. Good paying jobs

### ***Barriers and Solutions***

**B**y far the biggest barrier to service that was identified by most key informants is the *lack of transportation* available to many crime victims. One solution includes a program to repair cars to help break the isolation of persons who might be vulnerable to abuse and victims of crime. Another solution is for local programs to develop a volunteer transportation program where volunteers either use their own vehicles to transport victims or an agency van. It is truly felt that, “the lack of transportation keeps victims hostage.”

Another barrier to crime victims receiving the services they need is the *need for insurance* by crime victims. There is a perception that crime victims need professional mental health therapists and substance abuse treatment that are unavailable due to the lack of insurance. One solution identified is universal health care.

*By far the biggest barrier to service...is lack of transportation... It is truly felt that, “the lack of transportation keeps victims hostage.”*

### ***Victim Rights Difficult to Enforce***

**M**ost victims are provided a written list of crime victim rights by law enforcement officers that are followed by written notification from victim witness programs. Some victim witness programs indicate that it isn't very often they encounter non-English speakers as crime victims, but when they do they do the best they can in working with interpreters. However, informing non-English speaking victims about their crime victim

rights may fall through the cracks from time to time.

One right that seems difficult to enforce is, *“To have reasonable attempts made to notify you of the time, date and place of upcoming court proceedings, if you so request.”* Often what happens is that victims have already arranged to be off work for a particular court date, but when they are told that the date will be rescheduled it is too late and makes for further hardship.

Another set of rights that is difficult to enforce is, *“restitution as allowed by law”* and *“a civil judgment for unpaid restitution.”* There is a perception in some communities that restitution is never paid and that there are no programs set up for collection. Some victims think they will never get their restitution paid while others are under the false impression that someone will replace their property lost through some sort of compensation program. Also, *“To have your property expeditiously returned when it is no longer needed as evidence”* does not seem to occur in a timely manner according to some key informants.

*Informing non-English speaking victims about their crime victim rights may fall through the cracks from time to time.*

*“Timely disposition of case”* is another right difficult to enforce. Scheduling delays by the courts and defense attorneys are seen to be a huge problem. In some places it can take a year to get a sexual assault case to court. One informant states, “it takes sometimes as long as two years to get things going.”

One perspective on why victim rights are a challenge is that the rights of the defendant seem to be more important than the rights of the victim. A collection system similar to that of child support enforcement for victim restitution would be one solution to the imbalance. Increased funding for district attorneys and the courts could help with some delays with court proceedings.

# Findings from Unmet Needs Survey Results

**F**orty-six individuals representing law enforcement, victim/witness programs, human services and community-based victim service programs completed the Unmet Needs survey in the 13 counties that comprise Judicial District 10.

## **Who are Underserved?**

Fifty percent of the respondents think victims with mental health needs and victims who live in rural environments are underserved. Thirty to forty percent of respondents think the following groups are underserved: victims with developmental disabilities, child victims, runaway/throwaway teen victims, child victims of physical and sexual abuse, sexual assault victims, domestic violence victims and elderly victims.

Who are underserved?	N = 46	%
Rural victims	23	50%
Victims with mental health issues	23	50%
Child victims of sexual abuse	20	43%
Elderly victims	19	40%
Child victims	18	39%
Sexual assault victims	17	37%
Runaway/throw away teen victims	17	37%
Child victims of physical abuse	15	32%
Victims with developmental disabilities	14	30%
Domestic violence victims	14	30%

When given a list of potentially underserved populations, District 10 interviewees strongly identified the list above. This list supplements the findings from the interviews and points out a few community groups that did not come readily to people’s minds during the interview discussions.

## **Community Coordination and Unmet Needs**

When asked, “On a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 and 2 being “Not At All” and 3 and 4 being “Very Much”, please rate the extent to which you believe that the current service system...” the following chart represents the majority “**Very Much**” responses. Respondents could also answer “don’t know” and “not applicable”.

The current service system...	“Very Much” Response	N = 46	%
Shares information about what services agencies currently deliver or are planning to deliver.	Very Much	36	78%
Provides services that are accessible.	Very Much	35	76%
Creates opportunities for joint planning across different types of agencies (e.g., legal, mental health, physical health, public safety, domestic violence, child welfare).	Very Much	34	74%
Provides services that are individualized.	Very Much	32	70%
Prevents crime victims from getting lost in the complex system.	Very Much	32	70%
Allows differing points of view to exist among organizations.	Very Much	32	70%
Can be accessed at different stages of victim recovery process.	Very Much	31	67%
Addresses the issues of trauma.	Very Much	30	65%
Fosters a “big picture” understanding of the service system and the roles/responsibilities of the agencies that constitute that system.	Very Much	28	60%
Provides services that are gender specific.	Very Much	27	59%
Ensures that agencies have timely access to client records in ways that do not violate client confidentiality and/or rights.	Very Much	25	54%

When asked, “On a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 and 2 being “Not At All” and 3 and 4 being “Very Much”, please rate the extent to which you believe that the current service system...” the following represent the majority “**Not at All**” responses. Respondents could also answer “don’t know” and “not applicable”.

The current service system...	“Not at All” Response	N = 46	%
Provides services that incorporate non-traditional approaches.	Not at All	19	41%
Involves crime victims in improving and/or changing services.	Not at All	19	41%
Develops clear community-wide goals and plans.	Not at All	19	41%

## Community Assets

When asked, “On a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 and 2 being “Not At All” and 3 and 4 being “Very Much”, please rate the availability of these community assets, the following represent the majority “**Very Much**” response. Respondents could also answer “don’t know” and “not applicable”.

Services and Supports	“Very Much” Response	N = 46	%
Senior Center/Programs	Very Much	38	82%
Food Assistance	Very Much	37	80%
Early Childhood Programs Like Headstart	Very Much	35	76%
Recreation/Sports	Very Much	34	74%
Substance Abuse Assessment, Prevention & Treatment	Very Much	30	65%
Low Cost /Free Clothing, Furniture & Housewares	Very Much	27	59%
Health Education	Very Much	26	57%
Mental Health Services	Very Much	26	56%
Family Support Center/Services	Very Much	25	54%
Services For Persons With Disabilities	Very Much	25	54%
Housing Assistance	Very Much	24	52%
Support Groups	Very Much	24	52%
Information And Referral Hotline	Very Much	23	50%
Community Service Learning	Very Much	21	46%
Job Training/Job Treatment	Very Much	20	44%

When asked, “On a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 and 2 being “Not At All” and 3 and 4 being “Very Much”, please rate the availability of these community, the following represent the majority “**Not at All**” response. Respondents could also answer “don’t know” and “not applicable”.

Services and Supports	“Not at All” Response	N = 46	%
Transportation Assistance	Not at all	30	65%
Supervised Visitation/Exchange Center(s)	Not at all	25	54%
Violence Prevention	Not at all	22	48%
Mentoring	Not at all	18	39%
After-School Programs	Not at all	18	39%

# District Meeting Findings and Prioritization Survey

**T**wenty three people from eight counties of District 10 attended the meeting. Counties represented were Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Chippewa, Douglas, Eau Claire, Rusk, Sawyer. The group included: eight victim/witness specialist/coordinators; seven domestic violence/sexual assault community organization staff; four HHS staff members (all of whom solely do domestic violence and sexual assault work); one domestic violence liaison for a sheriff's department and one survivor. In all, two participants identified themselves as survivors of crime.

In the first part of the district meeting, the group reflected on and discussed the interview and survey findings. For the meeting, the findings discussed previously in this report were grouped to create a cohesive, flowing story of the interview and survey progress. The sections included: Crime Trends; Assets, Resources and Collaboration; Underserved Populations, Barriers and Solutions, and Crime Victims Rights.

*Last couple of years it's been hard to stay innovative because funding is tight. Much of the innovation began several years ago and we haven't been able to get innovative again.*

## **Crime Trends:**

The elements that stood out to the group included: vehicle sabotage, severity of crime, juveniles, links between crimes (drug - burglary – domestic violence), alcohol and other drug issues, and links to mental health and complex mental issues. The trends mirrored the experiences of the participants and none of the information was new to them.

The group raised the following insights about the perceived crime trends: 1) Teens and elder stories of crime are coming out because they have been so severe; and 2) Population expansion in Eau Claire is causing the city to have to cope with many issues that were not there 15 years ago.

## **Assets:**

This section inspired many comments about funding:

- ✓ Last couple of years it's been hard to stay innovative because funding is tight. Much of the innovation began several years ago and we haven't been able to get innovative again.
- ✓ Services are there, but nothing new is being created because of lack of funding.
- ✓ Most organizations and people in our communities want to get along and play nice so don't have to convince them that help is needed but there remains a lack of resources.
- ✓ Funding one program or agency for something like prevention isn't helpful – it breeds competition instead of collaboration.

The issues with collaboration were also echoed in reaction to only one-half of the respondents in the interviews and surveys saw positive collaboration. The sentiment was that this should be much higher.

People wanted to see programs for:

- ✓ Education for girls – 16 – 18 years – what is abuse? And for youth about healthy, appropriate behavior;
- ✓ Focus on primary prevention – towards victims and potential abusers;
- ✓ Programs for perpetrators – services mostly through probation and parole; many victims want perpetrators to get help;
- ✓ Working on understanding and reducing dual arrests in domestic violence; and
- ✓ Family counseling – children, victim and potentially perpetrator.

One participant summarized that the group seemed to be saying that human services was not providing clinical counseling for victims. Many felt this was because for many counties big slashes in human services budgets occurred. This caused many services to shrink and if services weren't mandated they weren't offered. This can cause tension between agencies.

“When the services dry up, the crime goes up – perhaps we’re feeling the ripple effect now”

### ***Underserved Populations & Victim Rights:***


General thoughts about these sections included:

- ✓ Lack of sexual assault services seems universal across the district. Good to see that it's not only in my area.
- ✓ Prevention Education works! (look at smoking example)
- ✓ “Underserved populations” for each community, THIS year, it's going to be different – maybe we need a category for ‘other’ or the ability to state that ‘this’ is our underserved populations.
- ✓ Dignity and respect are critical parts of Victims Rights Amendment but nothing can be done if rights are violated. No place for complaints to go.

Ideas that seemed new or insights that came to people included:

- ✓ Like the idea of involving the victims – their voices need to be heard more.
- ✓ Survivors sharing info, own stories – let's take advantage of leadership development with survivors but recognize that some survivors don't want to be involved, just want to put it behind them.
- ✓ People need to decide as victims how they want to ‘travel’ the system.
- ✓ Court system doesn't make it comfortable for victims to make victim impact statements.

For the second part of the meeting, participants incorporated the interview findings and their reflections into a consensus process which answered the question “What are our



recommendations for 2008 funding priorities for victim services?” See Appendix A for more details.

In a final step to understand the victim services needs in District 10, the emerging recommendations were incorporated into an internet based survey tool which sought to prioritize the recommendations. Interviewed key informants, participants from the District 10 meeting and all other known service providers in the district were asked to complete the survey. Eleven individuals representing eight counties (including Dunn and St. Croix, two counties not present at the district meeting) voted to prioritize the needs.

The ranked recommendations were:

1. Medical and Mental Health Services and  
Availability of Basic Needs (tie for first)
2. Prevention Education
3. Restitution Collection Enforcement
4. Victim Rights Funding
5. Services for Special/Underserved Populations
6. Develop and Maintain Professional and Program Standards
7. Universal Legal Representation including Family Law
8. Victim Led Community and System Change

# Implications

**M***ost Universal Service Needs:* The most universal need of crime victims resonating in all aspects of this assessment for District 10 is **transportation**. Identified as part of **Availability of Basic Needs** on their recommendations list and ranked number one, transportation and creative solutions for transportation needs echoed loudly throughout the interviews, surveys and district meeting. This barrier to service seems to affect all victims of crime and is most strongly linked to rural, isolated victims. Transportation even played a role in crime itself with vehicle vandalism, especially in cases of domestic violence, being used as a tactic to limit the mobility of the crime victim. Solutions like a car repair program, volunteer transportation programs and flexible funds for meeting transportation needs through bus passes, taxi service, and gas vouchers have been identified.

Issues concerning people with **medical and mental health needs** follow closely behind lack of transportation. Two aspects of this issue emerge – uninsured victims and lack of service. Universally through the assessment, the uninsured and victims with mental health issues were identified high among those underserved in the district often because services were not available or had long waiting lists. Many district meeting participants linked these limited or shrinking services to loss in funding over the years. Coupled with the need was the acknowledgement of the intersection of crimes often linking alcohol and other drug issues, mental health issues and violence. Specialized services in this area such as SANE programs and child psychology and counseling were identified as needed as well as general funding for treatment. One solution identified for the uninsured was universal health care, however, there might be some benefit in thinking about ways to build upon community assets.

The other emerging priority needs areas included:

- ✓ Prevention Education
- ✓ Restitution Collection Enforcement
- ✓ Victim Rights Funding
- ✓ Services for Special/Underserved Populations
- ✓ Universal Legal Representation including Family Law
- ✓ Victim Led Community and System Change
- ✓ Develop and Maintain Professional and Program Standards

***Building on Community Assets:*** As noted, interview and survey results highlight that there is a perception that victims with mental health needs are underserved victims of crime. It is important to note that many points of contact believe substance abuse and mental health services are assets that exist in their communities. Similarly, it appears there is a perception that elders who are victims are underserved. However, senior centers appear to be existing assets. Finding solutions that build upon on already existing assets to meet the needs of crime victims who are underserved could be a place for further attention.

For youth victims who are underserved, there appear to be some assets that exist like early childhood programs, family support centers and recreational sports from which to build upon. However, supervised visitation centers, mentorship programs, after school programs and violence prevention programs are missing in many community contexts. While runaway and throwaway teenage victims and victims with developmental disabilities were identified no corresponding services seem to be available. Thus the district meeting saw the emergence of **Prevention Education** and **Services for Special/Underserved Populations** as a much needed and desired group of services for crime prevention and intervention.

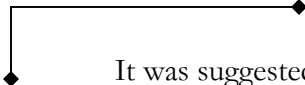
For many communities, services that have been provided in other sister communities were identified as innovative and part of their desired programming. These services include crisis response programs, child advocacy centers, family support programs/resource centers, school-based programs, licensed day cares and video taping children's testimony in child sexual abuse cases. Similarly these programs are echoed in a "wishlist" of needed services: Programs on key informants' "wishlist" include:

1. Violence prevention programs including school resource officers
2. Supervised visitation/exchange centers
3. SANE programs complete with nurses and equipment
4. Drug programs for youth
5. Sexual assault programs for youth
6. Restorative justice programs
7. A free store for items crime victims need
8. Video taping sexual assault victims' testimony in sexual assault cases

*The district meeting saw the emergence of "Prevention Education" and "Services for Special/Underserved Populations" as a much needed and desired group of services for crime prevention and intervention.*

Many items on this "wishlist" resonated for the participants at the district meeting and these ideas were coupled with similar ones to build the list of recommendations. However, district meeting participants identified that shrinking funds and competition generated by limited funds caused innovation in programming to dry up. Maintaining and sustaining programs trump their ability to be creative and find new solutions.

**Community Coordination:** Survey results indicate that county services systems are perceived to do a great job sharing information about what services agencies currently deliver or are planning to deliver; providing services that are accessible; and creating opportunities for joint planning across different types of agencies. Unfortunately, weaknesses include a lack of services that incorporate non-traditional approaches; low involvement of crime victims in improving and/or changing services and a lack of planning to achieve community-wide goals.



It was suggested that ways to improve the coordination of the service system is to increase funding to support adequate staff in various parts of the service system; understaffing appears to be a huge problem. Improving communication was mentioned several times. However, strategies to improve communication were not suggested.

More emphasis on planning how to creatively meet the unmet needs of victims of crime, building upon already existing assets and involving more crime victims in the process could truly make a difference. This sentiment was echoed in the recommendations for funding priorities with **Victim Led Community and System Change**. This included leadership development for victim/survivors which many acknowledged as needing to meet victim/survivors where they were and not force them into personal development or involvement.

***Crime Trends:*** The most frequent crime trends mentioned by key informants include: crimes relating to drugs including methamphetamines, alcohol, prescription drugs, cocaine and methadone; automobile sabotage and vehicle vandalism; identity theft; the severity of juvenile crime and sexual assault. The intersections of crime resonated with participants in the district meetings.

*“When the services dry up, the crime goes up—perhaps we’re feeling the ripple effect now.”*

# Appendix A

What are our recommendations for 2008 funding priorities for victim services?								
Prevention Education	Availability to Basic Needs	Restitution Collection Enforcement	Develop & Maintain Professional & Program Standards	Universal Legal Representation Including Family Law	Medical & Mental Health Services	Services for Special / Under-served Populations	Victim Rights Funding	Victim Led Community & System Change
Funding for prevention staff in schools	Utility avail. (cell phones, towers, home, phones, etc.)	Tax intercept for restitution	Credentials for DV & SA advocates	Free legal services for victims in addition to Judicare	Health care services that address needs and underlying causes of crime: AODA, MH, perpetrator counseling	Elder victim services	Fully fund services for V/W through out the state	Funding for legislative advocacy for victims
Prevention ed for school	Cell phones programmed with victim services numbers (shelter, victim witness)	Establish statewide restitution collection & tax intercept system	Establish quality assurance standards	Attorney funds	\$ for medical care & mental health treatment	Confidential services for teens w/o parent consent	100% state reimbursement for all V/W offices	Funding for community system change
School outreach offices	Transportation (urban mass transit, repair vehicles, private contractors)	Strengthen restitution collection programs	Better staff wages and benefits (retain, recruit, quality)	Fund training for divorce mediation so they "get" the dynamics of DV and accommodate needs of victims	Child psychologists for children victims of crime	Fund lots of DV liaison positions in county law enforcement	Early intervention & crisis response	Victim/ Survivor leadership development
Ongoing prevention education in schools	Transitional, affordable housing access	Restitution collaboration in collections	Avoid funding "trends" that might be transitory (fully fund programs that work)	Safe exchange program (children)	Complete SANE program	Perpetrator recovery including therapeutic counseling / education		
More prevention education in the schools (curric. / weekly)		Victims compensation for time off related to court / crime prosecution						
Victim mentoring program	Transportation \$							
	Transportation provided to victims to access services							

