



Needs Assessment Survey Results for Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy

by

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State Victim Assistance Academies (SVAA's) offer coursework and training in victimology, victims' rights, and victim services in order to meet the needs of victim service providers and allied professionals (Office for Victims of Crime). With state and federal funding, Victims for Justice began the development of a State Victim Assistance Academy for Alaska in 2008. An important first step in the development of a State Victim Assistance Academy is to conduct a needs assessment survey to identify the most important topics to include in coursework and training. This brief report highlights the results of the Alaska needs assessment survey conducted by the UAA Justice Center in 2009.

Respondent Characteristics

A total of 153 surveys were returned. Most respondents indicated that they worked for victim service agencies (41%) and/or health and human service agencies (35%). Ten to fifteen percent of respondents also indicated that they worked for law enforcement agencies, educational agencies, and/or medical agencies. Forty three (30%) of respondents were from Anchorage and 46 (32%) were from hubs and villages off the road system.

Over half (66%) of the respondents had five or more years of victim services experience, and 30% had more than fifteen years of experience.

Table 1. Agencies that Responded to Survey

<i>Row Percentages</i>			
Agency	N	%	Total
Victim Services	62	40.5 %	153
Law Enforcement	20	13.1	153
Prosecution	3	2.0	153
Corrections/Probation	11	7.2	153
Health/Human Services	53	34.6	153
Medical	18	11.8	153
Education	22	14.4	153
Other	39	25.5	153

Table 2. Years of Victim Services Experience

<i>Column Percentages</i>			
Years	N	%	cum %
1 to 3 years	35	23.6 %	23.6 %
3 to 5 years	16	10.8	34.5
5 to 10 years	24	16.2	50.7
10 to 15 years	29	19.6	70.3
More than 15 years	44	29.7	100.0
Total	148		

Source of data: Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy Needs Assessment Survey

Most respondents provided services to victims of sexual assault (82%) and domestic violence (81%), for both children (80%) and adults (66%). Survey respondents also provided services to victims of general crime (42%), victims of elder crime (38%), survivors of homicide victims (29%), and victims of economic crime (19%). Most respondents provided multiple services (categories in Table 3 are not mutually exclusive).

Very few respondents (5%) indicated they had no interest in a State Victim Assistance Academy. Most respondents (95%) had either some interest (53%) or high interest (42%).

Table 3. Types of Victims Served

Row Percentages

Victims	N	%	Total
General Crime	64	41.8 %	153
Domestic Violence	124	81.0	153
Survivors of Homicide Victims	45	29.4	153
Sexual Assault	126	82.4	153
Economic Crime	29	19.0	153
Elder Crime	58	37.9	153
Adult	101	66.0	153
Children	123	80.4	153
Other	27	17.6	153

Table 4. Interest in Attending Academy

Column Percentages

Interest	N	%	cum %
No Interest	8	5.4	5.4
Some Interest	79	53.0	58.4
High Interest	62	41.6	100.0
Total	149		

Source of data: Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy Needs Assessment Survey

Respondents were more interested in having a State Victim Assistance Academy in the winter (65%) or fall (60%) than in the spring (37%) or summer (29%), and were more interested in having the Academy on weekdays (74%) than on weekends (12%). Most respondents preferred having an in-person Academy in Anchorage (62%) or having the Academy online (web-based internet, 58%) rather than by video conference (33%).

Table 5. Best Times and Types of Training

Row Percentages

Training	N	%	Total
Spring	56	36.6 %	153
Summer	45	29.4	153
Fall	91	59.5	153
Winter	100	65.4	153
Web-based Internet	89	58.2	153
Video Conference	51	33.3	153
In-person (Anchorage)	95	62.1	153
Weekdays	113	73.9	153
Weekends	19	12.4	153

Source of data: Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy Needs Assessment Survey

Training Received and Needed

There were ten training topic areas that over half of the respondents had already received. These included domestic violence (71%); sexual violence (66%); ethics, professional responsibility and confidentiality (66%); child abuse, neglect, and children exposed to violence (63%); crisis intervention (62%); community resources (61%); active listening and empowerment (61%); substance abuse (56%); family violence (53%); and child victims (51%). Less than a quarter of the respondents had already received training in stalking and cyber stalking (22%) and identity theft (21%). Generally speaking, respondents were more likely to request basic training needs rather than advanced training needs.

Table 6. Training Received and Needed*Row Percentages*

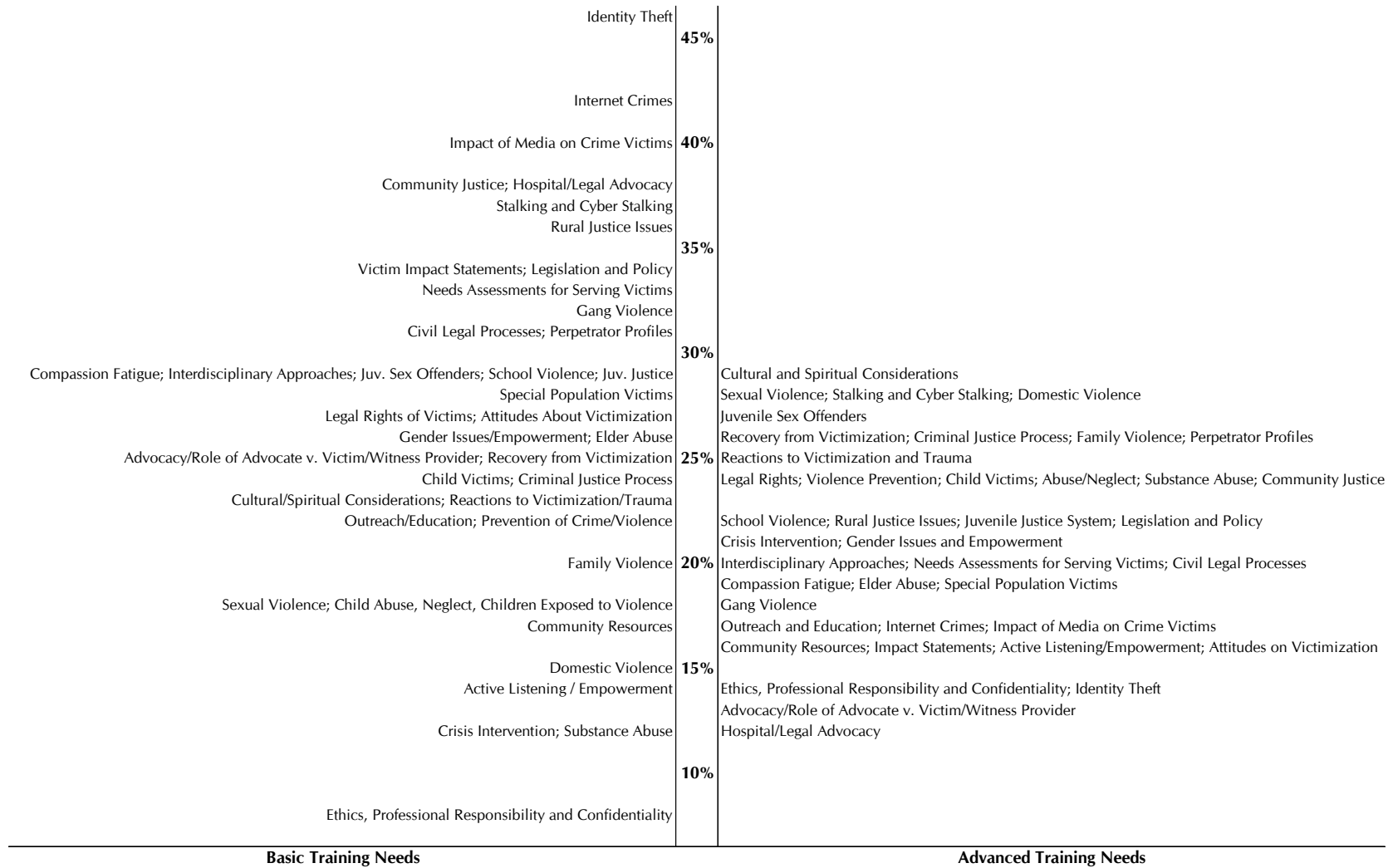
Training	Have Received		Need Basic Training		Need Advanced Training	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Domestic Violence	108	70.6 %	23	15.0 %	42	27.5 %
Sexual Violence	101	66.0	28	18.3	43	28.1
Advocacy/Role of Advocate v. Victim/Witness Provider	74	48.4	38	24.8	20	13.1
Legal Rights of Victims	67	43.8	41	26.8	37	24.2
Child Abuse, Neglect, Children Exposed to Violence	96	62.7	28	18.3	36	23.5
Compassion Fatigue for Victim Advocates	49	32.0	45	29.4	29	19.0
Stalking and Cyber Stalking	34	22.2	57	37.3	43	28.1
Child Victims	78	51.0	37	24.2	36	23.5
Community Resources	94	61.4	26	17.0	25	16.3
Crisis Intervention	95	62.1	19	12.4	32	20.9
Cultural and Spiritual Considerations	73	47.7	35	22.9	45	29.4
Family Violence	81	52.9	30	19.6	39	25.5
Interdisciplinary Approaches to Serving Victims	57	37.3	45	29.4	31	20.3
Needs Assessments for Serving Victims	48	31.4	50	32.7	30	19.6
Reactions to Victimization and Trauma	65	42.5	35	22.9	38	24.8
Recovery from Victimization	56	36.6	38	24.8	40	26.1
Substance Abuse	86	56.2	18	11.8	36	23.5
Elder Abuse	62	40.5	40	26.1	29	19.0
Victim Impact Statements	41	26.8	52	34.0	25	16.3
Attitudes About Victimization	54	35.3	41	26.8	24	15.7
Criminal Justice Processes	72	47.1	36	23.5	40	26.1
Ethics, Professional Responsibility and Confidentiality	101	66.0	12	7.8	22	14.4
Special Population Victims (Immigrants, Disabled, etc)	56	36.6	43	28.1	29	19.0
Community Justice (Tribal, Restorative, etc)	48	31.4	58	37.9	36	23.5
Outreach and Education	72	47.1	34	22.2	26	17.0
School Violence (Campus Crime, Bully Prevention, etc)	53	34.6	44	28.8	34	22.2
Hospital/Legal Advocacy	45	29.4	58	37.9	18	11.8
Rural Justice Issues	41	26.8	55	35.9	34	22.2
Active Listening/Empowerment	94	61.4	21	13.7	25	16.3
Internet Crimes	40	26.1	64	41.8	26	17.0
Juvenile Justice System	59	38.6	44	28.8	34	22.2
Prevention of Crime and Violence	64	41.8	33	21.6	37	24.2
Gang Violence	44	28.8	49	32.0	28	18.3
Identity Theft	32	20.9	71	46.4	21	13.7
Juvenile Sex Offenders	54	35.3	45	29.4	41	26.8
Civil Legal Processes (Orders of Protection)	60	39.2	47	30.7	30	19.6
Perpetrator Profiles	47	30.7	47	30.7	39	25.5
Legislation and Policy	42	27.5	52	34.0	33	21.6
Impact of Media on Crime Victims	36	23.5	61	39.9	26	17.0
Gender Issues and Empowerment	68	44.4	39	25.5	32	20.9

Source of data: Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy Needs Assessment Survey

The most often noted basic training needs included identity theft (46%), internet crimes (42%), the impact of media on crime victims (40%), community justice (38%), hospital/legal advocacy (38%), stalking and cyber stalking (37%), and rural justice issues (36%). The most often noted advanced training needs included cultural and spiritual considerations (29%), sexual violence (28%), stalking and cyber stalking (28%), domestic violence (28%), juvenile sex offenders (27%), recovery from victimization (26%), the criminal justice process (26%), perpetrator profiles (26%), family violence (26%), and reactions to victimization and trauma (25%).

Figure 1. Basic and Advanced Training Needs

Percent of Respondents Indicating Need



Source of data: Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy Needs Assessment Survey

Other advanced training needs included legal rights of victims (24%); prevention of crime and violence (24%); child abuse, neglect, and children exposed to violence (24%); child victims (24%); substance abuse (24%); and community justice (24%).

Four topics were noted as important for both basic and advanced training by over 25% of respondents. These four topics included stalking and cyber stalking, juvenile sex offenders, recovery from victimization, and perpetrator profiles.

Three topics were noted as important for both basic and advanced training by fewer than 20% of respondents. These three topics included community resources; active listening / empowerment; and ethics, professional responsibility and confidentiality. Over 60% of respondents had already received training in these areas.

Appendix – Survey Instrument

Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy Needs Assessment Survey

Name: _____ Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

1. What type of agency do you work for? Check all that apply.
 - Victim Services
 - Law Enforcement
 - Prosecution
 - Corrections/Probation
 - Health/Human Services
 - Medical
 - Education
 - Other (please specify): _____

2. How many years of victim services experience do you have?
 - 1 to 3 years
 - 3 to 5 years
 - 5 to 10 years
 - 10 to 15 years
 - More than 15 years

3. What type of victims do you serve? Check all that apply.
 - General Crime
 - Domestic Violence
 - Survivors of Homicide Victims
 - Sexual Assault
 - Economic Crime
 - Elder Crime
 - Adult
 - Children
 - Other (please specify): _____

4. Please indicate the best times and types of training for your organization. Select all that apply:

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Web-based Internet	Video conference	In-person (Anchorage)	Weekdays	Weekends
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What is your overall interest in attending an Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy?
 - No Interest
 - Some Interest
 - High Interest

6. Are you interested in joining the planning effort?
 - No
 - Yes

Please Continue to Page 2!

Please contact Nancy Lyman with questions (NLyman@victimsforjustice.org; 907-278-0992; 1-888-835-1213)

7. Please identify the type of training that you think would improve your ability to provide quality victim assistance services. Also indicate which training you have received previously.

	Have Received	Need Basic Training	Need Advanced Training
Domestic Violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual Violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocacy/Role of Advocate v. Victim/Witness Provider	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Rights of Victims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child Abuse, Neglect, Children Exposed to Violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compassion Fatigue for Victim Advocates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stalking and Cyber stalking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child Victims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crisis Intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural and Spiritual Considerations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family Violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interdisciplinary Approaches to Serving Victims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Needs Assessment for Victims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reactions to Victimization and Trauma	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recovery from Victimization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Substance Abuse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Elder Abuse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victim Impact Statements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitudes About Victimization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criminal Justice Process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ethics, Professional Responsibility and Confidentiality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Special Populations Victims (Immigrants, Disabled, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Justice (Tribal, Restorative, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outreach and Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Violence (Campus Crime, Bully Prevention, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospital/Legal Advocacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rural Justice Issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Active Listening/Empowerment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet Crimes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Juvenile Justice System	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prevention of Crime and Violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gang Violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identity Theft	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Juvenile Sex Offenders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Civil Legal Process (Orders of Protection)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perpetrator Profiles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legislation and Policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact of Media on Crime Victims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender Issues and Empowerment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you for your participation!

Please return survey to UAA Justice Center using prepaid return envelope or by FAX at 907-786-7777