



For over than 20 years, the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (VCCVS) has collaborated with partners across the state to develop and support new programs that are innovative, comprehensive, and accessible to all crime victims, including those with disabilities and those who are not fluent in English. The VCCVS strives to support and encourage providers and programs across the state in responding equally, respectfully, and compassionately to all victims; and, to the extent possible, to protect them from further victimization. We support services that are made available to victims/survivors regardless of whether the crime is reported or prosecuted and are independent of the offender's status or progress within the criminal justice system. Beyond services, the VCCVS strives to engage with government system partners in identifying what we can do with the programs and resources that will help victims rebuild their lives. This is part of our vision of a state of justice. We recognize that this awareness is a shared responsibility of government, programs, survivors, individuals and communities that will greatly enhance the public good.

The Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services is governed by a Board of Directors. As mandated by state statute, this Board consists of five members: a victim/survivor of crime, a physician, an attorney, and two community members. The Board approves the annual budget, policies and procedures, and the funding of VCCVS sponsored grantee programs.

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Vermont Victim Assistance Academy

2019-2020

WHO: People Attending this Year

Based on our Learning Needs Assessment/Participant Survey, the majority of participants in the 2019/2020 VVAA Cohort work for community-based non-profits, with the second largest category working for state government agencies. Participants serve in a variety of positions, from case managers to executive directors to advocates, coordinators, within restorative justice programs, in the VT National Guard, community members and more. The amount of time participants have been in their various professional roles ranges somewhat evenly from less than a year to more than 10 years, with the highest number having worked 1-3 years in their current positions. The majority of participants come into contact with victims of crime through their professional work – either providing direct support, through provision of services, or by way of regular community interaction.

Andera Van Liew, M.Ed. is the coordinator for the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy. Previously, she worked for the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services as the Director of the Community Engagement and Training Department. She invests in the notion that meaningful training and education is not just a part of her professional role, but also a critical part of strengthening our communities and supporting positive social change.

The Core Trainers for the Academy are seasoned professionals whose knowledge and training skills draw on extensive work in a variety of organizations involved with service provision. Core Trainers have worked with us over the years to thoughtfully design each session, and to synthesize the entire program in a way that is consistent with adult learning principles and comprehensive as a foundational, eight-day training course. Trainers and presenters come from the following organizations: Office of the Attorney General (VT), VT Department of Corrections - Victim Services, the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, Pride Center of Vermont, Outright VT, CQ Strategies LLC., VT Department for Children and Families – Family Services Division, Essex Community Justice Center, VT Center for Independent Living, VT Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, and Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. This year, we welcome a new Core Trainer who is designing and presenting with the Academy for the first time. Many others have been with the Academy for years, and a few even helped in the initial planning stages back in 2001.

Through a learning needs assessment, research and observation, we know that participants and trainers alike bring unique knowledge, skills and perspectives to the training, and we are continually seeking to better our practice.

WHERE and WHEN: Course Location will vary depending on the session

SESSION I

Monday, September 30, 2019 – Tuesday, October 30, 2018 at the Waterbury State Office Complex, Cherry Rooms A,B and C; 8:30am – 4:30pm

- Overview of the VVAA & Core Concepts
- Incidences and Types of Crime in Vermont
- Criminal Justice System
- State-based Victim Services

SESSION II

Tuesday, January 7, 2020 – Thursday, January 8, 2020 at Waterbury State Office Complex;
Cherry A, B & C; 8:30am – 4:30pm

- Systemic Power and Oppression
- Communication and Empathy Skill-Building
- Impacts of Crime
- Victim and Survivor Voices

SESSION III

Thursday, April 2, 2020 – Friday, April 3, 2020 at Waterbury State Office Complex;
Cherry A, B & C; 8:30am – 4:30pm

- Intersection of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment
- Protective Services
- Self-Care
- Making Systems Safer

SESSION IV

Tuesday, May 4, 2020 – Wednesday, May 5, 2020 at Waterbury State Office Complex;
Cherry A, B & C; 8:30am – 4:30pm

- Alternatives to the Criminal Justice System
- Youth Justice
- Systems Improvement
- Transfer of Learning and Action Planning

WHY: Situation that Calls for This Event

Those who come in contact with victims of crime, either directly or indirectly, in their professional roles or as members of their community, are interested in learning more about the following topics: referral information and existing services and support available to victims; building skills around effective interactions with victims, either as individual service providers or an organization as a whole; cultivating better understanding of a victim/survivor's experience, both within the criminal justice system and personally.

SO THAT: Changes Possible

This training will expose or re-familiarize participants with historical and contemporary legislation about victims' rights, the roles and obligations of our criminal justice system to victims of crime, and the barriers to access that many underserved communities face when they become victims of crime.

As a result, the following changes are possible:

- * Vermont's direct service providers embrace a victim-centered, trauma-informed perspective and practice.
- * Participants will bring back new knowledge, skills and attitudes to their places of business and/or communities to facilitate rippling impacts of meaningful change.
- * When interacting with victims of crime, participants will use language and behavior that supports the unique needs of every victim of crime in the best way possible.
- * As service providers and community members, participants will be better equipped to meet victims' needs by navigating through various services within a complex Criminal Justice System.
- * New perspective and awareness around the challenges many underserved communities face will allow participants to do all in their power to minimize such barriers and contribute to deeper, systemic change.

WHAT FOR: Achievable Learning Objectives

By the end of the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy 2019/2020 program, participants will have...

- Identified ways to help victims attain their basic rights and support providers in affording those rights.
- Identified ways to support victims and survivors in navigating the criminal justice system by fully exploring the CJ continuum and potential unintended consequences.
- Practiced effective communication skills to use when working with victims and survivors of crime.
- Reviewed/discovered trauma-informed, victim-centered practices in providing direct services to victims and survivors with a multicultural, multidisciplinary, collaborative perspective.
- Analyzed programs working towards crime prevention and systems improvement.
- Explored ethical considerations within victim services.
- Identified ways to prevent vicarious trauma and integrated self-care techniques in our work as helping professionals and service providers.
- Identified and networked with Academy participants and trainers to strengthen service provision and referrals.