

Integrating Community Youth (I.C.Y.)

Work-Shop II

Composed by: Kevin A. Ashby, MSHS MBA – I.C.Y. Coordinator at Argus Residence for Young People

Objective: To reduce and prevent biased-based or hate crimes via education and information sharing with youth experiencing homelessness about associated risks, challenges and their citizenry rights in the Waterloo Region.

Materials: Electronic device to show media from internet (i.e. laptop, PC, etc.), Photocopies of pages 7 & 8, 1 piece of scrap or note paper & Pens or Pencils for each participant

Duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour

Introduction

Moderator: Please Read Aloud

Biased-based or hate motivated crimes are crimes that are committed where the motivation for the illegal act is based in the perpetrators' dislike or hate for the victim's association with an identifiable group. There are laws in place that protect people for being a part of or associated with these identifiable groups. These classes or groups of people are also known as "protected classes." Some traditional protected classes of peoples are 1. Visible Minorities, 2. Individuals with Disabilities, 3. Seniors, 4. Young Children and 5. People who identify as other than Heterosexual. These classes require protection through the law because they have been found to be vulnerable groups of people.

There is talk here in Canada of adding people who are experiencing homelessness to the list of protected peoples. This move would be in line with many other countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Many people naively believe that this is not an issue here in Canada or the Waterloo Region. However, this is not the case. Please watch a snippet of the video clip below and prepare for a brief discussion afterward.

Video Clip:

Moderator: Please insert the following address into the URL (address) bar of a laptop or PC for showing of the video clip or click the link below. Watch 1 minute of the video [stop the video at 1:00] minus adverts.

[ABC News' – Hurting the Homeless](#)

<http://youtu.be/VWNQ5zbKw-Q>

Feedback:

Moderator: Please open up for brief discussion ≈ (approximately) 10 minutes

What are the first words or some thoughts that come to your mind after viewing this clip?

- Disturbing?
- Horrifying?
- Not here in Canada?

Did you ever recognize that those without adequate housing can be at risk of biased-based or hate crime, targeted?

Biased-based Crime

The University of Ottawa reports, “There is a tendency to focus on crimes committed by homeless people without also examining their heightened vulnerability to victimization – rates higher than for the housed.” The same report goes on to state “the risk of victimization is higher among persons who live on the street as opposed to in shelters ... 78 percent of rough sleepers had been victims of crime during their most recent period of sleeping on the street; however, only 21 percent of these incidents were reported to police” (Pierce, M., 2010). Unfortunately, recent studies have shown that there has been a higher incidence of hate crimes perpetrated against individuals who lack adequate housing. This is true throughout North America as well as internationally. The Institute for the Prevention of Crime at the University of Ottawa recognizes this fact in Canada stating, “Those without adequate shelter are more likely than the housed to be victims of violence and, for women, victims of sexual assault.” Interestingly, according to Statistics Canada, in 2009 Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo reported the highest rate of police-reported hate crimes followed closely by Guelph and still beating bigger metropolitans like Toronto and Montreal. However, biased-based or hate crimes differ from regular crimes.

Well, how do these crimes differ?

“Hate motivated crimes are unique in that they can have effects on the victim beyond those commonly associated with non-hate crimes. The personal characteristics related to hate crime victimization (e.g. race, religion, sexual orientation [housing and/or socio-economic status]) are often core elements of the victim’s sense of identity and, when targeted, can create feelings of

anger and vulnerability. Research on the psychological effects of criminal victimization has found that emotional consequences tend to be more severe among victims of hate crime than victims of non-hate crime. Other research has suggested that the recovery period can be longer for victims of hate crime.

Findings from the 2004 GSS lend support to this previous research. In more than one-third (39%) of perceived violent hate crime incidents, the victim indicated that he or she found it difficult or impossible to carry out their daily activities. This compares to 23% of violent incidents involving victims of non-hate crimes. Violent hate crime incidents were also more likely than violent non-hate crimes to result in the victim feeling fearful (35% compared with 17%).

Furthermore, victims of violent hate crime were more likely than victims of other violent crime to feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (37% compared to 23%). Victims of violent hate crimes were also more likely to worry while waiting for or using public transportation (66% compared to 48%).

Other research shows that hate crimes not only produce individual consequences, but they can also impact entire communities. Incidents motivated by hatred can create an atmosphere of fear among all members of a community to which an individual belongs. This, in turn, can heighten tensions between different groups, fragment communities and create further conflict” (Statistics Canada, 2008).

Youth Experiencing Homelessness and Victimization

Video Clip:

Moderator: *Please insert the following address into the URL (address) bar of a laptop or PC for showing of the video clip or just click on the link below. Watch/show the entire video to be followed by brief discussion.*

[ResearchSnapshot – Street Youth are among the most victimized population in Canada](#)

http://youtu.be/cHnwPfb2_8

Feedback:

Moderator: *Please open up for brief discussion ≈10 minutes*

What are your thoughts on the research presented through the video? Do you agree that youth whom experience homelessness may be one of the most vulnerable segments of population? Why or why not?

Moderator: *Please Read Aloud*

Stigmatization

Hate-crimes are crimes which are perpetrated against an individual based on bias, prejudice and discrimination. This bias and hatred is rooted in the perception and myth that youth who experience homelessness are somehow different or “other.”

These myths and misconceptions lead to stigmas that youth who experience homelessness live with and unfortunately accept for themselves; creating a greater cycle of hate, insecurity, inadequacy and low self-esteem. Many victims of biased-based, hate crime who lack housing fail to report these crimes due to stigmas and self-adapted feelings of inadequacy and shame. Youth homelessness is an unfortunate circumstance and hopefully only a temporary predicament that can befall anyone through no fault of their own.

Lesser Forms of Evil

Bullying and harassment are “lesser forms of evil” that can, if left unchecked, lead to biased-based or hate crimes. Technology has been utilized to alienate and persecute individuals with hate-mail, video-clips of fighting and “bad-mouthing” (spreading vicious lies and rumors) via YouTube and social net-working sites like Facebook or My-space.

You have Rights and Resources:

Your Citizenry Rights

Biased-based or Hate crime is first and foremost a Crime. Even though, crimes against the individuals experiencing homelessness here in Canada are not yet labeled as hate crimes, they are crimes nonetheless.

Victims of Crimes have Rights made possible through an Act Respecting Victims of Crime, Ontario Bill 23, 1995. This Act is also known as the Victims Bill of Rights and in short states:

Victims have the Right to:

- Be treated with courtesy, compassion and respect
- Be kept apprised of the investigation
- Participate in the judicial process
- Request information about services and remedies
- Know dates and places of significant proceedings
- Know the outcome of significant proceedings

- Be notified of offender release, parole, or escape
- Expect the prompt return of property
- Be interviewed by gender specific investigators in the case of sexual assault
- Make representations to the court by way of a Victim Impact Statement
- Apply for Criminal Injuries Compensation

The Act also states that a person convicted of a crime is liable for damages to the victim for emotional distress, and bodily harm resulting from the distress. The Act makes it clear that a victim of domestic assault, sexual assault or attempted sexual assault is presumed to have suffered emotional distress. Subject to judicial discretion, the following measures are provided for victims in civil actions:

- An offender's sentence should not be considered when awarding compensatory damages; except in the case of punitive damages;
- Victims who are successful in their lawsuits are presumed to be entitled to reimbursement for most of their legal costs by their assailant;
- Victims are entitled to receive interest on awards from the date of the crime to the date of trial; and
- Victims who live outside Ontario and who are commencing a lawsuit will usually not have to post security at the outset of the proceeding

EXERCISE – “People are People”

***Moderator:** Please pass out a piece of scrap or note Paper and a Pen/Pencil to each participant*

In this “people are people” exercise we will be sharing a little something personal about each of ourselves (nothing too personal of course) to show that we all share similarities. So the first thing we will do is on 1 piece of paper we will write something about ourselves. For example, you write something about yourself like you have a brother, sister, dog, cat, or etc. You can also list one of your likes or dislikes (your favorite movie for example). It’s your choice – share something about yourself. Now fold this piece of paper twice and hand it over to the moderator.

***Moderator:** Upon receiving all pieces of paper please jumble, toss or mix the papers well before handing a piece of folded paper back to each participant.*

Now each participant (one at a time) is to read aloud what is written on their paper and indicate to the rest of the group if what is written is true or false in regard to themselves (strongly,

somewhat, a little bit or not at all). Then ask the rest of the group if what was written on the paper also applies at all to them (strongly, somewhat or a little bit?). Do this until each of the participants has had a chance to read their piece of paper aloud and everyone has given feedback on each piece of paper.

This “people are people” exercise is not only an exercise in trust and sharing but shows that we are all people. We all have likes and dislikes and we share common titles and roles. Though we may have preferences, our similarities far outweigh any differences.

RESOURCE SHEET DISTRIBUTION

***Moderator:** Please distribute copies of Resource sheet and inform workshop participants that the sheet is theirs to keep for reference purposes.*

EVALUATION

***Moderator:** Please pass out anonymous questionnaire form for completion by participants*

Please collect completed evaluation forms and mail, send or call for pick up to Kevin Ashby, I.C.Y. Coordinator at Argus Residence for Young People, PO Box 22041 RPO Water Street, Cambridge, Ontario N1R 8E3. Phone: 519-650-0452

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Ontario Ministry of **Community Safety and Correctional Services***



Argus Residence for Young People

"The Watchful Guardian"

**The views expressed in this video are views of the I.C.Y. Project and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry.*

RESOURCES IN REGARD TO BIASED-BASED CRIME **VICTIMIZATION**

Waterloo Regional Police Services:

- Main Number: 519-650-8500
- For emergency services please dial 911
- WRPS Victim Services Unit: 519-650-8500 ext. 2228

Victim Services Waterloo Region:

- Main number: 519-585-2363
- 24 Hours a day – 7 days a week – Confidential
- Not part of Waterloo Regional Police Services
- Even if you have not reported the crime or do not want to report the crime, you can call for confidential consultation services

Waterloo Region Community Legal Services:

- Main number: 519-743-0254
- Free legal consultation with duty counsel
- Assistance with Criminal Injuries Compensation

Ontario Victim Services Secretariat (OVSS):

- Head Office number: 416- 325-3265
- Regional Office number for Waterloo Region: 905-521-7590
- OVSS provides direct services to victims of crime across Ontario
- OVSS funds community organizations that deliver support services to victims
- The Hate Crimes Community Working Group was established for improving services for victims of hate crimes and to prevent further victimization.

Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime:

- Main number: (toll-free) 1-866-481-8429
- answers your questions about your rights as a victim;
- gives you information about the services and programs available to you through the federal government;
- receive and review your complaints about federal government departments, agencies, employees, laws or policies;
- refer you to programs and services in your city or province that may be able to help you; and
- make recommendations to the federal government on how to change its policies or laws to better suit the needs and concerns of victims, and to report on those recommendations publicly.

KidsHelpPhone.ca:

- Main number: (toll-free) 1-800-668-6868
- 24/7 Free –Professional –Anonymous & Confidential – Counseling
- For youth 20 years of age and under
- Offers assistance with violence & abuse, bullying, hate-mail/internet, and many more topics

211

- Main number: (toll-free) 2-1-1
- Will direct you to need specific agencies in your area

EVALUATION – I.C.Y. WORKSHOP II

Anonymous (No Name Required): Please check Yes / No

1. Have you gained a better understanding of biased-based crime against youth who experience homelessness?
 YES
 NO
2. Do you believe you would know what to do to remain safe?
 YES
 NO
3. Do you believe you would report being a victim of biased-based crime to the police?
 YES
 NO
4. Do you now know more about the resources available to youth and victims in the Waterloo Region?
 YES
 NO
5. Have you ever been a victim of crime, assault (sexual or physical), violence, harassment?
 YES
 NO
6. Do you believe you are at risk of being victimized due to biased-based crime?
 YES
 NO
7. What was your favorite part of the work-shop in which you participated today?

8. What, if anything would have improved this work-shop and your learning experience?
