

# **CANADIAN** **RESOURCE CENTRE FOR** **VICTIMS OF CRIME**

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**2007 Annual Report**



## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Mother of a murder victim

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Mother of a murder victim

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Director, Canadian Police Association



## **Victimization in Canada**

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Criminal victimization is a frightening and unsettling experience for many Canadians. It is unpredictable, largely unpreventable and often unexpected. Unlike normal life experiences, victimization, especially violent victimization, is not sought out and never welcomed. It is debilitating and demoralizing. Its effects can be often long-term and difficult to overcome.

Victims may be confused, fearful, frustrated and angry. They want to know why this happened, and why it happened to them. Victims often have no knowledge of who or where to turn in the aftermath of crime. They feel insecure and do not know who to trust or rely on for support, understanding, and help. Not only do they suffer physically, emotionally, psychologically and financially from their victimization, they are also often burdened by the complexity of the criminal justice system.



## Recent Trends

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- According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Victim Services Survey, there were over 400,000 victims of crime who sought assistance from victim service agencies between April 1, 2005 and March 31, 2006. Almost three-quarters of these victims had experienced a crime against the person such as a sexual or physical assault.
- The risk of violent victimization was highest among young Canadians (aged 15 to 24 years). Other factors, such as being single, living in an urban area, and having a low household income (under \$15,000) also increased the likelihood of violent victimization.
- Canada's national crime rate, based on data reported by police, declined for the third consecutive year in 2007, continuing the downward trend in police-reported crime since the rate peaked in 1991. Following two years of increases in most serious violent offences, police reported fewer homicides, attempted murders, sexual assaults and robberies in 2007.
- The youth crime rate declined 1.5% in 2007 following a 3.3% increase in 2006. The youth violent crime rate remained stable in 2007 after increasing steadily over the past two decades. The 2007 rate was more than double the rate reported in the mid-1980s.
- The 2004 General Social Survey GSS on Victimization revealed that a large proportion of Canadians never reported criminal incidents to police. In all, only about 34% of criminal incidents came to the attention of police in 2004, down from 37% in 1999. The GSS showed that only 8% of incidents of sexual violence are reported to the police.
- Men are less likely than women to report violent victimization.



## Violent Crime in Canada

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- There were 594 homicides in Canada during 2007. Most victims (83%) knew at least one of their attackers. Police reported 802 attempted murders during 2007.
- The weapons used in homicides are changing, with knives becoming more prevalent. Between 2000 and 2004, there were 849 homicides involving knives. Conversely, there were 804 homicides involving firearms for the same period of time.
- Police reported that there were 21,449 sexual assaults in Canada in 2007. This contrasts with the 2004 General Social Survey, in which victims reported 546,000 sexual assaults nationwide, with 253,000 occurring in Ontario.
- In 2003, crime in Canada cost an estimated \$70 billion, a majority of which, \$47 billion or 67%, was borne by the victims. Victim costs include the value of damaged or stolen property, pain and suffering, loss of income and productivity, and health services. Criminal justice system expenditures such as police, courts, and correctional services comprised \$13 billion or 19% of the estimated total cost of crime. The remaining \$10 billion, or 14%, was spent on defensive measures such as security devices and protective services. Assessments by type of crime category revealed that property crimes cost Canadians the most, at \$40 billion, while violent crimes cost \$18 billion and other crimes \$12 billion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Policy Centre for Victim Issues, Cost of Crime in Canada, accessed on 7 November 2007:  
[http://www.victimsworld.gc.ca/archives\\_2006/fact-sheets/p2.html](http://www.victimsworld.gc.ca/archives_2006/fact-sheets/p2.html)



## ABOUT US

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Since 1993, the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC) has provided a voice for victims in the criminal justice system. We are a recognized, national, bilingual, non-profit advocacy organization. The CRCVC did not arise out of a personal incident and it is not a single-issue organization. We address a multitude of issues to promote public safety and to reduce re-victimization. All services are free of charge and confidential.

We are proudly sponsored by the Canadian Police Association (CPA). This partnership has enabled police personnel to support victims of crime and strengthen their voice for increased recognition and consideration in our criminal justice system.

### Values

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Victims of crime should be treated with courtesy, compassion and with respect for their dignity and privacy. We offer assistance and advocacy regardless of whether the perpetrator of the crime has been identified, apprehended, prosecuted or convicted. The CRCVC believes victims must be empowered to regain control of their lives.

### Services

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We assist victims and survivors by helping them:

- Obtain needed services and resources;
- Deal with post-trial agencies such as Correctional Service of Canada and the National Parole Board and/or financial benefits/compensation programs; and by
- Offering long-term emotional support.

Other services include:

- Lobbying for victims' rights by presenting the interests and perspectives of victims of crime to Government, at all levels; and
- Provision of FREE resource materials to crime victims and service providers in Canada, including a monthly newsletter.





## **2007 HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Appointment of Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime**

Perhaps our most significant achievement occurred in April of 2007, during National Victims of Crime Awareness Week, with the announcement by the federal Ministers of Justice and Public Safety of the appointment of CRCVC President & CEO, Mr. Steve Sullivan, as Canada's first Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime. The creation of this national office and the appointment of Mr. Sullivan is a significant milestone for victims/survivors of crime in Canada and for the Canadian Police Association, who for 15 years has proudly sponsored the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime.

### **CRCVC mandate review**

Upon the departure of the President & CEO, the CPA undertook a review of the role and mandate of the CRCVC. After a consultation process with key stakeholders and former Board members, the organizational mandate was updated by the Board of Directors to provide the following Core Services:

- Advocacy;
- Education and Awareness;
- Research;
- Police Liaison;
- Survivor Outreach;
- Canadian Police and Peace Officers' Memorial; and
- Networking

### **Other highlights from 2007**

**SUPPORTING VICTIMS IN THEIR HEALING JOURNEY** – The CRCVC assists hundreds of victims each year from coast to coast access services they might need, provides them with general information about the criminal justice system and their rights, as well as helping them access specific information about the offender(s) who harmed them. We offer a toll free line (1-877-232-2610) to ensure that victims from coast to coast can easily reach the office.



We currently have approximately 200 active, long-term files. These clients receive ongoing support services, advocacy and representation (which includes advocacy/support in their dealings with the agencies who provide information about the offender who harmed them).

**FIGHTING FOR MORE EFFECTIVE LAWS** – The CRCVC is actively involved in public policy reform to effectively reduce criminal victimization in Canada, better balance the interests and needs of victims and survivors with those of the offender and to enhance public safety. In 2007, we participated in numerous consultation processes, advocating for increased recognition of and consideration for those persons most harmed by violent crime.

- CRCVC was granted intervenor status at the Air India Inquiry, in order to speak to the issues facing victims of terrorism.
- Brief to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics re: the PIPEDA Review. We spoke specifically about the difficulties facing law enforcement in protecting and rescuing children from sexual exploitation on the Internet.
- Brief to the Correctional Service of Canada Review Panel, including a list of 18 recommendations to improve the manner in which victims are treated by the Correctional Service of Canada.
- CRCVC prepared a submission for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: Implementation of the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Our submission focussed on the problem of sexual exploitation of children on the Internet in Canada. The International Bureau for Children's Rights, in collaboration with UNICEF Canada, the Committee against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth and the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children prepared an alternative report for the UN, in which a number of the CRCVC's points were referenced.
- The CRCVC participated in the consultation process to establish a single service delivery network for victims of abuse, which would replace the current ad hoc New Identities for Victims of Abuse (NIVA) process.



- CRCVC was invited to a private meeting with the Honourable R. Roy McMurtry to discuss improving the crime victim compensation program in Ontario. Our presentation made many recommendations to reduce the current backlog and improve services and awards for the victims and survivors who seek compensation.

**NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS** – The CRCVC often promotes important advancements for victims that may occur in one jurisdiction and advocate for other provinces to follow suit. For example, in 2007 we organized:

- National letter writing campaign to all provinces/territories asking that they introduce legislation similar to Bill 58, which was passed in Quebec. It requires employers to grant a leave of absence of up to two years to employees whose child or spouse is slain. It also allows employees or their children who suffer serious bodily injury as a result of a crime to have the right to a two-year leave of absence, as well as employers to grant a leave of absence of up to one year to an employee whose child or spouse commits suicide, or if their child disappears.
- National letter writing campaign to all provinces/territories asking that they introduce legislation similar to Manitoba's Bill 7, which makes illegal any failure to report anyone who may possess videos, photographs or online computer material of child sexual abuse.

**RESEARCH** – In March of 2007, we released our extensive research report for the Department of Justice entitled RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF CANADIAN VICTIMS OF TERRORISM. In it, we examined the experiences of Canadians impacted by the Air India bombing and the impact of the attack on the United States on September 11th, as well as making a number of recommendations as to how all governments can be better prepared to respond to future victims and survivors in the aftermath of an attack on Canadian soil or elsewhere. The full report is available on our website for review.



**EDUCATION AND AWARENESS** – The CRCVC works diligently to promote victims’ concerns by addressing current events and issues in the media; and to conduct workshops/presentations at colleges, universities, community events, and conferences. As well, we act as a resource centre for victims by providing understanding and knowledge of the Canadian Criminal Justice System, and disseminate that knowledge through our monthly newsletter and web site.



Since 1994, the CRCVC has prepared a monthly newsletter called the National Justice Network. Membership in the network is free and provides victims of crime, victim services workers, other criminal justice professionals and interested parties a monthly update about current victim issues, initiatives, and programs. Currently more than 650 members (individuals and agencies) belong to the Network.

The CRCVC offers a large library of free resource materials for victims/survivors and service providers on our website – [www.crcvc.ca/en/resources/](http://www.crcvc.ca/en/resources/). There are a number of information papers, which can be accessed to learn more about issues such as advocacy, elder abuse, child abuse, sexual assault, homicide survivors, the impact of victimization, recovering from trauma, etc. We also provide all of the research we conduct, consultation papers we write and briefs to various government committees for viewing on our website.



**CANADIAN POLICE AND PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL SERVICE** - The last Sunday of September each year marks National Police and Peace Officers' Day. A memorial service is held in Ottawa on Parliament Hill to honour and remember the sacrifice made by police and peace officers killed in the line of duty.

The CRCVC proudly coordinates events for family members of fallen officers who come to Ottawa each year to attend the Service and honour their loved one's memory.



On the eve of the Memorial Service, a Welcoming Reception and Candlelight Vigil for immediate family members of fallen officers is held. The evening vigil is a beautiful candlelight ceremony with singing and prayers in the Memorial Pavilion behind Centre Block on Parliament Hill (pictured left). For the first time in 2007, we invited two family members (a widow and a sister) to share the story of loss of their loved on in the line of duty. The heartfelt journeys that were shared were very moving and so well received by all of the families it will become an annual tradition.

### **LOOKING AHEAD - 2008/09 Priorities**

The Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime will continue to intervene on behalf of crime victims to attempt to solve problems they may encounter in their dealings with the criminal justice system. We will also advocate for:

1. Victims' rights
2. Improving the corrections and parole systems in Canada
3. Expansion of information for victims
4. Legislation to address high-risk offenders
5. Responding to terrorism
6. Reducing victimization through crime prevention
7. Creation of a national program for financial assistance for victims of violent crime
8. Financial support for non-government organizations who serve crime victims



# Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime

Statement of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ended December 31, 2007

<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Funding</b>		
CPA	\$ 115,000	\$ 150,000
Other	\$ 1,016	\$ 351
Projects	\$ 9,583	\$ 28,121
	<b>\$ 125,599</b>	<b>\$ 178,472</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
Office admin, salaries, professional fees, travel, insurance, etc.	\$ 142,110	\$ 181,147
<b>NET REVENUE (EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>\$ (16,511)</b>	<b>\$ (2,675)</b>



**CANADIAN**  
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FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME**

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