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# Assessing Crime Victim Satisfaction With Probation Services

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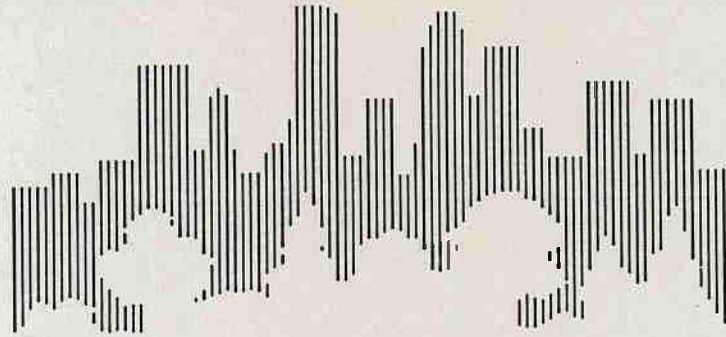
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**C • O • L • L • E • G • E**

**MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK  
THESIS**

**Janet L. Isaacson**

**Assessing Crime Victim Satisfaction  
With Probation Services**

**MSW  
Thesis**

Thesis  
Isaacs

**1995**

ABSTRACT OF THESIS  
ASSESSING CRIME VICTIM SATISFACTION  
WITH PROBATION SERVICES

*Janet Isaacson*

*May 1, 1995*

The field of Community Corrections has been mainly focused on identifying the needs and wants of the offender and the safety of the community. As the voices of crime victims are getting louder in the criminal justice system, probation departments are evaluating how to improve response to victim needs. A new framework that is being implemented in Community Corrections to meet those needs is a model called Restorative Justice. This model incorporates services to the offender, the victim, and the community.

A pilot project which offered specific victim services was developed out of the restorative justice concept through the Community Corrections Department in Dakota County, Minnesota. This study explored the satisfaction levels of crime victims who received services from the pilot project with those crime victims who did not receive specific victim services. A satisfaction survey was constructed and mailed to crime victims in both groups. The study focus is on identifying and understanding victim satisfaction with Community Correction services.

***ASSESSING CRIME VICTIM SATISFACTION  
WITH PROBATION SERVICES***

*Janet Isaacson*

*In partial fulfillment of requirements  
for  
Masters of Social Work*

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MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK  
AUGSBURG COLLEGE  
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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*"Blame is not the issue when you consider the system -  
change is the real objective."*

survivor of crime



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Crime victims currently have little access to, and involvement with, probation departments. This study explored the satisfaction level of crime victims after receiving specific victim services that were offered through a pilot victim program in a probation department. The study was done in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Masters of Social Work.

### VICTIM RIGHTS MOVEMENT

"A major victim complaint is the victim's sense of having been treated not as a person, but a thing, having been wholly subordinated to the whim of another, (e.g., personal possessions, one's physical security) and integrity invaded, trampled on, sullied" (Green, 1989, p.48).

Rights for people who have been oppressed and wronged have been closely intertwined with the justice system in America throughout history. The criminal justice system is where all segments of society may go to have their cases heard to achieve a sense of justice and fairness. Yet the justice system did not begin to recognize the rights of crime victims who had been wronged until the late 1980's when

legislation was passed. The crime victim movement has emerged from the women's movement and the civil rights movement. Advocates for victims have made an impact on the criminal justice system. For example, all states now have victim compensation funds and most have victim rights legislation (APPA, 1994).

Identifying crime victim rights has been in the area of the system up through sentencing, but is now expanding in the area of post-sentencing (see Appendix F for crime victim rights).

#### **EXAMINING PROBATION PRACTICES**

"... encourage probation and parole officers to realize the importance of the role in the victim's life and the manner in which their response affects the victim's opinion of the community corrections process" (APPA, 1994, p.99).

Community Corrections was founded on an emphasis of rehabilitation with three models as the basis - diversion, advocacy, and reintegration (Lawrence, 1991). The probation caseworker's main responsibility was to help change the offender based on his/her needs and problems. The caseworker did have control to use enforcement when the offender was not in compliance, but the focus was on service and assistance for the client.

In Minnesota there are approximately 4,400 people incarcerated. There are approximately 90,000 people on parole and probation (Halverson, 1994). Probation officers have caseloads that are astronomically high. The probation officers may only see the high risk offenders for an average of one half hour a month. The lower risk offender may only check in four times a year. Larger caseloads have left the probation officer delicately balancing the line between policing the offender's conditions of probation with rehabilitation efforts. The probation officer may believe that adding the victim in the process would "overload" the process even more. The feeling is that advocacy for offenders and advocacy for the crime victims are mutually exclusive, one must be either for the offender or for the victim (Lawrence, 1991).

As society appears to be saying "get tough on crime", the rehabilitative approach swung to a more retributive approach. The rehabilitative approach did not appear to be reducing crime. Therefore a "nothing works" view by society led to a "just lock'em up" attitude. Possibly one of the failures of the correction models in earlier decades was the lack of including the crime victim.

"Historically, people may have thought of probation as a form of lenience, but it can be, if done properly, a

carefully measured set of sanctions that hold people accountable, restore and retribute victims and change the behavior of offenders" (Mulcrone, Nov. 13, 1994, p.1B). This appears to be a philosophical framework that is shifting from an "either/or" attitude to an "and" attitude - community corrections can include the offender and the crime victim and the community. Byrne (1989) notes that probation officers need to develop the skills of advocating for the offender while firmly and fairly monitoring the offender, and also advocate for the victim. This new framework, named Restorative Justice, reflects a traditional justice framework that when people wrong one another, they have the responsibility to make amends to the victim and society (Lawrence 1991).

#### **NEED TO ESTABLISH VICTIM SERVICES WITHIN PROBATION**

Victims of crimes are not able to undo the crime in which they were involved; their only outlet for achieving a sense of justice is to have a meaningful and responsive interaction with representatives of the criminal justice system (APPA, 1994, p.23).

The criminal justice system is difficult and complex. The professional may experience a system plagued with problems. It is even more difficult for victims to maneuver and learn about this system. Community Corrections staff members are

in a position to offer crime victims services that would aid in alleviating the harmful action facilitated by that system. The criminal justice system sets up a role for the victim that is dehumanizing and passive, and treats the victim in a distant manner. For example it is the State vs. the offender. The state took on the burden of pressing charges instead of the crime victim having to press the charges. Inadvertently, this has developed into making the crime victim feel left out of the process and powerless. Community Corrections offering victim services creates an opportunity for the crime victim to receive services and be involved in the criminal justice process.

Currently most states have established a crime victims' Bill of Rights. The rights in most states are statutory not constitutional; if the rights are violated there is no legal recourse. The legislation has [in essence] said, these are the victim rights that need to be recognized. When the rights are not acted on [in essence] they disappear. In a South Carolina report (1989) 984 recently adjudicated criminal cases were reviewed. In only 9% of the cases was it documented that the crime victims were given an opportunity to make a statement at the sentencing about the impact of the crime on their lives - a right guaranteed by state law to crime victims. This same study reported that less than 10% of the public was aware of victim services and victim rights. This is noteworthy as there were 34 million

reported victimizations occurring in the United States in 1992. One in four households was victimized by a crime (South Carolina report, 1989).

**What is the victim pilot project?**

Community Corrections Department of Dakota County, Minnesota developed a pilot project entitled Victim Information Program. Funding was sought and awarded for a five month project to be developed by providing services to crime victims whose offender was in a unit of probation called the monitoring unit, which is for low risk offenders.

The grant proposal stated that an experimental group, those victims that receive services from the pilot project, and a control group, those that do not receive the specific services, would be created. The participants were randomly assigned to each group. The experimental group was labeled the session group. (See appendix E for pilot project brochure).

The specific services that were offered to the crime victims in the session group were:

- \* notification letter identifying new victim program
- \* giving crime victims a contact person in the corrections department for ongoing support
- \* inviting the victim to an informational meeting

- \* notifying victims of their rights as a crime victim
- \* a packet was sent to crime victims who did not attend the informational meetings that included:
  - rights of victims
  - data privacy information
  - offenders sentencing conditions
  - offenders restitution schedule and payments to date
  - brochures on area resources
  - civil judgment proceedings
  - identifying contact person
- \* Follow up letters

An evaluation tool was to be developed to identify the satisfaction level of probation services offered to crime victims in each group. Community Corrections would then be looking at the possibility of having an on-going victim service unit.

As the judiciary is ordering and incorporating restitution, and ordering offenders to community work service in sentencing, the probation officer will have continued contact with crime victims. There appears to be a growing need for identifying and involving the crime victim as a consumer of probation and parole services.

## PURPOSE OF STUDY

This research looks at crime victim satisfaction with probation services offered through a pilot project within the probation department. It will explore the variables that may affect the satisfaction level of crime victims who received specific victim services compared with those who did not. A crime victim satisfaction survey was developed to collect the data.

Services offered by probation that crime victims feel are important are also identified. Some of the areas discussed from this qualitative and quantitative data will be:

- \* What are the concerns of crime victims overall?
- \* Are the crime victims served through the pilot program more/less satisfied when compared to non-participating crime victims?
- \* Do crime victims feel specific services are necessary?
- \* What does probation need to do to fulfill its responsibility to crime victims?



The needs of crime victims and the findings as well as the limitations of the study will be discussed. The literature will be reviewed surrounding the issues of the impact of the crime on victims; identifying crime victim needs; crime victims access to information; Restorative Justice; and mediation between offenders and crime victims. The research results add to the body of knowledge that is available to help aid in shaping victim service programs. Implications of the study will also be offered which may be utilized to enhance victim services.

#### **Definition of Terms**

The following are definitions of terms.

- \* Offender: person who has been found guilty of committing a crime.
  
- \* Crime Victim: person that offender committed a crime against.
  
- \* Community Corrections (Probation): Agency that monitors court ordered conditions of offenders who are found guilty of a crime.

\* Satisfaction: How crime victims rated the importance of specific services offered by the probation department.

\* Session Group: Crime victims in study who received specific victim services. This is the experimental group.

\* Control group: Crime victims in study who did not receive specific victim services.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### IMPACT OF THE CRIME ON VICTIMS

"Victims are in emotional pain, sometimes physical distress and in financial straits because of the criminals activity" (survivor of crime).

The victims' movement has brought the voices of crime victims' to the attention of the criminal justice system. When the crime victim becomes involved with the probation department the impact of the crime is still going on and the rights of the victims still need to be recognized.

In providing victim services it would be beneficial to probation officers to understand the impact of the crime on the victim. Dr. Dean Kilpatrick (cited in APPA, 1994) noted five major types of crime-related psychological trauma.

- \* A high level of fear and anxiety. The crime victim may experience fear and anxiety during the crime and hours, weeks, months, and years afterwards.
  
- \* Depression - despondency about the future.

- \* Difficulty with important relationships, difficulty in trusting others, especially if the assailant was an acquaintance.
  
- \* Pre-crime assumptions, that the world is a safe, just, and fair place where people can be trusted are shattered.
  
- \* Development of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, re-experiencing the trauma, feelings of detachment, guilt, disturbed sleep (p.73).

Kilpatrick notes that the impact of the crime is often long term in nature. Added to this may be the re-victimization that is experienced through the criminal justice system. The characteristic reactions of the victims are fluid and may surface at any time at any given point in the criminal justice process and beyond. Some of the characteristics include:

- \* Victims continue to experience fear even after the incident is over.
  
- \* Victims sometimes hide their fear behind a mask of competence.

- \* Victims frequently expect to be blamed for what has happened. They often-blame themselves.
  
- \* Victims experience their misfortune as very important and seek sympathy and understanding.
  
- \* Victims frequently experience humiliation or loss of dignity.
  
- \* Victims sometimes accuse others of not protecting them and express anger at the person trying to help.
  
- \* Victims need to regain a feeling of control over their lives.

(National Crime Victim, 1992, p.3)

This researcher is aware that both the foregoing characteristics and Kilpatrick's five stages of trauma appear to work on a deficit model. Redefining the characteristics as survivor skills and re-focusing on how the system characteristically responds to the crime victim may be more beneficial. Research has shown that the presence or absence of empathy by the service provider is one of the most important factors determining whether or not a person in crisis will move "forward" (Crisis Connection, 1994). To become more empathetic one must develop understanding and convey that understanding back to the

crime victim. The major deterrent of crime victim satisfaction in a study looking at victim witness services found it was not with the performance of professionals but the attitude of the professional toward the victim where high level of satisfaction was found (Shapland, 1983). Following are the identified four needs expressed by crime victims.

- \* To be able to make decisions
- \* To be consulted prior to decisions be taken.
- \* To be informed about decisions taken
- \* To be given help for emotional, physical or financial needs (Shapland, 1983, p.236).

The crime victim who has these needs may be viewed by the probation officer as being "vindictive" and or "pushy". This is not to be taken as the crime victims posing a threat to the professionals in the system, to take over any decisions, but more of empowerment for the crime victim. The victim can be viewed as a partner by the criminal justice system. When this view is adopted the crime victim will be treated courteously, kept informed, and consulted about all stages of the process (Lawrence, 1991).

Agnew (1985) studied the relationships between victimization and the fear of crime. The results indicate that there is a weak relationship between the two, and the crime victim alleviates the impact of the crime by denial and "neutralizing" the crime. The neutralizing techniques are similar to the characteristic of the victim hiding behind a mask of competence. The difference between the two appears to be that Agnew examines the perceived benefits of crime victims denying the crime as they avoid the fear and negative impact of the crime. Agnew states that the neutralizing techniques could possibly be used to help victims who become overly fearful. Dr. Young's (1990) identification of the four major needs of crime victims would challenge the neutralizing concept. The four needs are as followings:

\* Safety and security

The victim has a sense of loss of control, they did not control the criminal act, nor decide to be victims. The professional needs to validate their ability to take control and involve them as much as possible in decision making.

\* Ventilation and Validation

Probation officers should reinforce that victim input is important to the officer and to the case. By asking the crime victim "how has this affected your life?", it gives the opportunity to talk about the crime and shows concern.

\* Prediction and Preparation

The probation officer can help the crime victim understand the future by asking "what do you want to see happen?" This provides a starting point for post sentencing possibilities and the parameters of the offenders conditions. There are short and long term concerns where probation officers can validate and involve the crime victim.

\* Information and education

Many victims do not understand the criminal justice system including corrections. Explain to the victim what the probation officer can and will do for the victim. (p.2-4).



The probation officer will need to develop empathetic skills and an understanding of the impact of crime on victims. It will be important to keep in mind the tendency to generalize about the effects of crime on victims and how they should/will react. The characteristics mentioned may lead probation officers to work from a deficit framework when relating to victims. A reaffirmation of the victims survivor skills should be included in the framework. While the neutralizing techniques may be helpful in a broad way to aid the victim in overcoming fear, a high degree of social support and empathy may lead to a lesser degree of fear (Young, 1990). The probation officer would need to delicately balance the neutralization technique with empathetic skills, refocusing on the victims strengths.

#### CRIME VICTIM SERVICE NEEDS

##### Restitution

"When one has sinned and become guilty, he shall restore what he took by robbery... or anything about which he has sworn falsely; he shall restore it in full, and shall add a fifth to it, and give it to him to whom it belongs"

(Leviticus 6:5-6, cited in APPA, 1994, p. 151).

According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1973-92:

\* You are more likely to become a victim of a crime than to be injured in a motor vehicle accident. The average dollar loss per crime increased from \$142 in 1975 to \$550 in 1991. 1.8 million victims in 1992 lost 6.1 million days from work, an average of 3.4 days per crime.

\* The most common reasons victims of violent crime, theft, and household crime gave for reporting the crime was to prevent further crimes by the offender and because it was a crime, and to recover property and damages.

A twenty year survey on crime victims found that in 1991 an estimated \$19.1 billion was lost from personal and household crime (National Crime Victimization Survey, 1973-92).

FIGURE A

The greatest dollar losses result from household crimes such as motor vehicle theft and burglary

Type of crime	1991 gross dollar loss in millions
All crimes	\$19,098
Personal crimes	4,553
Crimes of violence	1,076
Crimes of theft	3,493
Household crimes	14,529
Specific crimes	
Motor vehicle theft	\$6,478
Burglary	4,162
Personal larceny without contact	3,400
Household larceny	1,890
Assault	556
Road robbery	472
Personal larceny with contact	92
Rape	38

Note: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Losses do not reflect recovered property or insurance payments.

Since ancient times restitution has been made to an injured party by the offender of the crime. Restitution started to change when an Anglo-Saxon king mandated a system of payments to a victim's clan and also to the king for a violation of the king's peace (APPA, 1994). This then began the division that is currently present in the criminal justice system today of fines and restitution. The state in essence is now in competition for the victim role including monies. The purposes of restitution are broken down as follows:

- \* A sentence of restitution or restitution as a condition of probation allows the court a way to circumvent more severe but permissible means of punishment such as a prison term;
- \* An order of restitution helps to renew the offender's self-respect by holding him/her accountable for his/her actions;
- \* Restitution as a criminal sanction and alternative to imprisonment is less expensive; and
- \* Restitution can provide the victim with material realization and psychological satisfaction (Barkas, 1978, cited in APPA, 1994, p. 153).

Crime victims appear to be in a special category, set apart from other types of victims, such as victims of natural disasters. Robert Reiff, author of *The Invisible Victim* (1979) states, "I believe that violent crime victims are disaster victims and have a right to a special status. Social justice requires that society take responsibility for making the victim whole again. Emergency financial assistance, medical care, legal services, and justice are the rights of every victim and the moral obligation of society (cited in APPA, 1994, p.156).

The criminal justice system has now set up a process where deserving and undeserving victims are identified. The system does not trust on face value what the crime victim states as the restitution amount. The victim must file receipts proving to the probation department the totals submitted. Most states now have victim compensation - reparation - boards where crime victims may be eligible for reimbursement. These funds do not pay for damages to, or loss of, property, financial hardship, attorney fees, or coverage for pain and suffering. A crime victims recourse for recovering the above losses, or restitution ordered by the court but where the offender never paid, is to try and recoup the damages through a civil court action. There are many disadvantages to civil litigation: the perpetrator may not have any assets; road blocks exists for finding out about the perpetrator's address and employment; the crime

victim would have to go through the court process and may have to repeat the details of the victimization; civil cases may take a long time before a decision is rendered; and the victim may have to pay for out of pocket expenses such as filing fees, time off of work, deposition costs for obtaining expert testimony (Office for Victims of Crime, 1993, p.7).

There appears to be a failure to explain to crime victims the truth in restitution. It is possible that the crime victim may be angry when restitution is not paid. It may be because the crime victims had been told they would receive monies and then they do not. It is not so much that they want restitution from the offender, but that their trust of a "just world" is shattered again when the criminal justice does not follow through with what it promised.

Two factors may also be present regarding crime victim views of restitution. A longitudinal study done by Joanna Shapland (1984) involved interviews with 278 adult victims of violent crime over a three year period. This study found that victims were not suffering from financial need when they finally did receive compensation. Financial need was concentrated at the time of the offense; therefore, by the point they received compensation, it was judged against a background of frustration and mental suffering for having to go through the offense and subsequent time period with no

compensation. It was found to be not the actual receipt of the money that was important, but the judgment which that award represented about the suffering and position of the victim. The study concluded that victims viewed compensation not as "doling" out money as charity, but as in the historical view of compensation as restitution - "as the giving back or re-compensating to the victim what he has lost, not only materially but symbolically and in terms of suffering" (Shapland, 1984, p. 145).

One more piece of the restitution process bears mentioning. Probation officers and crime victims both feel frustration and possible confusion about revoking probationers for failure to pay restitution. It is a huge missing link that needs attention in the "credibility chain" of the criminal justice system. The frustration of probation officers, as arms of the court, is that their hands are sometimes tied. When they do revoke probation for failure to pay, judges are not incarcerating or following through if the "only" violation is failure to pay restitution. "This is perhaps the single most significant factor which undermines the concerns of victims regarding restitution" (APPA, 1994, p.155).

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

"If the victim is a non-person in the eyes of the professional participants, at least as far as the day-to-day functioning of the system is concerned, then he/she will not be informed or consulted as a matter of course" (Shapland, 1984, p.147).

Crime victims may have to interface with many professionals as they move through the court process. The first may be the police where depending on the type of crime and officer involved information may or may not be inadvertently passed on to the victim. The crime victim may also be receiving information at a time of crisis and find it hard to remember everything that is presented. The crime victim may have contact with prosecutors, judges and probation officers. The communication between the criminal justice professionals is lacking, but the crime victim, rightfully so, may believe that all of the professionals are connected and information is flowing freely. In the Shapland (1983) longitudinal study of 278 adult crime victims, the major requirements from victims was for information and help - "not as charity but in exchange for the very considerable time and effort the victims themselves put in at a time when they were injured or shocked" (p.147).

The criminal justice professionals have a tendency to label victims who want information as "vindictive". But to be informed about the status of one's case is an essential piece to empowerment and aiding the "victim's emotional and mental recovery" (APPA, 1994, p.200).

As a practical reason for information to be given the crime victim will not even know their rights if no one tells them. Letting crime victims know their rights will also alert them to know when they are allowed to exercise these rights. Issues concerning information are of utmost concern to crime victims as it first is their right but also may possibly affect their well-being and safety.

Information reaches victims from informal and formal means (APPA, 1994). No matter how and when information is gained by the crime victim, it is haphazard and incomplete. Crime victims are left to piece together a puzzle of information when they do not have all the pieces. If crime victims find out a professional did not give them timely clear information that was their right, there is little or no recourse to force compliance. Victims have an interest in every aspect of their case at every stage of the criminal justice system (APPA, 1994). Post-sentencing, crime victims have rights and may still be concerned with the status of their case. In Fort Worth, Texas, the probation department provides written notice to all victims concerning



restitution including a notice of the restitution order, the amount, revocation hearing dates if revoked for non-payment; follows up the written notice with a phone call informing the victims of the payment schedule and when the first payment maybe expected; and provides the victims with a name and number of a person within the agency to contact if any questions or concerns arise (APPA, 1994, p.211).

Shapland (1983) states that victims highest concern was to receive information at various points in the case, and have one person to contact (p.236).

#### **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

Restorative Justice evolved out of a sense of "failure and frustration with the current system and its detachment from the real problems of victims, offenders and communities" (Bazemore, 1994, p.19).

Restorative justice is emerging within probation departments as a philosophical framework stemming from the tension between a rehabilitative focus and a retributive enforcement focus. Each framework is narrow within its own focus. The common denominator in each is to focus strictly on the offender. How can one change the offender if there is not an opportunity to make amends for the harm caused by the offense to both the victim and the community? Gordon

Bazemore (1994) states that "no community corrections mission targeting only the offender for intervention and change, and ignoring the needs and input of victims, will ever be capable of achieving public support" (p. 20). The following table compares the two systems.

TABLE 2

PARADIGM ASSUMPTIONS	
Beliefs of Current System	Beliefs of Restorative Justice
Crime is an act against the state, a violation of a law, an abstract idea	Crime is an act against another person or the community
Punishment is effective a. threat of punishment deters crime b. punishment changes behavior	Deliberate infliction of pain does not contribute to community harmony
Criminal justice system controls crime	Crime control lies primarily in the social/economic system
Accountability equals suffering	Accountability defined as taking responsibility and taking action to repair harm
Victims are peripheral to the process	Victim is central to the process of resolving a crime
Offender is defined by deficits	Offender is defined by capacity to make reparation
Crime is an individual act with individual responsibility	Crime has both individual and social dimensions of responsibility
Source: Minneapolis Citizens Council, 1993	

Restorative justice is foremost a victim-centered framework which has a basis for promoting victim programs such as victim support services, restitution notification, victim awareness education, and victim offender mediation (Bazemore, 1994, p.21).

A cross-sectional study which collected quantitative and qualitative data, and consisted of face to face interviews with crime victims of burglary who were referred to mediation, showed that crime victims were seeking fairness not revenge, and wanted to be in more of an active role (Umbreit, 1989). The restorative justice model has at its goal reconciliation and restoration. It is a return to ancient cultures, where crime was primarily an offense against the victim and the victim's family as well as disrupting the community peace (Steele and Quinn, 1994).

#### VICTIM AND OFFENDER MEDIATION

"My goals were to have the offender see face to face that it was a person he had violated not just an object, an empty house, so that he had to deal with the person he had hurt, and to be able to have him understand that it was a loss and a hurt" (Crime victim as cited in Umbreit, 1989, p.55).

Victim offender mediation programs are growing out of the restorative justice framework where victims and offenders are directly involved in resolving the conflict through dialogue and negotiation (Umbriet and Coates, 1992). One of the problems for victims is a sense of having lost control. The criminal justice system appears to separate the offender and victim and put them both in a passive role. Victim

rights advocates may take issue with this in that they believe the crime victim is the only one in the passive role. Offenders are the primary focus in the court process and correctional process and have little to do with victims. Victim programs rarely involve the offender. Mediation programs are therefore controversial in that they involve both the victim and offender. The programs legitimize the victim's outrage and suffering. Mediation programs state that what they do best is "re-address some of the interpersonal assaults to which victims are subject" (Green, 1984, p.52). In a study of mediation in Minnesota, four out of five victims indicated an interest in participating face to face with the offender (Steel and Quinn, 1994). Umbreit (1993) cautions that mediation may be appropriate for a certain group of victims and offenders, but not for assault cases, or for more violent crimes. The primary concern of mediation is the victim. Ideally, information is conveyed to the offender in an effort to help the victim reconcile with the situation (Umbreit, 1987). Offering Mediation services to the victim and offender would be a benefit to probation departments because the goals of mediation are to reduce incarceration, empower the offender and the victim, and address community issues (APPA, 1994, p.85).

The gaps in the literature would appear to be the lack of studies involving crime victims, probation officers, and offenders. Currently there are no studies done with the few

probation departments that offer limited victim services. This study may be used to add to the body of knowledge on victim needs, but also to begin filling the gap in research regarding crime victim services within probation departments.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Questions

What services do crime victims identify as being important?  
Will victims who receive specific victim services have a higher level of satisfaction with probation services than those who do not?

The purpose for conducting this exploratory research was to identify crime victim satisfaction levels with Community Corrections services offered through a pilot victim program in Dakota County, Minnesota from August - 1994 to December - 1994. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Augsburg College.

#### The Study Sample

The subjects for the study were pre-determined by the framework of the pilot project grant. In a five month period, a list of offenders was developed. The offenders had all been ordered to pay restitution and were in a unit of probation called the monitoring unit, which is a unit for low risk offenders. The victim name for each of the offenders was then found.

As victims names were found, they were placed randomly in the pilot project group - victims who received the specific

services also called the session group - or placed in the control group - victims who did not receive the specific victim services. A total of 171 adult victims were in the session group and a total of 66 victims in the control group. The discrepancy in the numbers was twofold. In the session group, there were more multiple victims for each offender than in the control group. It was also found that one of the victims in the control group was a victim of welfare fraud. Offenders on probation for welfare fraud were placed in the control group from then on as it was the same victim but only counted as one victim. This victim received one survey which would be generalizable to all the welfare fraud offenses. Eleven surveys were returned because of address changes.

#### **The data collection instruments**

Two surveys were designed specifically for crime victims in the session group and the crime victims in the control group. The questionnaires were identical except the session group survey had four questions that were inserted for respondents to answer in relation to whether they attended the informational session. The questions were both open and closed ended. The primary focus was the crime victims' satisfaction. Satisfaction was conceptualized to be ratings of services offered and how important each type of service was to crime victims. Identification of what services were

rated higher and a comparison between the session group and the control group was made using a Likert scale. The word "comment" or "other" was added to have the questions be mutually exhaustive. Questions were designed from gathering information from the literature on crime victim reactions. The survey was presented to probation staff members for feedback on clarity as well as technical issues. The survey was intended to take approximately ten minutes to fill out to enhance the respondents' returning the survey. The cover letter also stated that crime victims' input was important and can make a difference which this researcher believed would be an internal motivator for crime victims to return the survey. The questionnaires were sent with a self-addressed stamped envelope with the envelope stamped confidential. The questionnaires were sent to both groups after the last information session date. The surveys were sent back anonymously (See Appendix A for cover letter and Appendix B and C for survey instruments).

#### **Limitations of Study**

The victim pilot project grant had a pre-determined design when submitted for funding. This researcher had to work within the boundaries set out in the grant. The grant evaluation was designed for a control group, those crime victims that did not receive specific victim services, and an experimental group, victims that received the specific services. After the timeline of five months the groups were



to be surveyed for comparable satisfaction levels. Design limitations:

\* The crime victims in the session group contacted in the fourth through fifth month of the grant only received the services for a few weeks before being mailed their satisfaction survey, a very short time frame to compare whether the services were effective.

\* The crime victims were not contacted immediately at the time of the offense. There was a minimum of a sixty day time lag between offense and contacting the victim. This was due to internal bookkeeping and computer limitations.

\* The offenders were considered "low-risk". The sample did not include all levels of crimes against victims.

\* The time constraints did not allow for response rates to be addressed. Intensive follow-up is needed with mail questionnaires to increase response rate (Miller, 1991).

\* There may be other variables that affect satisfaction levels other than probation services (ie: level of satisfaction with outcome of case).

\* The sample size is small.

\* Participants were selected randomly which lessened the possibility that results were due to chance, but a statistical analysis was not done.

\* Possibility of bias by the respondent if the respondent was a victim, but also at same time, or currently, was also an offender.

\* Survey questions may not have been clear and/or exhaustive (ie: explanation of variables "daily contact"; what was meant by "involvement with probation", restitution question was a double bind, "have you received payments" yes, no, partial", should be in full, no, partial).

\* Crime victims who had been victims more than once did not know which offense to respond to.

\* Design did not take into account multiple victims of offenders, therefore showing differences in the numbers in the control and session group.

\* The majority of the limitations were unavoidable as the framework of the study was outlined in the grant proposal. Working within the scope of the limitations the findings are presented as follows.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

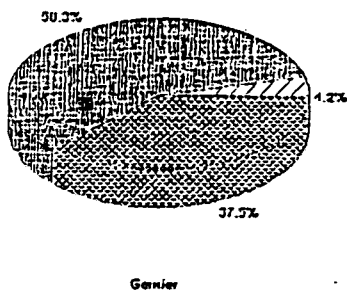
There were 171 session surveys sent out and 97 control surveys sent. 49 surveys were returned in the session group and 23 in the control group.

Who are the crime victims that responded?

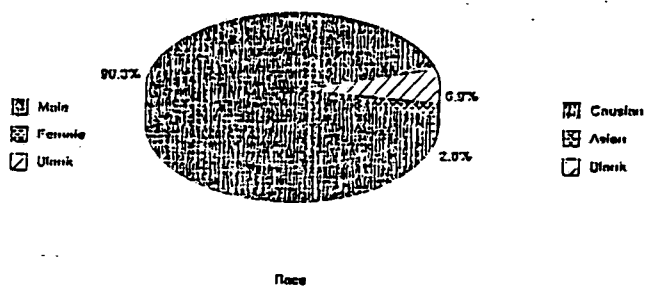
Figure I

#### Demographics of total respondents

DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS  
1995 Victim Survey  
Demographics of Respondents



DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS  
1995 Victim Survey  
Demographics of Respondents



The majority of the crime victims that responded were (90.3%) Caucasian and (58.3%) male with the age reported

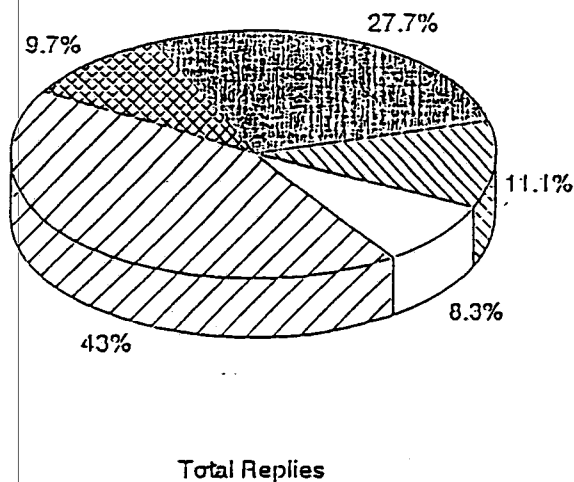
most often as 41 years. In the control group there were 12 male respondents, 10 female respondents, and one blank. Twenty-one respondents were caucasian and 2 were missing. In the session group there were 30 male respondents and 17 female respondents. Forty-four were Caucasian, 2 Asian, and on 3 serveys there was no response.

What were the offenses committed against the crime victims?

Figure II

Offenses Reported

DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS  
Victim Survey  
Offenses Reported



Property
  Person
  Theft
  Multiple
  Blank

The majority of the offenses were theft (43%) and property offenses (27.7%).

Have respondents contacted the probation department in the past 6 months?

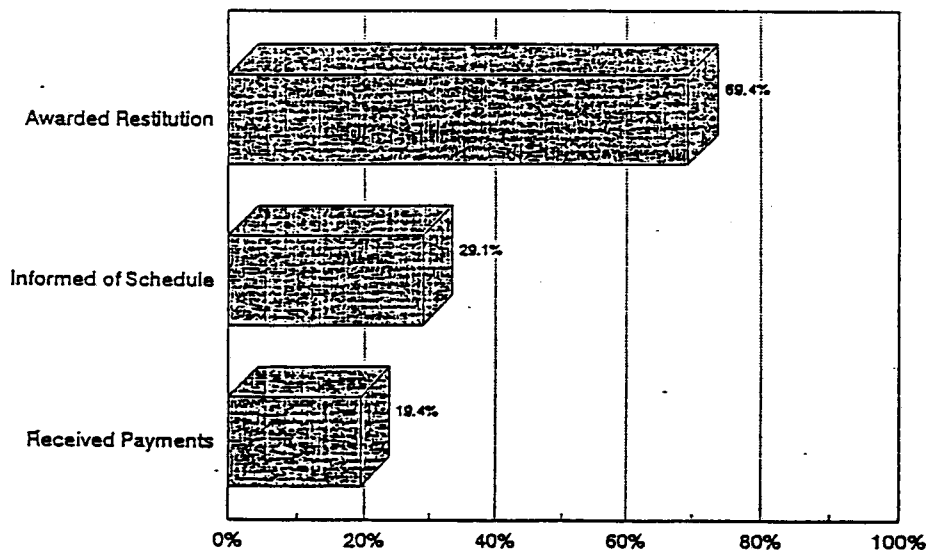
(36.7%) of the respondents in the session group responded that they had contacted the probation department. In the control group (26.1%) of the respondents reported they had contacted the probation department

Were the respondents awarded restitution? Were they informed of the payment schedule? Did respondents receive any monies?

Table III

Restitution results from both groups

DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS  
Victim Survey  
Restitution Results



Of the total 72 respondents (69.4%) were awarded restitution. (29.1%) were informed what the payment

schedule would be for the offender, (19.5%) of the respondents had received some payments.

What do crime victims feel about the importance of services offered by probation?

Table IV

How important is it that the probation department informs the crime victim periodically about the offenders status?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	1	2.0	2	8.8
Not Important	4	8.2	3	13.0
Somewhat Important	18	36.7	5	21.7
Very Important	26	53.1	13	56.5
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

(89.8%) of the session respondents responded that it was somewhat to very important that they be informed about the offenders status. (78.2%) of the control group responded that it would be somewhat to very important.

Table V

How important is it that the probation department  
help the offender "straighten out" his/her life?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	3	6.1	2	8.7
Undecided	1	2.0	1	4.3
Not Important	6	12.2	2	8.7
Somewhat Important	15	30.6	8	34.8
Very Important	24	49.1	10	43.5
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

(79.7%) of the session group and (78.3%) of the control group respondents replied that this was somewhat or very important.

Table VI

How important is it that the offender is punished?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	1	2.0	2	8.7
Undecided	1	2.0	0	0.0
Not Important	3	6.1	5	21.7
Somewhat Important	7	14.3	16	69.6
Very Important	37	75.5	0	0.0
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

(89.8%) of the session group and (69.6%) of the control group reported this was somewhat to very important. (21.7%) of the control group said it was not important while the session group reported it not important at (6.1%).

Table VII

How important is it that probation make  
sure that all money is paid to crime victims?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	1	2.0	2	8.7
Undecided	1	2.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Important	12	24.5	7	30.4
Very Important	35	71.5	14	60.9
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

The session group respondents rated this as somewhat to very important (96%) of the time. The control group was (91.3%).



Table VIII

How important is it that the probation department listen to crime victims?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	2	4.1	2	8.7
Undecided	1	2.0	0	0.0
Not Important	5	10.2	1	4.3
Somewhat Important	18	36.8	7	30.5
Very Important	23	46.9	13	56.5
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

Session group responded with a rate of (83.7%) as somewhat to very important and the control group with an (87%) rate.

Table IX

How important is it that the probation department notify crime victims when the offender is in violation of the probation conditions?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	3	6.1	2	8.7
Undecided	0	0.0	1	4.3
Not Important	4	8.2	2	8.7
Somewhat Important	17	34.7	7	30.5
Very Important	25	51.0	11	47.8
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

Very to somewhat important was found to be reported at a rate of (85.7%) for the session group and (78.3%) for the control group.

Table X

How important is it that probation tells crime victims right away what information is accessible about the offender?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	2	4.1	2	8.7
Undecided	0	0.0	1	4.3
Not Important	7	14.3	3	13.0
Somewhat Important	22	44.9	8	34.8
Very Important	18	36.7	9	39.2
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

(81.6%) of the session group thought this was somewhat to very important and (74%) of the control group.

Table XI

How important is it to receive a copy  
of the offender's sentence?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	1	2.0	2	8.7
Undecided	1	2.0	0	0
Not Important	4	8.2	1	4.4
Somewhat Important	9	18.4	7	30.4
Very Important	34	69.4	13	56.5
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

The session group reported this as somewhat to very important (87.8%) and the control group at a rate of (86.9%).

Table XII

How important is it to crime victims  
to receive all victim rights?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	1	2.0	2	8.7
Undecided	2	4.1	0	0.0
Not Important	1	2.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Important	9	18.4	2	8.7
Very Important	36	73.5	19	82.6
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

This was reported of somewhat to very important at a rate of (91.9%) for the session group and (91.3%) for the control group.

Table XIII

How important is it to you that the probation department  
keep information from crime victims confidential?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	1	2.0	2	8.7
Undecided	0	0.0	1	4.3
Not Important	10	20.5	2	8.8
Somewhat Important	11	22.4	3	13.0
Very Important	27	55.1	15	65.2
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

Confidentiality was reported to be somewhat to very important for session group at a percentage of (77.5) and for the control group at (78.2%).

Table XIV

How important is it that someone in the probation  
department acts as a victim contact person daily?

Rating	Session Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Blank	3	6.1	2	8.7
Undecided	1	2.1	1	4.4
Not Important	6	12.2	3	13.0
Somewhat Important	20	40.8	7	30.4
Very Important	19	38.8	10	43.5
Total	49	100.0	23	100.0

missing cases = 0

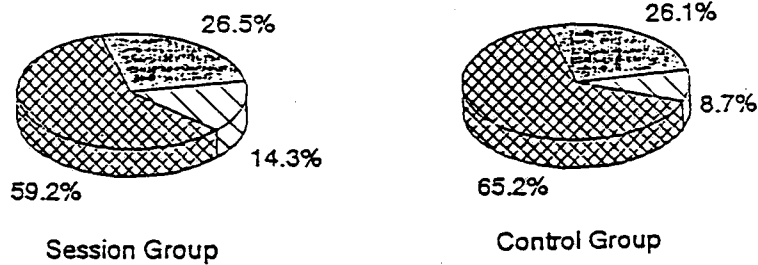
The combined response for somewhat to very important for the session group was (79.6%) and the control group (73.9%).

Were crime victims aware of the civil judgment option when restitution had not been paid to them?

Figure IV

Awareness of Civil Judgment Option

DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS  
Victim Survey  
Awareness of Civil Judgment Process

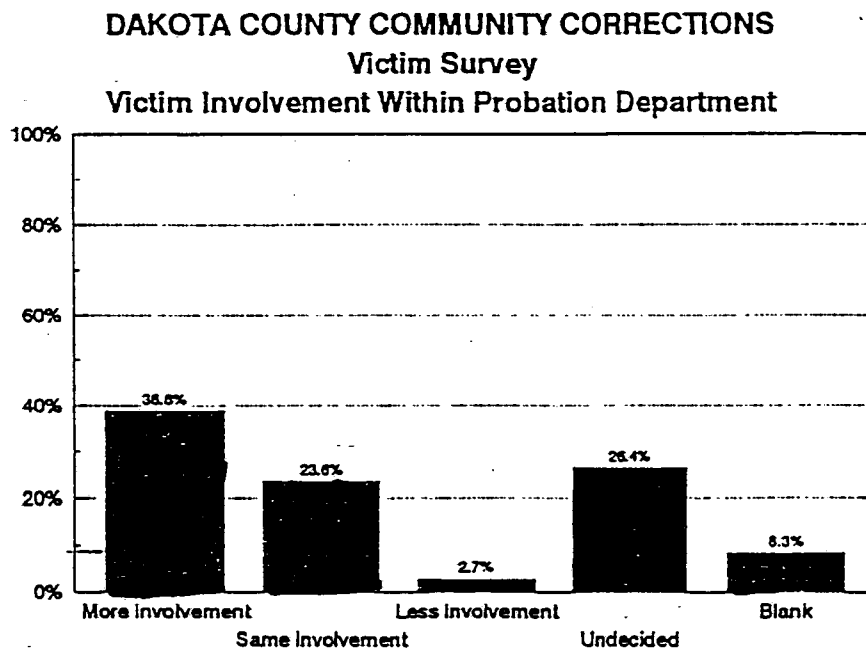


Aware Not Aware Blank

(65.2%) of the control group respondents and (59.2%) of the session group, before the pilot project services were offered, were aware of the civil judgment option if restitution had not been paid.

Table XV

Within the probation department, how involved should crime victims be?



Overall, (38.8%) of the crime victims felt they should be more involved. (59.2%) of the session group responded there should be more or the same involvement. (4.1%) responded that there should be less involvement. In the control group

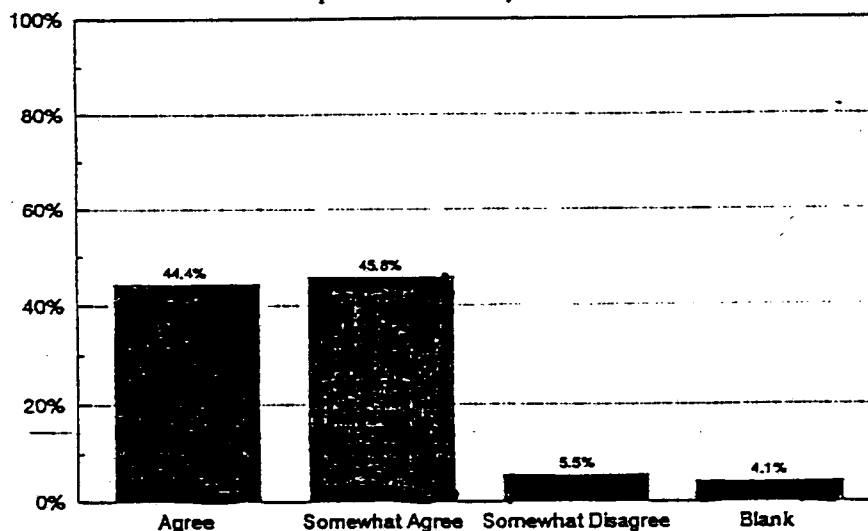
(69.5%) responded that there should be more or the same involvement. None responded that there should be less involvement.

Do crime victims believe the probation department should help solve the problems created by the crime?

Table XVI

Probation Department should help solve problems created by the crime.

DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS  
Victim Survey  
Probation Dept Should Help Solve Problems



Combining the two groups, (90.2%) of the crime victims responded they agreed or somewhat agreed that the probation department should help solve the problems created by the offense.



**In what way has the probation department been least helpful?**

Twenty-eight out of the 49 crime victims in the session group responded to this question. Seventeen out of the 23 responded in the control group. All of the respondents comments had three themes. The probation departments had not informed the crime victims of any information regarding: rights, offenders status, and information about restitution.

**How has the probation department been the most helpful?**

In the session group 35 victims out of the 49 commented and, in the control group 17 out of 23 responded. The themes are that the crime victims feel it would be helpful to be kept informed and receive restitution. Respondents in both groups, 6 of the 17 respondents in the control group and 11 of the 35 respondents in the session group, replied that there was not any help at all.

**How could the probation department be more helpful to crime victims?**

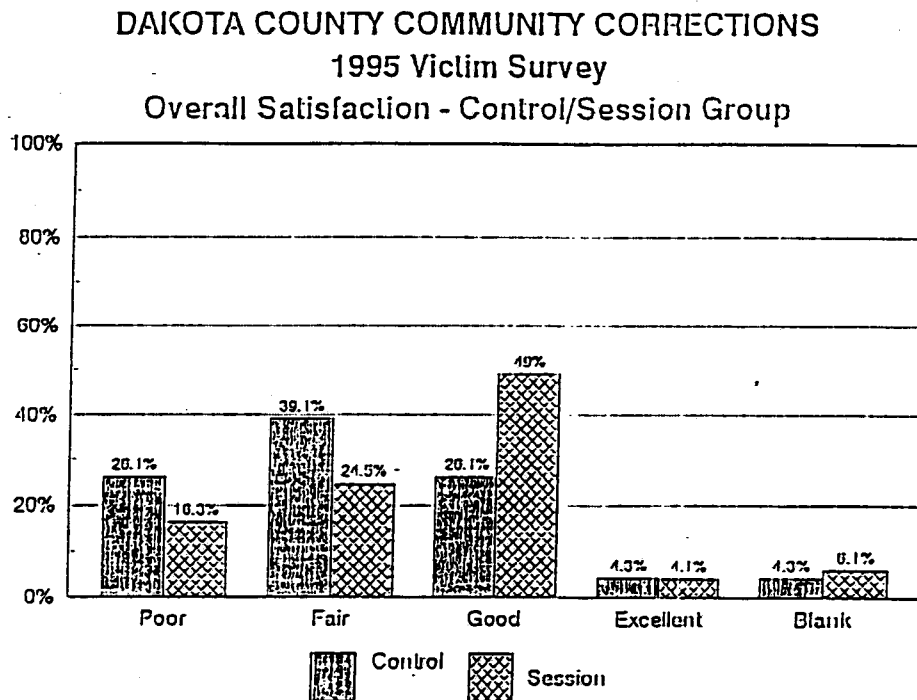
Out of the 49 surveys returned in the session group, 26 victims commented to this question and 17 out of 23 responded in the control group.

The responses in both groups fell into two categories; having contact and receiving information from probation and issues surrounding restitution (See Appendix D for all comments).

How did crime victims rate the overall satisfaction with the probation department?

Table XVII

Control and session group overall satisfaction



(49%) of the session group respondents rated the overall satisfaction of services as good. The control group rated services good at a rate of (26.1%).

## SUMMARY

The overall satisfaction of the session group was rated higher than the control group - session group at (49%) to the (26.1%) of the control group. The three highest services the session group found to be the most important were:

- \* to make sure the offender was punished
- \* to see that all monies were paid to them
- \* to make sure that all rights as a crime victim were received

The data from this study suggest that even though the crime victims in the session group did not receive all their monies, they had a higher satisfaction level with services due to the contact and information provided by specific services offered to this group. This finding is in line with the literature that crime victims want a more active role, which supports the restorative justice model (Umbreit, 1989). It is important to understand the results of the study in the context of the limitations. The data from the control group suggest that being notified of their rights as a crime victim was the most important service for probation to offer victims. The control group also had a higher percentage, (47.8%), than the session group when responding to the question about believing crime victims should be more involved with probation. Findings also suggest that crime

victims in the session group, (34.7%), wanted to have more involvement than they were currently receiving with the specific services.

The findings may have generalized themes for a larger population when keeping in mind that the research was a cross-sectional study with very limited services offered in a very short time frame. Even within this framework, the data suggest that crime victims who received services through the pilot project reflected a higher level of satisfaction as a group than those crime victims who did not receive project services.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

The participants in the session group had a more positive result overall with probation services than the control group, yet the qualitative data revealed both groups had the same themes in their responses. Issues surrounding the lack of information and the failure to receive restitution payments were prominent from both groups. Possible recommendations are as follows:

- \* Services be offered to the crime victims in an efficient timely manner when the offender enters probation. This study had participants responding where the offense had occurred many months prior to services. Would crime victims have higher levels of satisfaction when services are offered immediately and for a longer time frame?
- \* A longitudinal study with a sample of crime victims representation from all offenses. Do crime victims of a burglary have the same needs/wants for services as a victim of assault?
- \* An exploratory study surveying offenders responses on crime victim involvement.

\* Crime victim services would need to be formalized within probation. Strategies for delivery of services may then be determined. An advisory board of crime victims may be beneficial to aid in enhancing services.

\* This study showed that crime victims whose offender was in a "low-risk" probation unit and the offense had been committed many months prior, still had strong opinions about their needs and wants. The comments from the questions regarding what probation could do to be more helpful gives insight to crime victim needs. As one victim stated "contact the victims!"

\* Ongoing staff training for probation officers on victim concerns would be necessary. "In victim's interactions with the criminal justice system, it was the attitude of the personnel of that system to the victim that was the chief determinant of victim satisfaction" (Shapland, 1985, p. 147).

While the findings cannot be generalized to represent all crime victims, they do provide insight into crime victim needs and wants post sentencing. This was a small sample yet the respondents were vocal in their comments.

Recommendations would be to assign trained, sensitive staff and volunteers to organize informational contact with crime

victims by phone and letters. The session meetings designed in the pilot project were not attended for a variety of reasons (only 2 people attended). The overall feedback from phone contact was the victims did not want to take personal time, and associated the meetings with an "unfairness" that they needed to take time off to hear their rights. The premise of the information sessions was that crime victims wanted more contact and information. The data supports this premise.

### **Implications**

An overwhelming majority of crime victims from both groups felt that it was very important that all rights be given to them (session group 73.5%, control group 82.6%). If Community Corrections Departments are moving towards a framework of restorative justice, the needs of crime victims must be heard. The probation departments already understand the importance of accountability; within the restorative justice concept departments will also need to be accountable to the crime victims and the community. To provide victim services is a long term vision that will need to be adopted as a philosophical perspective.

The qualitative and quantitative data revealed that crime victims have opinions about what they need and want. The comments reveal crime victims want what they feel they

rightfully deserve. The services in the session group did not, or could not, change what had happened yet victims felt more satisfied just to have a "connection" and receive clear information. Formalizing restitution information to crime victims appears to be one of the services that is severely lacking. Both groups rated the importance of receiving all monies yet the data showed less than (20%) has received restitution.

The development of victim rights being recognized in probation departments would support the emphasis within the social work profession on inter-disciplinary relationships. This study adds to the existing knowledge based on crime victims needs and wants. It may aid the criminal justice system in developing services to crime victims. The study is a beginning for probation departments to seriously and holistically approach the system perspective of including the offender, the victim, and the community to aid in repairing how the crime has affected all three. The social work profession can embrace the restorative justice concept as the profession has championed social justice causes. The restorative justice framework focuses on solving the problems created by the crime. The social work profession runs parallel as one of the main models is the problem solving concept. The restorative justice model also in essence is a community based mechanism to solve community problems. This also parallels social work which works



towards empowerment of individuals and communities. Social workers working with the offender, the victim, and/or the community will be able to incorporate the holistic principals of the concept.

*"This is not a monetary issue, it is a justice issue"*

*(crime survivor, session group).*

*"I must say it was nice to have at least received this form. It gave me, as a victim, a chance to let someone know how frustrating it is to be victim - no one - from the time the accident happened..., no one volunteered any information or offered assistance in the process."*

*(crime victim, control group)*

*We are all - survivors of crime, offenders, and the  
community - intertwined. Listen very closely, the chorus of  
"justice! Dignity!" is cried by all.*

## **APPENDICES**

APPENDICES

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**CRIME VICTIMS DESERVE TO BE HEARD!  
YOUR IDEAS AND OPINIONS ARE IMPORTANT AND VALUED!**

Dear

You are invited to take part in a research study regarding your satisfaction with Dakota County Community Corrections Services for crime victims. You were selected as a participant because the offender who committed the crime against you is in a unit of probation called the Monitoring Unit. My name is Janet Isaacson and I am conducting this study as a partial fulfillment of my Master's thesis at Augsburg College.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the study is to receive important feedback on how satisfied you are with the probation department services. The information from the survey will then be evaluated to look at how the probation department may offer services to crime victims.

Your decision to fill out the survey is voluntary, and will not affect your current or future relationship with Dakota County Community Corrections or Augsburg College.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Do not put your name on the survey.

When you return your anonymous survey, it will imply consent to participate in the study. While I am collecting the data, all records will be kept with me. The anonymous final results of the study will be shared with Dakota County Community Corrections. After the tabulated results, I will be destroying the anonymous individual response forms.

The survey is completely confidential.

I will be the only one to see your survey.

IMPORTANCE

The amount of satisfaction crime victims have regarding probation services is of vital concern. There is no direct benefit to participating such as money, but you have the benefit of knowing your individual response is important and can make a difference in developing crime victim services. I urgently request you to take about 15 minutes to answer the questions and promptly return the survey in the enclosed envelope.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 891-7226, or my research advisor, Professor Maria Brown at 330-1771.

I truly thank you for your time, cooperation and input!

Sincerely,

Janet Isaacson  
Principal Investigator

**DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS  
CRIME VICTIM SATISFACTION SURVEY**

Thank you for taking the time to express your opinions to improve crime victim services in the probation department!

1. What was the offense committed against you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Did you attend a victim information session?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (if Yes, then go to #3) No \_\_\_\_\_ (if no, complete the following, then skip to #6):
- a. Before reading the information on the civil judgment procedure, were you aware of this option for crime victims?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Before having any contact with the victim service program within the probation department, had you been told all your rights as a crime victim?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (If Yes, by what agency?) \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_
3. At the session, was the information presented in a clear and understandable way?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Some parts were \_\_\_\_\_  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Before attending the information session, were you made aware of your rights as a crime victim?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (If Yes, by what agency?) \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_
5. Before attending the information session, were you aware of the civil judgment process? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. Have you called the probation department in the past six months?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Were you awarded restitution money?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- If yes:
- a. Were you informed about the payment schedule? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Have you received payments? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Partial \_\_\_\_\_
- Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Please indicate your:
8. Sex: Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_
9. Race:  
African American \_\_\_\_\_ American Indian \_\_\_\_\_  
Asian American \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian \_\_\_\_\_  
Latino \_\_\_\_\_ Bi-racial \_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)  
Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)
10. Age: 18-30 \_\_\_\_\_ 31-45 \_\_\_\_\_ 45 or older \_\_\_\_\_

11. The Dakota County Community Corrections Department is looking at possibly developing and enhancing services to victims. For each of the following statements, please circle how important it would be to you that the probation department:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Undecided
a. Inform me periodically about offender's status	VI	SI	NI	U
b. Help the offender "straighten out" his/her life	VI	SI	NI	U
c. Make sure the offender is punished	VI	SI	NI	U
d. See that I'm paid all money owed to me	VI	SI	NI	U
e. Listen to me	VI	SI	NI	U
f. Notify me if offender is in violation	VI	SI	NI	U
g. Tell me right away what information I can access about the offender	VI	SI	NI	U
h. Make sure I receive a copy of the offender's sentence	VI	SI	NI	U
i. Make sure I receive all my rights as a crime victim	VI	SI	NI	U
j. Keep information I give to the probation department as a crime victim confidential	VI	SI	NI	U
k. See that someone in the probation department acts as a victim contact person daily for crime victims	VI	SI	NI	U

Other: (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

12. Within the probation department, crime victims should be:  
 More involved \_\_\_\_\_ Less involved \_\_\_\_\_  
 Same involvement as now \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided about involvement \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

13. The probation department should help the crime victim solve the problems created by the crime.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat agree \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat disagree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_\_

14. In what way has the probation department been the least helpful to you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

15. In what way has the probation department been the most helpful to you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

16. In what way could the probation department be more helpful to you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

17. Overall satisfaction of the probation department's response to crime victims  
 Excellent \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_

18. Please share any additional comments or suggestions:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS  
CRIME VICTIM SATISFACTION SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to express your opinions to improve crime victim services in the probation department!

1. What was the offense committed against you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your:

2. Sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

3. Race: African American \_\_\_\_\_ American Indian \_\_\_\_\_  
Asian American \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian \_\_\_\_\_  
Latino \_\_\_\_\_ Bi-racial \_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)  
Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)

4. Age: 18-30 \_\_\_\_\_ 31-40 \_\_\_\_\_ 41 or older \_\_\_\_\_

5. Were you awarded restitution money? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If Yes: a. Were you informed about the payment schedule? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Have you received payments? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Partial \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you called the probation department in the last six months?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. The Dakota County Community Corrections Department is looking at possibly developing and enhancing services to victims. For each of the following statements, please circle how important it would be to you that the probation department:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Undecided
a. Inform me periodically about offender's status	VI	SI	NI	U
b. Help the offender "straighten out" his/her life	VI	SI	NI	U
c. Make sure the offender is punished	VI	SI	NI	U
d. See that I'm paid all money owed to me	VI	SI	NI	U
e. Listen to me	VI	SI	NI	U
f. Notify me if offender is in violation	VI	SI	NI	U
g. Tell me right away what information I can access about the offender	VI	SI	NI	U
h. Make sure I receive a copy of the offender's sentence	VI	SI	NI	U
i. Make sure I receive all my rights as a crime victim	VI	SI	NI	U



- |    |  |    |    |    |   |
|----|--|----|----|----|---|
| j. | Keep information I give to the probation department as a crime victim confidential                   | VI | SI | NI | U |
| k. | See that someone in the probation department acts as a victim contact person daily for crime victims | VI | SI | NI | U |

Other: (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Were you told you had rights as a crime victim? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
 If Yes, what agency informed you? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Within the probation department, crime victims should be:  
 More involved \_\_\_\_\_ Less involved \_\_\_\_\_ Same involvement \_\_\_\_\_  
 Undecided about involvement \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

10. The probation department should help the crime victim solve the problems created by the crime.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat agree \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat disagree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are you aware of a process called a civil judgment that is a way to obtain money owed to you by your offender if restitution is not paid?  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

12. In what way has the probation department been the least helpful to you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

13. In what way has the probation department been the most helpful to you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

14. In what way could the probation department be more helpful to you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

15. Overall satisfaction of the probation department's response to crime victims  
 Excellent \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_

16. Please share any additional comments or suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME AND INSIGHTS!

**\*\*COMMENTS ON RESTITUTION\*\*****CONTROL GROUP**

- o If it happens like usual I will never see restitution.
- o Restitution was to be sought but none has occurred.
- o Of 3 cases only one made payments totaling \$300 on a \$4436 debt.
- o No notification of restitution was ever provided.
- o I don't receive checks on a consistent basis.
- o Would be nice if they would make them pay sooner.
- o I will not be satisfied until I get all of the money due to me!
- o 3 people were involved and the most serious offender of the 3 has not sent restitution.
- o We have received nothing to date. I did call probation recently and they said that they would check into it.
- o I have called 4 times trying to get the restitution cleared up. Haven't seen a penny yet.
- o So far I have only gotten \$50 of the \$650 I have coming, but I received no schedule of payment.
- o Court sent a letter, said payments would go through them, have yet seen any money.

**SESSION GROUP**

- o 125 OF 1,000
- o Have received a letter saying can pay \$100 for copies of report-no way!! I'm owed \$162.
- o I was just told how much I would have to pay to get my restitution.
- o Sometimes yes-sometimes no.
- o Got one payment-just a check, nothing that says, is this all I get or is there more.
- o Was to receive payments, but never said when, just to be done in 2yrs. Well 6 months have passed and still no money!

- o I did not request my restitution.
- o Have received no info. about restitution since it was awarded.
- o Full payment of \$250 5 months after appearance in court.
- o In some cases.
- o My neighbor's mailbox was knocked over too. He put the 2 mailboxes up and took care of the financial payments. I was not involved. The mailboxes were knocked over twice.
- o I was told I was getting \$900 or so back and as far as I can tell I'm only getting \$400.
- o Have not received any money for several months-just two payments so far?
- o I asked for \$25 but have not received it.
- o Not sufficient time to be reimbursed.
- o This is absurd! He was found guilty, ordered to pay restitution by judge. But when he doesn't, we the victims at our expense have to pay more money to follow through to try to get restitution, with no guarantee we will ever get it. What a joke for the law. We are still victims if he's to pay or not. He's still doing what he wants.
- o I have no idea how much money I am going to receive and when I am going to get it all.
- o The court said yes, the thief has done nothing about it. They were going to have the thief send payments to the clerk and then the clerk would forward the money to us.
- o We don't know if the check we received was all we will be getting or if we should expect more.
- o I do not know when or how payments are to be made to me.
- o Restitution was reduced after the court hearing.

**\*\*CALLING PROBATION DEPARTMENT COMMENTS\*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o Get run around.
- o Dept of Corrections has called me once.
- o I have 33 retail facilities and received restitution from 3x's that many counties. I don't call unless a major problem arises.
- o Called about getting reimbursement for counselling and haven't received anything.
- o Did not receive a return call inquiring a restitution schedule.
- o Poor results theft occurred in June 1994.
- o I was never notified that the person had been apprehended.

**SESSION GROUP**

- o To find out status.
- o Difficult to reach a person to speak with-messages not returned P.S. Mary Jo just returned my call!!
- o Reported that perpetrator was not conforming to probation requirements (restitution).
- o They were helpful.
- o Call to determine why I had not been paid restitution.
- o Called to ask about restitution-told that we had to wait until the end of probation term.
- o As a school we frequently do this.
- o Had a problem in being able to contact person called.
- o Every time I call it takes at least three more calls to get my question answered.
- o After 4-5 months, I called to see when restitution money was going to be paid & she said that the thief did not show for his first schedule meeting.
- o Very helpful, knowledgeable; pleasant people.
- o No one ever seems to know what I want.

**\*\*IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES COMMENTS\*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o When asking on probation if they made restitution don't take their word for it check with the victim. If they steal they also lie.
- o (k) Not necessarily daily but biweekly-often in dealing with crime (3 in the last 2 yrs.) we are not informed of anything pertaining to the case.
- o I don't like the feeling that the criminal seems to have equal or more rights than the victim.
- o I feel that even though it is a crime to write a bad check, nothing is really done to the offender so they feel they can keep on doing as they please.

**SESSION GROUP**

- o Why did it take so long to bring the offender to trial & why the money takes so long to get.
- o It seems that "Follow through" by corrections Dept is lax.
- o Just need person to call-doesn't have to be in probation department.
- o Make certain restitution is paid before offender completes probation. Why have the court order restitution if there's no effort made to make offender pay.
- o I live in Florida now and am less concerned about Dakota County.
- o There should be some way of achieving payment of restitution when a warrant has been issued.
- o Make sure the offender-pays restitution to victims as court ordered-or have him suffer other consequences. Right now he's off free to do what he wants again.
- o Make sure they follow through with the punishment (whatever it is) keep their feet to the fire until its finished-that is their punishment is finished.
- o Just keep me informed as to what is expected of me-also when I can expect restitution.

**\*\*WERE YOU TOLD VICTIM RIGHTS? IF YES, BY WHOM?\*\*) \*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o Dakota county court system.
- o Dakota county comm. corrections.
- o Eagan police.

**SESSION GROUP**

- o From county at sentencing.
- o City Attorney.
- o Research.
- o Did not receive any info.
- o Police, informational mail.
- o By letter?-Possibly!
- o Again, I did not attend the session.
- o Police.
- o Wash. Co. asst co. att.
- o Mall watch meeting-city attorney.
- o this one-through the pamphlets.
- o Police.
- o Not that I am fully aware of.
- o Lawyers prosecuting case.
- o Community Corrections dept.

**\*\*INVOLVEMENT WITH PROBATION DEPARTMENT COMMENTS\*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o The probation officer should follow the policy and not cut corners. Not enough time and too many to take care of is an excuse and not a reason.
- o Many incidents happen in banks. After reporting the crime, we rarely hear anything further & even more rarely do we see restitution.
- o I'd like to see the probation department enforce monthly payments, even if its less then the original monthly amount.
- o I don't know what involvement exists now.
- o I asked to appear in court/write a victim letter but didn't due so because they said it wasn't needed. I was not informed of court dates.

**SESSION GROUP**

- o Good program.
- o System is very cumbersome. Victims must jump through too many hoops. Too much paper work.
- o Don't know all I've received were letters no personal contact.
- o They should be forced to pay restitution much sooner as we have yet to receive ? from our offender.
- o Receive more information about status of case without having to call probation dept and sometimes wait days for a response.
- o As a school this is a strange question to answer. The victim part is irrelevant. The need for students to be accountable supports our program.
- o It would have to depend on the crime. But yes victim's should be involved.
- o What type of involvement are we talking about? What is the job of the probation dept? Citizens shouldn't be responsible for the dept.
- o Victims should be reimbursed according to order by court and made to do it. Or other judgments should be put on him. To make him responsible.

- o We like to know what's happening with our case in plain terms as it unfolds.

**\*\*HOW HAS PROBATION BEEN LEAST HELPFUL?\*\*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o By follow up with the victim.
- o This is the first time, I've ever heard a report from them on any crime ever reported.
- o Not providing follow up on status of offenders.
- o By paying me my restitution.
- o Maintaining consistent payments by offenders.
- o I would like to have been more kept up to date on progress of the offender's status as they are going through the criminal justice system.
- o I'm not sure I only received 2 letters so far.
- o Telling me about payment plan and actual dates I will receive payments, also I have never heard about this "civil judgment."
- o Did not keep me informed of the status of the case and did not initially inform me of all the possibilities for receiving money do me.
- o Providing current information.
- o Not keeping me informed!
- o It has not helped in any of the three cases that we prosecuted.
- o Personally I feel that it was a forgotten matter until I called-everything moves to slowly.
- o Keeping me aware of my situation ex. payment schedule.
- o Didn't send me a copy of offenders sentence.
- o They never informed me that person had been caught.
- o The person that wrote this bad check has a job. I guess I feel there should be a way to get this money from this person.



## SESSION GROUP

- o Bringing the two people to trial. 1 adult and 1 child.
- o It seems that "follow through" by corrections dept. is lax.
- o Never heard from them after one call.
- o No information about if I get my money. When do I get it all. Just bunch of papers for all.
- o No contact.
- o Helping fulfill restitution requirements.
- o No direct contact.
- o Outcome could have been forward to me.
- o I have had very little contact with the probation department.
- o No restitution yet.
- o I haven't received my money and it has been six months.
- o Very limited contact-I can't find out what has happened to the criminal.
- o I was not compensated for my time for repairs, loss of auto, or new connections.
- o Keeping me informed on status of restitution claim.
- o Sent me some \$, and were marginally helpful with my questions.
- o Not enough information released-hard to contact.
- o Getting my money.
- o Very hard to get to contact persons.
- o Not really disseminating information to us as a retailer in regard to sentencing & probation of the offenders.
- o They argued with me about the damages because I didn't keep receipts and did the repair myself.
- o None.

- o Letting me know what is going on. One agency tells me that they can not give me the names of the offenders, the next day I received in the mail from Dakota lawyers the names. I wish everyone went by the same story. I also was sent a letter from the offenders with a number to call if there was any question. I called and wanted to talk to the lady who signed it and she had no idea what I was talking about. If more information or names was needed I can look them up for you.
- o No contact with them.
- o Nothing has happened.
- o Know my rights.
- o We weren't sure if all 3 of the boys got sentences. We wondered if they were sent away or still living in our neighborhood. We didn't know if they'd been ordered to pay restitution and the amount we asked for our deductible.
- o Keeping me informed-for all I know its over & she has gotten away with money that's rightfully mine.
- o Not been keeping up to date, not being able to be present when changes are made.

**\*\*HOW HAS PROBATION BEEN MOST HELPFUL?\*\*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o None.
- o Information is usually available if I call & locate the right person to talk to.
- o Sent me 2 letters.
- o Getting restitution payments to me promptly.
- o They have at least told me he was caught and that he was convicted.
- o I'm not sure I only received two letters so far.
- o Sending me updates about what is going on in this case.
- o Unsure.
- o They haven't been helpful.

- o I finally received some money for the crime from 2 of the 3 assailants.
- o (none)-We were never in contact until I called to find out about sentencing and restitution.
- o Let me know that you were taking care of it and also working with the juveniles who did this.
- o Have not!
- o Letting me know that the offender owed me restitution.
- o The police were very helpful in telling me all my rights.
- o Not at all.
- o The actual prosecution of the offender.

**SESSION GROUP**

- o Kept me somewhat informed.
- o Kept us informed.
- o Very nice, understanding, lots of letters.
- o Have received restitution in a few cases.
- o None!
- o Got \$100-\$250 owed-don't know if person is on probation or how long to pay
- o None.
- o Answering questions.
- o Collecting the money owed.
- o No direct contact.
- o Kept me informed-didn't realize I'd get money until I got it.
- o Very little.
- o Kept me informed & that you were working with the juveniles who did this.
- o Very little so far-we're tired of waiting for action to enforce restitution.

- o The brat wrote an apology and that was all right.
- o When I am contacted, are cooperative and try to answer questions if allowed.
- o I received a letter of apology from the offender.
- o Not anything noteworthy as a crime victim.
- o Helpful when we collaborate.
- o Haven't really been terribly helpful.
- o Info in form of letters.
- o Telling me my rights as a crime victim.
- o Seems to be trying to track progress of case etc.
- o Cannot recall any help needed.
- o Told me how I could get my money back.
- o By offering to make the criminal pay me.
- o The company I work which was the actual victim was paid restitution promptly.
- o Notified me of the judgment against the offender.
- o Checking on my case and the status of the restitution I did find someone at the S. St. Paul court house very helpful but I am not sure this individual was with the probation department.
- o None.
- o No contact with them.
- o Nothing has happened.
- o Good phone contacts-evenings.
- o Telling us the date of the trial. Informing us of night meetings where we could learn more about us.
- o Not!

**\*\*HOW COULD PROBATION BE MORE HELPFUL?\*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o Follow up calls and not treat the victim like he was the offender.
- o More contact.
- o Advise us when offender is not making timely payments & help in obtain civil judgments.
- o Keep me informed monthly until everything is over-in writing.
- o Maintaining consistent payments by offenders.
- o I would like to have been more kept up to date on progress of the offender's status as they are going through the criminal justice process.
- o Call before sentencing to hear our side.
- o Payment plan & somehow make it certain that I will get all of the money he owes me so I can fix up my car again the way it was before!
- o Again, keep better contact & inform victims of all rights in writing!
- o To provide us with information regarding the collection of restitution payment. We have no payment schedule- We are getting no response at all as to our rights.
- o Not keeping me informed.
- o Contact the victims!
- o You were very good for both parties.
- o Be tougher on offender - seems we even have to be careful to use the "PC" and not even call them what they are "criminals."
- o Keeping involved, ie. contacting me every few weeks to see if I have any questions.
- o Send a copy of offenders sentence.
- o I'm not really sure.

## SESSION GROUP

- o Bringing the two people to trial. 1 adult and 1 child.
- o Follow through, follow through, follow through.
- o Keep in contact.
- o Got \$100-\$250 owed-don't know if person is on probation or how long to pay.
- o Personal contact.
- o Get restitution.
- o Give assistance to crime victims for restitution of monies, etc.
- o Keep us informed as we have had to keep calling to find out offender status.
- o Tell me when I am getting my money.
- o With our current laws, I feel they do all they can. The criminal seems to have more rights than the victim.
- o I don't know what sentence the offender received or even if he served it.
- o Inform me of offender's punishment and time from when I could expect restitution.
- o Informing me of the status of my case.
- o Enough staff so you can talk to someone-not a answering machine.
- o See that the offender is punished and help get me all the money that is owed to me.
- o Send them to Singapore.
- o Inform us when all cases go to court and the outcome-could be done by postcard.
- o Not really disseminating information to us as a retailer in regard to sentencing and probation of the offenders.
- o Keep us informed.
- o Making the criminal send me the money.
- o When asking for damages the probation officer made me feel like a victim again by arguing about the amount of

damages.

- o Follow through with court to make sure offender does what was ordered.
- o Contact, communication.
- o Keep the thieves feet to the fire so they see the impact of their wrong doings.
- o We could not make the meeting. Perhaps literature to read at home.
- o Keep me informed-start help sooner-we were questioned so late we could not remember details about car, etc.

**\*\*ADDITIONAL COMMENTS\*\***

**CONTROL GROUP**

- o Do your job as instructed by court and not cut corners.
- o I'm sure they do a good job, however, I would like status update occasionally.
- o When restitution is not paid under terms of probation, the offender should be jailed and not let off the hook.
- o The victim should be kept informed of what is going on with the offenders. We should all know when the offender is released. Thank you!
- o I must say that it was nice to have at least received this form. It gave me, as a victim, a chance to let someone know how frustrating it is to be a victim-no one-from the time the accident happened-seemed to care about what happened to the other parties in the accident. No one volunteered any information or offered assistance in the process.
- o Lack of any contact shows that there is no concern for the victim.
- o Thank you for working with young people getting into trouble & making them responsible for their actions.

- o Treat these small crimes as you would any crime with appropriate jail time & restitution, this may give the offender something else to think about before they do it again maybe a weekend in jail for 0-100 dollar check 2 weekends for 100-200 and so on-not only that but they should be made to pay for their stay at the jail also instead of the tax payer.

#### SESSION GROUP

- o Took too long to go to trial and get restitution.
- o Someone within government should be assigned the task of recovering restitution. Suffering a loss is bad enough but having to chase after the criminal for restitution is an insult. The fees outlined for sheriff services and others are only recoverable if the criminal has money. If the system wants me to pursue restitution on my own why not let me punish the offender as well?
- o Real pain to fill out more forms-would like my money-not here to fill out papers.
- o WHAT A JOKE NOTHING DONE FOR OVER 1 1/2 YEARS.
- o It's no help to me to be told the offender completed the probation period without paying the court ordered restitution and now I can go after subject civilly, If restitution is a part of probation, why release the subject without fulfillment of the court order?
- o Assure offender recalls the consequence for the crime committed.
- o Thanks for working with young people getting in trouble & making them responsible for their actions.
- o We're tired of having to wait for restitution for our stolen lawn mower especially since the offender admitted stealing it many months ago.
- o Only because I know they are over loaded w/cases I feel they simply don't have enough time to do all expected.
- o I think the probation dept. has quite a challenge ahead of them considering the attitudes of troubled youth in todays society.
- o Institutions may require a different kind of response.
- o I stress the money because this happened almost a year ago I had \$900 or so in damages and I've only received \$125.  
Thank You!



- o Typical case of slapping his hand so he doesn't do his responsibility-he's off again to do whatever crime he wants cause he'll know he'll not have to pay for his crime EVER. Typical case of the government action written by the civil rights attorneys who are more interested in protecting the rights of the "hoodlum" rather than the hard working, tax paying citizen, who pays through the nose for the GUILTY and the government system and attorneys who protect the rights of the guilty with no feelings for the rights of the victims  
THIS IS NOT A MONETARY ISSUE THIS IS A JUSTICE ISSUE.
- o The system seems like it would be good if they had a way of making sure that their program was followed & punishment given if not followed.
- o We had 2 complaints with the dept. We get sheets of paper with no specific info-names whited out & we do not have a clue as to which complaint it is they are writing us about!!!

## ASSISTING CRIME VICTIMS

### Frequently Called Numbers

#### Courthouse:

Apple Valley	891-7256
Hastings	438-8100
So. St. Paul	451-1791

#### Probation Offices:

Apple Valley	891-7200
Hastings	438-8288
So. St. Paul	552-0276

#### Crime Victims Reparations Board (Financial Help)

642-0395

#### Crime Victim Ombudsman

(Violations of Victims Rights)

642-0397

#### Citizens Council Victim Service

340-5400

#### Emergency Assistance For Food,

#### Shelter, Clothing, Finances,

#### Transportation:

Community Action Council	431-2112
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Neighbors	455-1508
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Hastings Family Service	437-7134
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#### B. Robert Lewis House

(Services For Battered Women & Children)

Eagan	452-7488
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Inver Grove Heights	457-0707
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Sexual Assault Services	431-2112
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Crisis Nursery	435-5585
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Dakota County Social Services	891-7400
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Dakota County Crisis Response Unit	891-1414
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Dakota County Help Line	891-2424
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## DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

### ASSISTING

### CRIME

### VICTIMS



Victim Information Program

We exist to enhance  
restoration.

To the victim, the  
sense of justice.

To the community,  
the feeling of safety  
and protection.

To the offender, the  
ability to lead a  
productive life.

To all, dignity and  
self respect.

Any questions please contact:

Mary Jo Rowe - 612-891-7226

Scott Lorenz - 612-891-7152

www310.wprk.com

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Any questions please contact:  
Mary Jo Rowe - 12-191-7226  
Scott Lorenz - 12-191-7152

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### Frequently Called Numbers

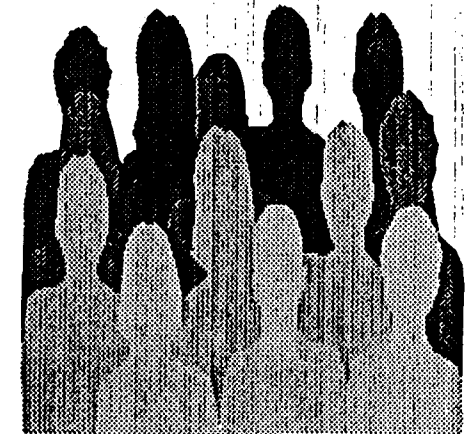
<u>Courthouse:</u>	
Apple Valley	891-7256
Hastings	438-8100
So. St. Paul	451-1791
<u>Probation Offices:</u>	
Apple Valley	891-7200
Hastings	438-8288
So. St. Paul	552-0276
<u>Crime Victims Reparations Board</u> (Financial Help)	
	642-0395
<u>Crime Victim Ombudsman</u> (Violations of Victims Rights)	
	642-0397
<u>Citizens Council Victim Service</u>	
	340-5400
<u>Emergency Assistance For Food, Shelter, Clothing, Finances, Transportation:</u>	
Community Action Council	431-2112
Neighbors	455-1508
Hastings Family Service	437-7134
B. Robert Lewis House (Services For Battered Women & Children)	
Eagan	452-7488
Inver Grove Heights	457-0707
Sexual Assault Services	431-2112
Crisis Nursery	435-5585
Dakota County Social Services	891-7400
Dakota County Crisis Response Unit	891-1414
Dakota County Help Line	891-2424

## DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

ASSISTING

CRIME

VICTIMS



Victim Information Program

YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM OF CRIME IN MINNESOTA

**You have the right:**

- \* To support and accurate information.
- \* To be free from intimidation.
- \* To be assisted by your criminal justice agencies.
- \* To expect a minimum of time and inconvenience to you as a victim or witness.
- \* To be told about available compensation for court appearances.
- \* To be told about all available help from Social Services or volunteer agencies.

**You have the right to be notified of:**

- \* Plea agreements.
- \* Changes in court schedules, date, time and place of sentencing.
- \* Release of offender from prison or institution. You must request such notification from the Commissioner of Corrections, or the administration of the prison or institution.
- \* Victim Rights.

**You have the right to participate in prosecution:**

- \* Right to inform court of impact of crime at pre-trial and sentencing in person or in writing.
- \* Right to have input in pre-trial diversion program.
- \* Right to object to plea agreement.
- \* Right to request speedy trial.
- \* Right to bring supportive person to pre-trial hearing.
- \* Right to attend sentencing.
- \* Right to give written objections to sentence.

**You have the right to protection from harm:**

- \* Tampering with a witness is against Minnesota law.
- \* Witnesses do not have to state their addresses in court.
- \* Victims have the right to a separate, secure waiting area during court.
- \* Employers may not discipline or dismiss victims or witnesses who are called to testify in court.

**You have the right to financial assistance:**

- \* Victims may be eligible for financial assistance from the state if they have suffered economic loss.
- \* Victims may request restitution - monies which the offender may be ordered to pay as part of his or her penalty.

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