If Your Loved One with Autism is the Victim of a Crime

If your loved one with autism spectrum disorders is the victim of a crime, you may want to work with your local chapter of the Autism Society or other autism or disability support groups to develop partnerships, offer basic training on autism, and assist victim assistance organizations in developing and enhancing services for individuals with ASD and other disabilities.

AUTISM SOCIETY

4340 East-West Highway, Suite 350
Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3067
Phone: 301.657.0881 or 1.800.3AUTISM
Fax: 301.657.0869
Web: www.autism-society.org

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RESOURCES

Crime Victim Organizations
- Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice 1-800-851-3420 - www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/
- National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC) 1-800-394-2255 - www.ncvc.org/
- National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) 1-800-879-6682 - www.trynova.org/
- Childhelp USA National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-442-4453 - www.childhelp.org/
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 - www.ndvh.org/
- National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 1-800-537-2238 - www.nrcdv.org/
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) 1-800-656-4673 - www.rainn.org/

Autism and Crime
- Autism Society - 1-800-3AUTISM www.autism-society.org/safeandsound
- Find local resources for victims of crime at Autism Source®, the Autism Society's on-line referral database www.autismsource.org
- Disability, Abuse & Personal Rights Project www.disability-abuse.com
- LEAN (Law Enforcement Awareness Network) on Us www.leanonus.org
- Autism Risk and Safety Management www.autismriskmanagement.com

If you appreciated the information contained in this publication please consider offering support through a donation that will continue the availability of this information to others in need. Help us continue the work so vital to the autism community by making a tax-deductible donation at www.autism-society.org/donate-home.
CRIME VICTIMS’ SERVICES

In every state there are programs that provide services for crime victims. If you are unfamiliar with what resources are available to your loved one, you may want to contact your state’s Victim Assistance Program. These programs address the crisis needs of victimized individuals and families by working with a network of community-based services. They may be able to assist your loved one through the availability of such services as a 24-hour Hotline, crisis intervention, shelter, individual and group counseling, abuser interventions, legal assistance, medical accompaniment, court accompaniment, and information and referral. Using the victim assistance network, the Victim Assistance Program will also try to assist you in finding victim assistance providers with some knowledge of autism. In many communities, especially those in rural areas, a victim assistance organization may want to partner with a disability organization to provide services to your loved one. Given that your loved one may have particular challenges in processing and communicating their experience, it is especially important to involve someone familiar with the autism spectrum.

In addition to assistance services, programs throughout the country also assist with compensation for crime victims by reimbursing them for expenses incurred as a result of a crime. Crimes covered include homicide, rape, drunk driving, domestic violence, and child sexual abuse and neglect. Expenses covered include medical costs, mental health counseling, etc. Individuals with ASD may require specialized counseling and support services beyond the scope of those needed by a crime victim without a disability, and victim’s compensation may be able to assist with the expense.

For assistance finding your state’s Victim Assistance and Compensation Programs, call the federal Office for Victims of Crime at 1-800-851-3420 (TTY 1-877-712-9279). The Office for Victims of Crime also has an online resource directory available at www.ovc.gov/help/links.htm.

WORKING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The expertise of crime victim assistance organizations regarding autism spectrum disorders varies widely from community to community. As someone who cares about an individual with autism, you may wish to volunteer your time and knowledge to provide your local victim assistance organizations with a greater understanding of what autism is and how to best serve individuals on the spectrum. An individual’s ability to move forward after being a crime victim, as well as the state’s ability to prosecute the crime, may be dependent on professionals’ knowledge of autism.