



# Supporting children and young people in out-of-home care who are victims of crime

Information for caseworkers – June 2021

## Identifying that a child or young person is a victim of crime

Under the [Victims Rights and Support Act 2013](#), casework practitioners must identify and respond to the needs of children and young people in statutory care who have been victims of crime.

A victim of crime is anyone who suffers harm because of a criminal act. Harm includes having property taken, destroyed or damaged, and actual physical or psychological harm. If a child or young person has died because of a crime, their immediate family members are also considered victims of crime.

Identifying and responding to children and young people who have experienced crime acknowledges that they are particularly vulnerable because of the trauma they have suffered from the crime committed against them. It is critical to link these children and young people with services that will give them every opportunity to recover.

All children and young people who have been a victim of a crime must be treated in accordance with the [Charter of Victims Rights](#).

## Victims Support Scheme

Children and young people who have experienced harm as a result of crime may be eligible for counselling, payment for immediate needs, financial assistance or a recognition payment under the Victims Support Scheme.

## Support Services

The Victims Access Line (1800 019 123),

Aboriginal Contact Line (1800 019 123)

[Victims Services](#) website

## Casework practitioner's role

Caseworkers play a key role in helping eligible children and young people access these supports and communicate the status and outcome to children, young people and their carers.

DCJ casework practitioners must make an application to Victims Services on behalf of the child or young person in care who has experienced crime using their online [application form](#). An application can be made at any age of the child / young person's life.

It is also important to refer all young people in statutory OOHC for a Legal Audit at age 15, or as soon as possible if they are older than 15 years and have not yet had a Legal Audit, to check on any legal matters that may affect them when they leave care.



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NGO Casework practitioners should consult with their local DCJ Child and Family District Unit (CFDU) about submitting the Victims Services recommendation form or a Legal Audit referral at 15 years of age:

1. [Recommendation for application to Victims Services](#) form should be used as a checklist to prepare evidence (for example, supporting documents). This completed form then needs to be submitted to the DCJ CFDU. The CFDU will assess the child or young person's potential eligibility. A recommendation can be made at any age of the child / young person's life.
2. *Legal Audit.* Use the [NGO Referral for legal audit](#) form if the child or young person is subject to a final order of parental responsibility of the Minister of at least 2 years duration and is aged 15 years or older OR will leave care in less than 15 years e.g. Section 90 application or adoption. Young people transitioning to guardianship or adoption may be prioritised for legal audit.

Practice - remember that young people leaving care should be supported with financial literacy skills to manage and protect any recognition payment they may receive. See the factsheet [Preparing young people to receive a large sum of money](#) for practical suggestions and advice.

For more information:

- DCJ practitioners can refer to the [Supporting victims of crime mandate](#)
- NGO practitioners and PSP providers can refer to the [PCMP Rules and Practice Guidance regarding Victims of Crime](#) and [Supporting Victims of Crime Guidelines](#) for information about meeting their responsibilities towards victims of crime.