



**Part 2- Nineteenth Annual Report of  
the Victims Assistance Committee of  
the Northwest Territories**



August 26, 2008

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty  
Minister of Justice

Dear Mr. Lafferty:

On behalf of the Victims Assistance Committee, I am pleased to present Part 2 of the annual report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2008.

While Part 1 of the Victims Assistance Committee Annual Report, tabled in the spring 2008 sitting of the legislative assembly, detailed the disbursements from the Victims Assistance Fund (VAF) and the activities supported by these disbursements, Part 2 of the Victims Assistance Committee Annual Report details the activities of the NWT community-based victim services programs between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008.

This year has been marked by an exceptional level of victim services activities in the NWT. Much of this activity is due to the front-line workers and to an additional administrative position to support them.

The highlights of victim services work this year include:

- Yukon site visit and First Responders to Sexual Assault workshop in Whitehorse, Yukon, attended by almost all NWT victim services program coordinators and workers;
- Beginning of a three-year project to enhance services to victims of crime in the Beaufort Delta with related consultations in Paulatuk, Aklavik, Inuvik and Sachs Harbour, and a week-long victim services training event in Inuvik;
- Purchase of an additional 12 vulnerable-witness screens for use in court to help child and other vulnerable witnesses to give more full and complete testimony;
- A 1.5-day meeting in Fort Smith to develop a plan to provide more support to victims of crime at community justice hearings;
- A day-long victim services administrative meeting where issues such as “duty of care” were discussed with victim services sponsoring organizations; and,
- The addition of four Tłıchǫ wellness/addictions workers, whose community activities’ statistics are included in this annual report.

The Committee thanks the Minister, his Deputy, the Director of the Community Justice Division and the Department of Justice Canada’s Policy Centre for Victims Issues federal victims’ initiative for their steadfast support to the development of victim services in the NWT.

I thank the following people for their hard work in supporting and promoting the needs and concerns of victims of crime in the NWT:

- Committee members **Bridgette Larocque** and **Faye Noksana** (both of Inuvik);
- Victim Services Program Coordinators/Workers: **Carrie Lauder**, **Sara Smith** and **Jana Huismans** (Inuvik); **Nora Doig** and **Marie Speakman** (Yellowknife); **Kristen Grandjambe** (Fort Good Hope); **Jared Zeldin** (Hay River); **Tara Mooney** and **Nola Benwell** (Fort Smith); **Betty Bird** of Fort Simpson; and,
- **Victim Services volunteers** in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Smith.

Sincerely,

Nora Wedzin  
Chairperson, Victims Assistance Committee



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## VICTIM SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS 2007-2008

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In 2007-2008 local victim services coordinators/workers reported:

- 1845 clients were served, a 17% increase in the number of clients served compared with 2006-2007
- A 40.4% increase in their average monthly client caseload, compared to 2006-07
- 2606 total services provided to new and continuing clients
- 1,312 brief service contacts
- 18% more children and youth served than in 2006-2007
- 77% of new clients are victims of violence
- 53.2% of the people impacted by crime were referred to victim services by the RCMP
- A 38% increase, compared to 2006-2007, in client referrals to other agencies/services
- An 86% increase in public education activities, compared to 2006-2007
- An 84% increase in community liaisons and networking , compared to 2006-2007
- A 200% increase in media events
- 158 hours of service were provided by victim services volunteers

## VICTIM SERVICE PROGRAMS

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Since 1989, community-based victim services have helped victims of crime in the NWT.

The Government of the Northwest Territories, through the Department of Justice Community Justice Division, provides assistance, training, resources and support to community-based victim services in Inuvik, Fort Good Hope, Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Smith. **Fort Simpson Victim Services is new this year.**

The benefits of community-based victim services are:

- Victims feel comfortable accessing services through a community-based agency;
- Services are available for victims of both reported and unreported crime; and
- There is greater opportunity to develop the most appropriate victim services for the community.

### TERRITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT

Victim services offer support, assistance, information, and referrals in a courteous and compassionate manner that respects the dignity and privacy of victims of crime.

### OBJECTIVES

Victim services' objectives are to:

- Make contact with victims in a manner that expresses concern and support;
- Offer practical assistance and information;
- Liaise between police, Crown and other court personnel so current information is available to victims and procedures do not unduly inconvenience them; and
- Help victims to access the resources they need in order to deal with the effects of victimization.

This report demonstrates the work of community-based victim services in 2007-08. This year's report compares data from 2006-07 and discusses how victim services have changed.

In 2007-08, a total of 10 paid coordinators/workers and 12 volunteers provided direct services to victims of reported and unreported crime.

## Section 1: How many people used victim services?

Victim services help victims of crime. The number of clients served each month is divided into three categories: new cases, brief service contacts and cases continued from the previous month.

New cases are those with whom victim services spent substantial time and where ongoing contact was anticipated at first contact. Brief service contacts usually involve telephone contact with clients, to whom brief service was provided, but no substantial time was spent and ongoing contact was not anticipated. Cases continued from the previous month are those people victim services continued to provide services to.

Table 1.0 shows the overall use of victim services by community, type of contact and fiscal year.

In 2007-08, victim services served a total of 1845 clients, a 17% increase in the total number of clients served when compared with 2006-07. Victim services served 527 new clients, 24.3% more than in 2006-07. There was an increase of 42.1% in the number of brief service contacts in 2007-08 compared to 2006-07. Continuing cases decreased slightly by 7.1%, to 606 clients served.

**Table 1.0 Total number of clients served by community and type of contact, 2007-2008 and 2006-2007**

| Community            | Brief Service Contacts | New Clients | Continuing Cases | Total |
|----------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------|
| Fort Good Hope       | 20                     | 10          | 25               | 55    |
| Fort Smith           | 72                     | 56          | 38               | 166   |
| Hay River            | 489                    | 95          | 55               | 639   |
| Inuvik               | 15                     | 59          | 395              | 469   |
| Yellowknife          | 116                    | 307         | 93               | 515   |
| <b>Total 2007-08</b> | 712                    | 527         | 606              | 1845  |
| <b>Total 2006-07</b> | 501                    | 424         | 652              | 1577  |
| <b>Change</b>        | 42.1%                  | 24.3%       | -7.1%            | 17.0% |

**\*NOTE: 2006-2007 statistics include Fort Simpson - for which there were no reported statistics for 2007-08.**

The significant increase in the number of brief service contacts was due to the number of victim services contacts following the tragic death of an RCMP officer in Hay River in October 2007.



Table 1.1 shows the number of monthly contacts by type of contact, comparing 2007-08 to 2006-07. Including brief service contacts, the total monthly victim services caseload has increased by 40.4%. Individually, new clients have increased 26.2% and continuing contacts are up 11.5%. Overall, longer contacts have increased 17.9%. Brief service contacts have also increased by 101.5%.

**Table 1.1 Average number of monthly clients, by type of contact, 2007-08 and 2006-07**

| Year    | Longer Contacts |                  |       | Brief Contacts | Total Caseload |
|---------|-----------------|------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|
|         | New Clients     | Continuing Cases | Total | Brief Service  |                |
| 2007-08 | 8.78            | 10.10            | 18.88 | 11.87          | 30.75          |
| 2006-07 | 6.96            | 9.06             | 16.01 | 5.89           | 21.90          |
| Change  | 26.2%           | 11.5%            | 17.9% | 101.5%         | 40.4%          |

Reasons for increase in the number of clients services in 2007-08 compared to 2006 - 07 include:

- Increase in crime, especially serious violent crime. Victims of serious violent crime have extensive and long-lasting service needs.
- Increase in the number of people referred to victim services.
- Increase in brief service contacts due to the tragic death of an RCMP officer in Hay River.

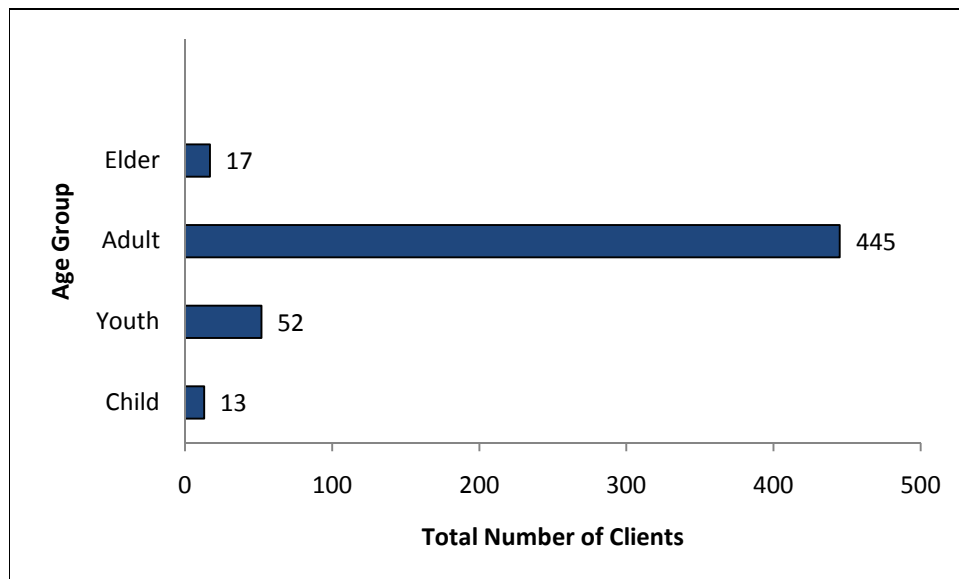
## Section 2: Who was served by victim services?

Services are provided to primary and secondary victims of both reported and unreported crime. Primary victims are the direct victims of crime, such as a female victim of spousal assault. Secondary victims may include those who live with and/or have a close relationship with the direct victim. In this example, a secondary victim could be the child of the spousal assault victim.

Victim services workers track the following information about their new clients:

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Gender and victim type (primary or secondary)
- Offence/incident type

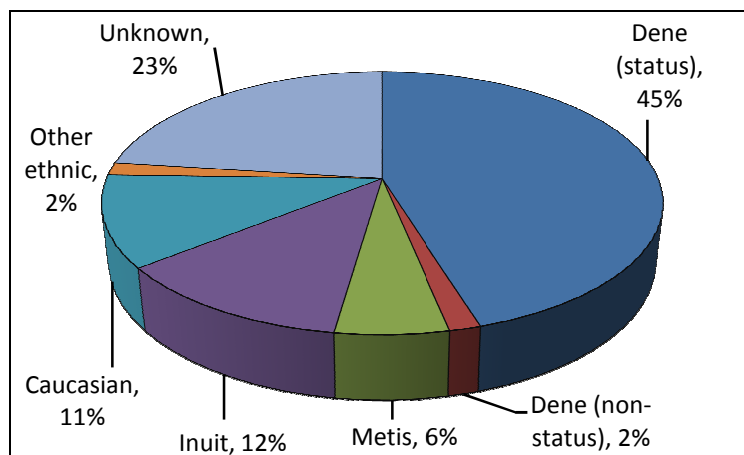
**Graph 2.0: Clients by age group, 2007-08**



- Children: birth to 11 years
- Youth: 12 to 17 years
- Adults: 18 to 64 years
- Elders/Seniors: 65 years and up

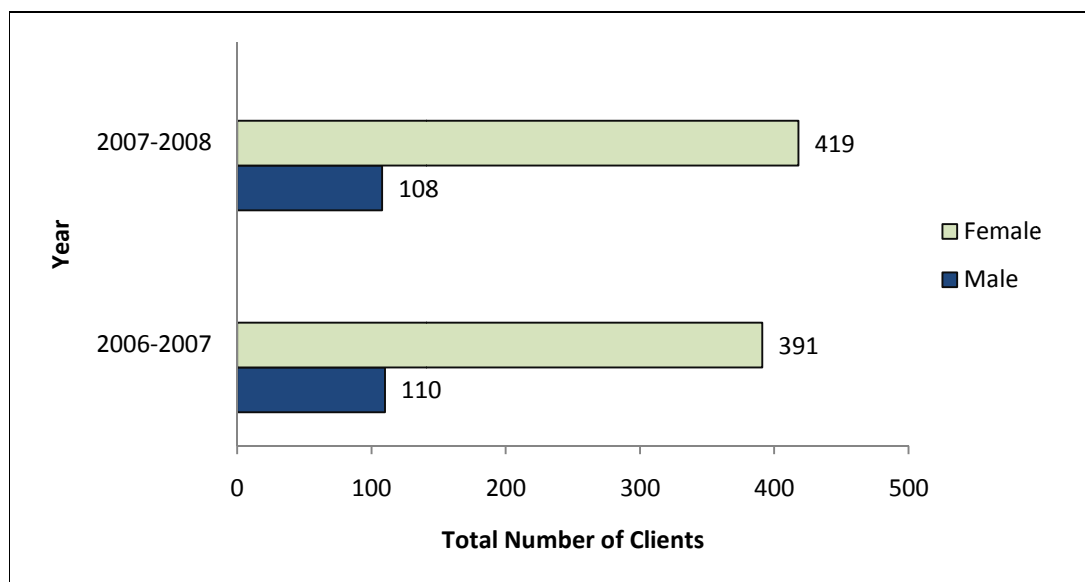
Graph 2.0 shows the number of new clients (total 526) by age category that received services during 2007-08. 445 adults (84%), 52 youth (10%), 17 elders (3%) and 13 children (2.5%) received victim services. Three out of four categories were up from 2006-2007: children and youth by 18% each, and adults by 5%; elders were down by 15%.

**Graph 2.1: Clients by ethnicity, 2007-08**



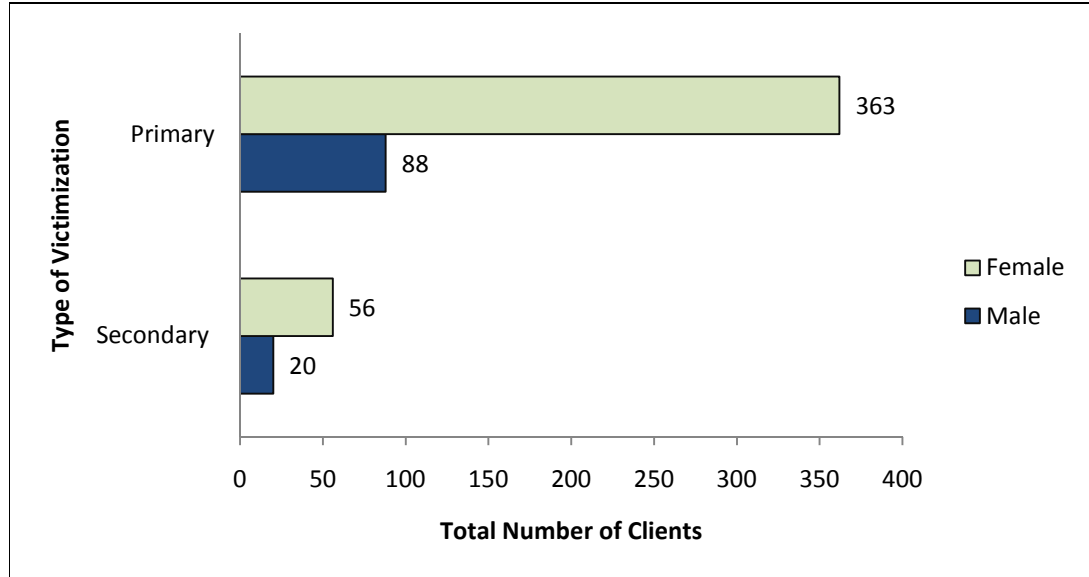
Graph 2.1 shows the 2007-2008 client base by ethnicity. The largest group of clientele are Dene (status and non-status) at 47%, followed by clients of unknown ethnicity at 23%, then Inuit clients at 12%, with Caucasian clients at 11%, Métis clientele at 6%, and clients of other ethnicity at 2%.

**Graph 2.2: Total number of clients, by gender, 2007-08**



Graph 2.2 shows 80% percent of the clients served are female and 20% are male. When comparing the statistics from 2006-07, the number of male clients decreased by 1.8% and female clients increased by 7.2%.

**Graph 2.3: Total number of clients, by type of victimization, 2007-08**

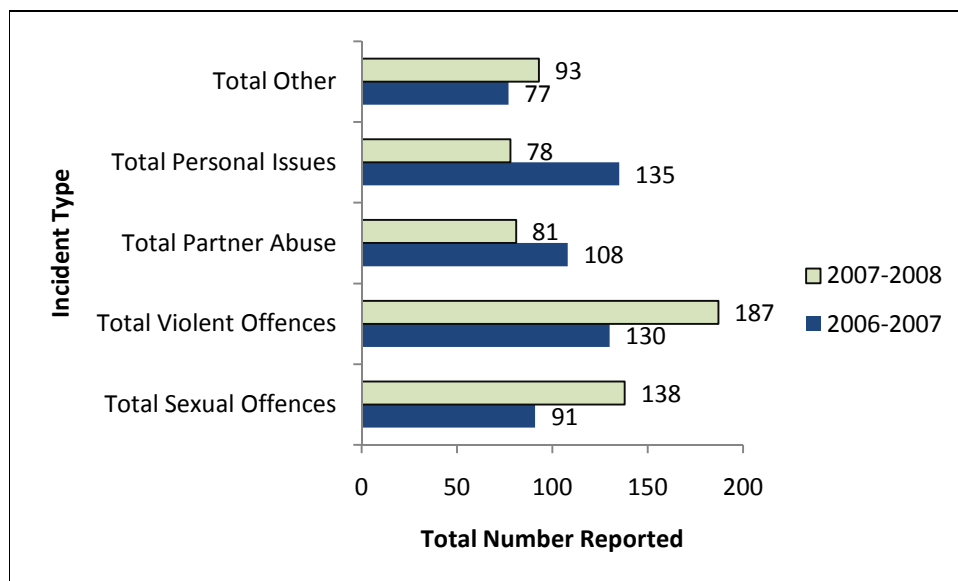


Graph 2.3 shows the following caseload breakdown of clients:

- 86% are primary victims
- 14% are secondary victims
- 69% are primary female victims
- 17% are primary male victims
- 11% are secondary female victims
- 4% are secondary male victims

The majority of the caseload involves working with people who have been directly impacted by crime, while less than one quarter of the caseload work is spent with people who either live with or are close to the direct victim.

Again, female clientele are overrepresented as both primary victims (69%) and secondary victims (11%), especially in comparison to male clientele who represent 20% of the caseload as both primary (17%) and secondary victims (4%).

**Graph 2.4: Reported offences/incidents by type, by year**

'Sexual offences' include sexual assault (child, youth and adult), attempted and aggravated sexual assault, past sexual abuse and residential school abuse.

'Violent offences' include assault, assault with a weapon, assault causing bodily harm, aggravated assault, homicide/attempted homicide, firearms offences and robbery.

'Partner abuse' includes spousal assault, spousal assault with a weapon/aggravated assault; confinement and criminal harassment (stalking).

'Personal incidents/issues' include sudden death, suicide/attempted suicide, and family difficulties/concerns.

'Other' offences include break and enter, uttering threats, civil matters and other offences.

Graph 2.4 shows a comparison of the offences/incidents by which clients were affected between 2006-07 and 2007-08. When comparing caseloads by year, there were increases in:

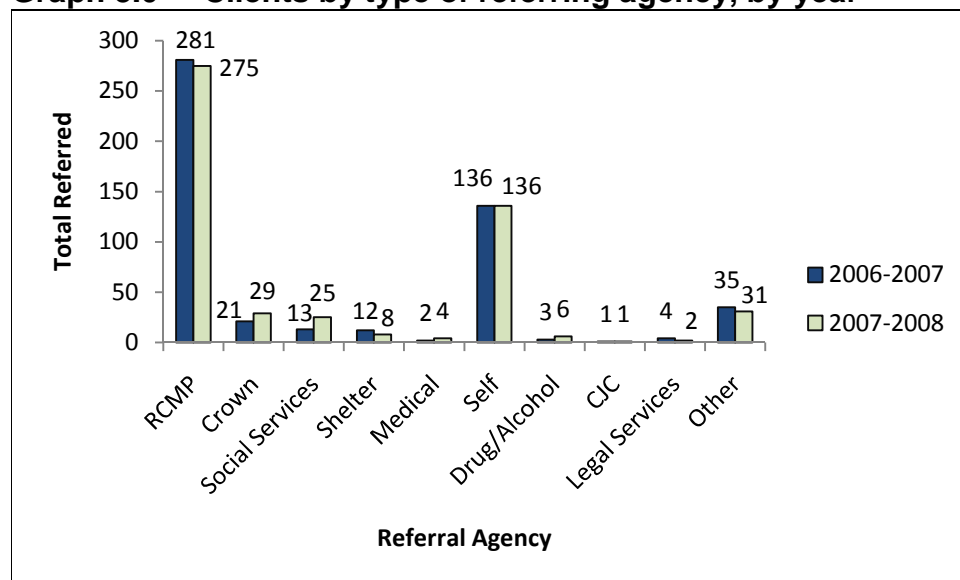
- sexual offences, by 52%
- violent offences, by 44%
- other offences, by 21%

There were decreases in:

- partner abuse, by 25%
- personal issues, by 42%

## Section 3: Who referred clients to victim services?

**Graph 3.0 Clients by type of referring agency, by year**



**NOTE:** One program did not report the source of referrals for 10 new clients

Graph 3.0 is a comparison of the number of clients referred by agency to victim services between 2007-08 and 2006-07. Overall, referrals are up by 9 units or 1.8%. There were increases in referrals from the Crown, Social Services, medical services, and drug/alcohol programs. We saw decreased referrals from the RCMP, shelters, legal services and other services; self-referrals and community justice committee referrals remained the same.

Other referral sources can include the Native Women's Training Centre, Justice, the YWCA transitional housing project, families, other victim services programs, churches, parents, friends, siblings, elders, community wellness counsellors, courts, coroner, concerned community members, victim services volunteers/advocates, crown witness coordinators, and Aurora College.

Table 3.0 shows that in 2007-08 the RCMP referred over half of all clients to victim services. For victims of reported crime, the RCMP is the primary referral agency.

**Table 3.0 Percentage of RCMP referrals to victim services by year**

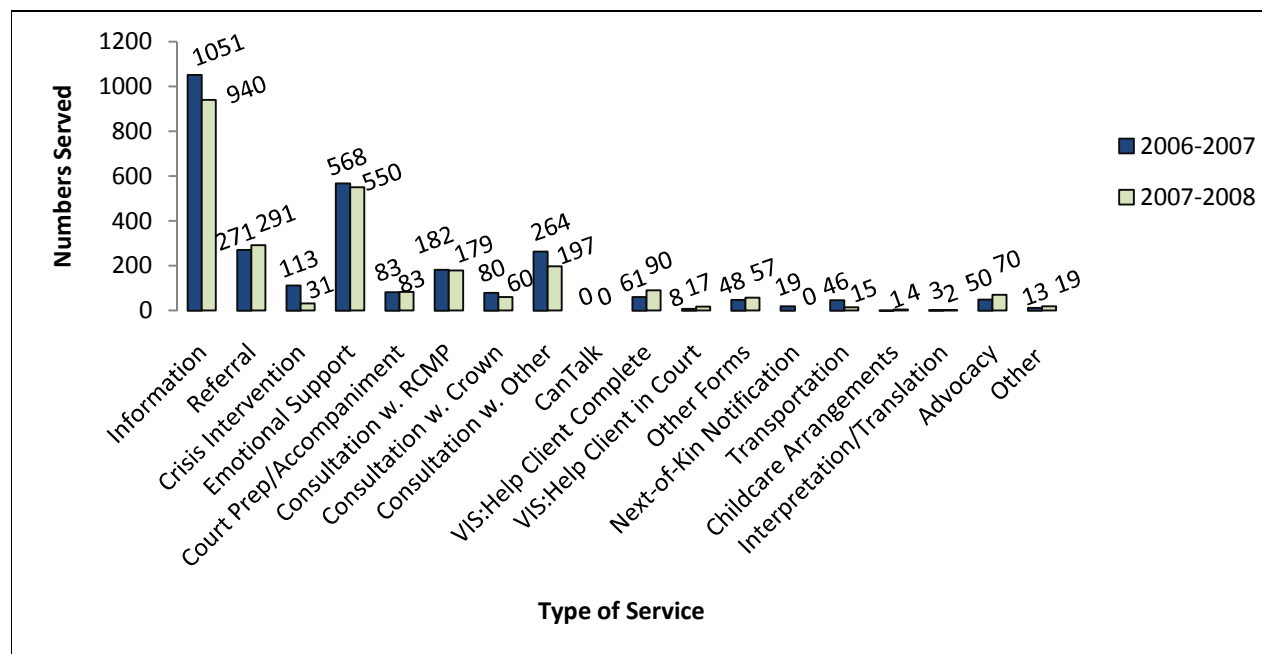
| <b>Referrals</b>                         | 2007/08 | 2006/07 | 2005/06 | 2004/05 | 2003/04 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| RCMP referrals                           | 275     | 281     | 362     | 235     | 121     |
| Total referrals                          | 517     | 508     | 597     | 475     | 278     |
| RCMP referrals as a % of total referrals | 53.2%   | 55.3%   | 60.6%   | 49.5%   | 43.5%   |

## Section 4: What kinds of victim services were delivered?

Victim services programs provided referrals, information, assistance and support to victims of crime as described in Table 4.0 below:

**Table 4.0 Services offered by victim services programs**

| Service                       | Description  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Information                   | Victim services workers provide information to clients about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The criminal justice system and processes;</li> <li>• The progress of their case;</li> <li>• The role of the police and Crown counsel;</li> <li>• The recovery of property;</li> <li>• Being a witness and what it involves; and</li> <li>• Other local resources and types of assistance available.</li> </ul> |
| Practical Assistance          | Victim services workers assist clients with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical forms, offender restitution and victim impact statements;</li> <li>• Home security checks;</li> <li>• Visiting various agencies and the courts; and</li> <li>• Arranging childcare and transportation.</li> </ul>  |
| Emotional Support             | Victim services workers help to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous emotional support from the time of first contact throughout and beyond the court process; and</li> <li>• Helping relationships as clients come to know and trust the worker and feel more comfortable expressing their feelings and concerns.</li> </ul>  |
| Court Orientation             | Victim services workers assist clients involved in the court process by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarising them with the court setting;</li> <li>• Explaining procedures, terminology and the roles of the court personnel; and</li> <li>• Accompanying clients to court when necessary.</li> </ul>   |
| Community Resources Referrals | Victim services workers refer clients to outside resources in the community providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical services;</li> <li>• Financial help or child protection;</li> <li>• Counselling or mental health services;</li> <li>• Transitional housing; and</li> <li>• Rehabilitation services</li> </ul>  |

**Graph 4.0 Services delivered by type, by year**

Between 2007-08 (total services, 2606) and 2006-07 (total services, 2861) there was a 9% decrease in the total number of services provided to new and ongoing clients.

Of the 18 service categories, service in nine categories decreased, seven increased and two stayed the same.

The services most frequently delivered, as a percentage of total services provided, include:

- Information, at 36% (940)
- Emotional support, at 21% (550)
- Referrals, at 11% (291)
- Consultations with others, at 8% (197)
- Consultations with the RCMP, at 7% (179)

In 2007-08, victim service providers reported assisting clients to complete 90 victim impact statements (VIS) and there were 17 incidents where they provided VIS assistance in court. This contributed positively to the total number of victim impact statements submitted to the NWT Courts during 2007/08.



Table 4.0 shows the number of victim impact statements filed with the NWT Courts, by registry and year, including 2007/08.

**Table 4.0 Victim Impact Statements filed with NWT Courts, by registry and year**

| Victim Impact Statements Filed with NWT Court Registries |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |       |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
|  | 2001-02 | 2002-03 | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | TOTAL |
| <b>Yellowknife</b>                                       | 63      | 64      | 68      | 81      | 64      | 78      | 41      | 459   |
| <b>Hay River</b>   | 52      | 21      | 62      | 55      | 54      | 48      | 37      | 329   |
| <b>Inuvik</b>  | 65      | 59      | 72      | 41      | 19      | 17      | 27      | 300   |
| <b>Total</b>   | 180     | 144     | 202     | 177     | 137     | 143     | 105     | 1088  |

Another important aspect of victim services is brief service contacts. A brief service contact is normally made via telephone, where a victim services worker does not anticipate on-going contact. Victim service workers note the type of brief service that is provided and record it under three categories: information, referral and/or support. One, two, or all three types of service can be provided during the course of one brief service contact.

In 2007-08, brief service contacts increased by 42.1% when compared with 2006-07. This is due, in large part, to the tragic death of an RCMP officer in Hay River, which is reflected in the extremely high brief service contacts in this community. The total number of brief service contacts increased in Yellowknife (by 52.7%), Inuvik (by 15.4%) and Hay River (by 205.6%) when compared with 2006-07; while there were decreases in the number of brief service contacts in Fort Smith (by 11.1%) and Fort Good Hope (by 47.2%). Table 4.1 shows the types of services provided to brief service contacts in 2007-08.

**Table 4.1 Types of Brief Service Contacts, by type, 2007-08**

| Types of Brief Service Contacts |             |          |         |       |
|---------------------------------|-------------|----------|---------|-------|
|                                 | Information | Referral | Support | Total |
| Yellowknife                     | 103         | 57       | 38      | 198   |
| Fort Smith                      | 51          | 20       | 18      | 88    |
| Fort Good Hope                  | 16          | 0        | 16      | 32    |
| Inuvik                          | 15          | 1        | 9       | 25    |
| Hay River                       | 400         | 174      | 395     | 969   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | 585         | 252      | 476     | 1312  |

## Section 5: How satisfied are victims of crime with victim services?

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At some point in the helping relationship, crime victims are asked to complete a victim feedback questionnaire. The questionnaire asks for feedback on a range of services and the result of these services, including a series of questions about victim impact statements. Questionnaire feedback is used to help improve services to victims of crime.

In 2007-08, completed Victim Feedback Questionnaires revealed the following:

Those who completed the questionnaires heard about victim services by being from the same community, through other professionals such as police, counsellors, newspaper ads and through community outreach.

The questionnaire respondents had been impacted by a variety of incidents including spousal assault/threats, break and enter, arson, and family law issues.

Respondents received between three and eight out of a possible 11 services. And on a scale of 1 – 5, with one being least helpful, three being somewhat helpful and five being very helpful, the respondents' average satisfaction with service rating ranged from 3.875 to 5. The victim services clients surveyed found the services they received to be very helpful.

On a similar satisfaction rating scale, respondents were completely satisfied with how easy victim services were to contact. Their satisfaction level was 4.75, or somewhat satisfied with how comfortable victim services staff made them feel. They were completely satisfied with how staff kept their information confidential and their satisfaction level was 4.75 or somewhat satisfied with how services were suited to their individual needs.

Eighty percent of respondents said that victim services support helped a lot to make it easier to deal with their situation, while 20% said that victim services helped a little to make it easier to deal with their situation. Only 20% of the respondents surveyed spoke to a victim services volunteer, but here it was reported that the victim services volunteer helped a lot.

When asked to suggest at least one way could do things better to improve services, respondents suggested: *“more advertising to assist others”* and *“more things to read”*.

When asked what part of the service was most valuable, respondents replied with the following comments: *“someone available to listen and advise with good information”*, *“advocacy by the program coordinator”*, *“getting a lot of information and feeling hopeful that things would work out...I feel safe again”*, *“victim services did not give up”*.

The respondents' level of satisfaction with victim services support ranged from three, or somewhat satisfied, to five, or completely satisfied, with an average rating of 3.4, or satisfied.

Of the respondents whose situations warranted being informed of their right to complete a victim impact statement, 75% of respondents were informed by the RCMP of their right to complete a victim impact statement, while 25% were not advised.

One hundred percent of the respondents whose situations provided an opportunity submit victim impact statements, did so. Seventy-five percent of these respondents received help from victim services to complete their victim impact statement, while 25% of respondents did not receive help to complete their victim impact statement.

We asked respondents how helpful they found the victim impact statement guide, which is attached to the victim impact statement form. Seventy-five percent of the respondents found the guide *"neither helpful nor unhelpful"*, while 25% of the respondents said they found it *"quite helpful"*. There were no suggestions for how the guide could be improved.

One hundred percent of the respondents surveyed submitted their victim impact statement for use in court. Of those victim impact statements submitted, half were used in court, while 25% were either not used or the respondent did not know at the time of the survey if their victim impact statements had been used in court.

In rating how satisfied they were with the victim impact statement as a way to express the impact of crime, 50% of the respondents were *"very satisfied"*, while 25% were either *"quite satisfied"* or *"neither satisfied nor dissatisfied"*. When asked to explain in more detail, the reasons for their level of satisfaction with victim impact statements as a way to express the impacts of the crime, respondents replied with the following comments:

- *"Through writing it down, I felt a lot better and (with) someone reading it, could possibly get a better understanding";*
- *"It helped me organize my thoughts and motivated me to make a safety plan and try to move on";*
- *"Sentence was too lenient so feels it was a waste of time, in a way"; and,*
- *"Feel listened to by the court".*

When asked if they knew what a victim impact statement was before they came to victim services, 50% of the respondents said yes and 50% said no. None of the 50% of respondents who knew about victim impact statements before they came to victim services knew that all victims are allowed to complete a victim impact statement. Only half of this same group of respondents knew before they came to victim services that a victim impact statement is used at sentencing. None of these people knew before they came to victim services that a victim impact statement can not recommend a particular sentence. Only half of the respondents had ever seen ads or publicity about victim

impact statements. Those that did see victim impact statement publicity reported they had no influence on their decision to complete a victim impact statement.

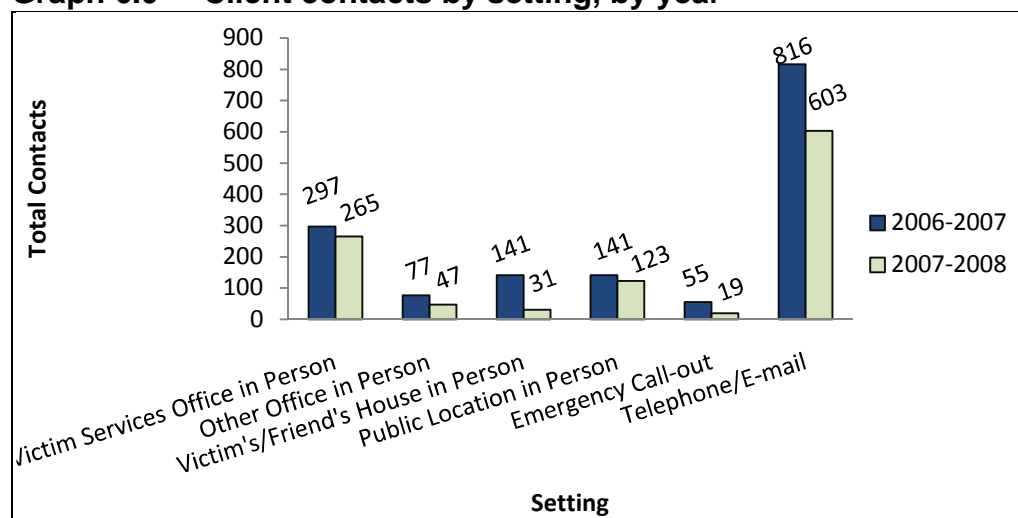
Clearly, direct contact with victim services seems to be the most effective way of providing information about victim impact statements.

## Section 6: In what settings were victim services provided?

Victim services can be provided in different settings. Services can be provided out of a victim services office, in a public location like a courtroom or through home visits in victims' homes. Frequently, services are provided over the telephone, especially in cases where clients live in communities where there are no dedicated victim services programs.

Graph 6.0 shows the number of client contacts by setting and year, comparing 2007-08 to 2006-07.

**Graph 6.0 Client contacts by setting, by year**



In 2007-08 there were a total of 1,088 client contacts compared to 1,527 in 2006-07. This represents a 29% decrease in client contacts between 2007-08 and 2006-07. All contact methods decreased in 2007-08: the total number of in-person contacts decreased by 35%, emergency call-outs decreased by 65% and telephone and e-mail contact decreased by 26%.

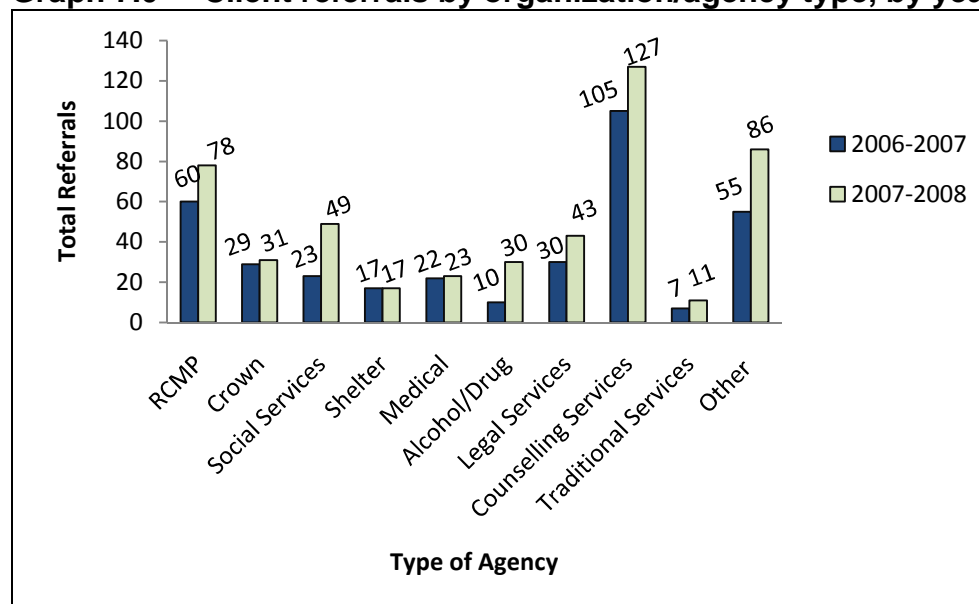
With basically the same number of victim services workers in 2007-08 as in 2006-07, serving a greater number of clients, there are correspondingly fewer opportunities to contact each client. Victim service providers' time is also taken up with other duties, such as community activities (see Section 8 of this report), which increased substantially in 2007-08 compared to 2006-07.

However, the most likely explanation for the decrease in the number of client contacts is that the frequency of client contact is underreported. Additionally, trained and experienced victim services workers are likely becoming more efficient and effective in their work.

## Section 7: To what other organizations and agencies were victims of crime referred?

Referring crime victims to other programs and services that can help them is a very important role for victim services workers. For example, to help victims cope with the psychological impact of violent crime, victim services can refer crime victims to other agencies/service providers for counselling. The majority of referrals are client-driven.

**Graph 7.0 Client referrals by organization/agency type, by year**



Overall, referrals of clients to other services have increased by 137, or 38%, since 2006-07. Nine out of ten categories saw an increase in referrals and one category (shelters) stayed the same.

The agencies to which there was an increase in referrals between 2006-07 and 2007-08 are: referrals to the RCMP by 30%, to the Crown by 7%, to medical services by 5%, to legal services by 43%, to counselling services by 21%, to traditional services by 57%, and to other services by 56%.

The most dramatic increases were seen in referrals to Social Services, which increased by 113% and to drug and alcohol services, which increased by 300%.

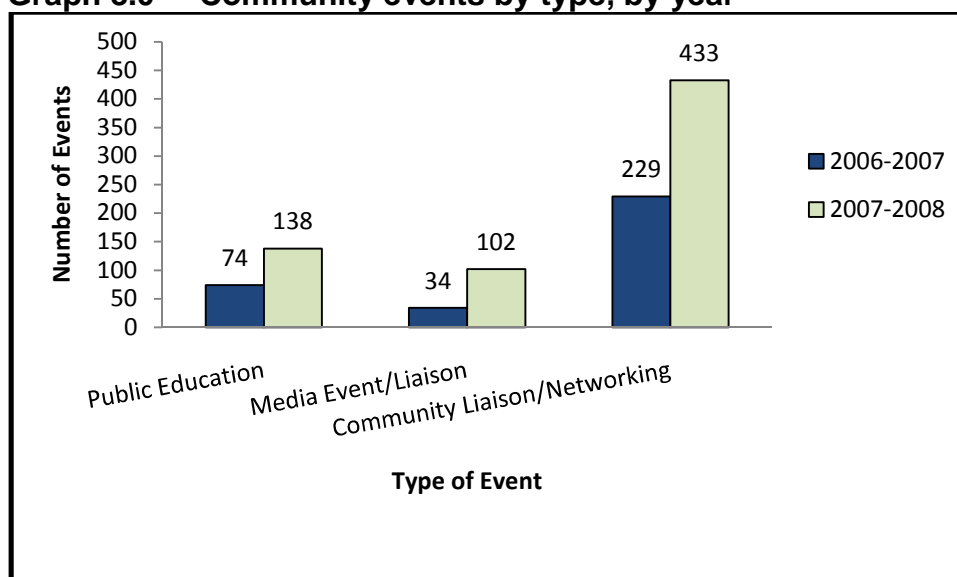
Other services referrals can include referrals to funeral directors, housing, Seniors Society, income support, parenting after separation support, NWT courts, emergency protection order application, other victim services, mental health, the Council for Persons with Disabilities, Human Rights Commission Advocate, the YWCA or Crime Stoppers.

## Section 8: In what types of community activities were victim services involved?

In addition to providing direct services to victims of crime, victim services also participate in community activities. Community activities include public education, media events and acting as a community liaison or networking. The goal of community activities is to improve the coordination and delivery of services to victims of crime.

Through community activities, victim services can work with others to build processes, structures and protocols to better serve victims of crime. These activities can also serve to increase awareness about victims' needs and concerns. Victim services engage with other professionals such as the RCMP, the Crown, and social workers in community activities with the aim of improving the coordination and the delivery of services to victims of crime.

**Graph 8.0 Community events by type, by year**



Graph 8.0 compares the number of community activities in 2007-08 to 2006-07. We saw an increase in all forms of community activities. Public education activities increased by 86% or 64 activities; similarly, community liaison and networking activities increased 84% (192 activities). The number of media events in which victim services participated rose by 200% (68 activities).

The relationship between community activities and the number of victims served is clear: the more other professionals know about victim services as a result of community activities, the more likely they are to refer clients impacted by crime to victim services.

Additionally, by changing public attitudes through public education about victims of crime needs and concerns, community response to victims of crime changes from “victim blaming” to “victim supporting”.

Victim services engaged in a diverse range of community activities during 2007-08.

In 2007-08 Inuvik Victim Services used the National Victims of Crime Awareness Week (NVOCAW), April 13 – 19, 2008 to focus their awareness raising, public education and media events activities. Building on the NVOCAW theme of *“Finding the Way Together”* Inuvik Victim Services held a community luncheon at Ingamo Hall, set up an information booth at two local locations, submitted an editorial about victims of crime to News North, and were interviewed by CBC radio about NVOCAW and about the role of victim services in the community. Spring saw Inuvik Victim Services busy with the Inuvik Youth Centre, coordinating camping and canoeing trips for young women aged 12 – 17 years.

Fort Good Hope produced and distributed a series of community newsletters featuring new information about the needs of people who have been impacted by crime and tragedy.

On July 15, 2007, Yellowknife Victim Services, in cooperation with the Native Women’s Association of the NWT, sponsored the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *“Journey for Change”* walk from Yellowknife to Behchokò. Sixty people walked over 100 kilometres to raise awareness on violence against aboriginal women. Upon their arrival in Behchokò, weary walkers were greeted by Tłıchǫ leaders. Yellowknife Victim Services used the Arctic Winter Games in March 2008 as an opportunity to raise awareness about and funds for victim services. For three days running, they held stew and bannock luncheons with the AWG Cultural Events.

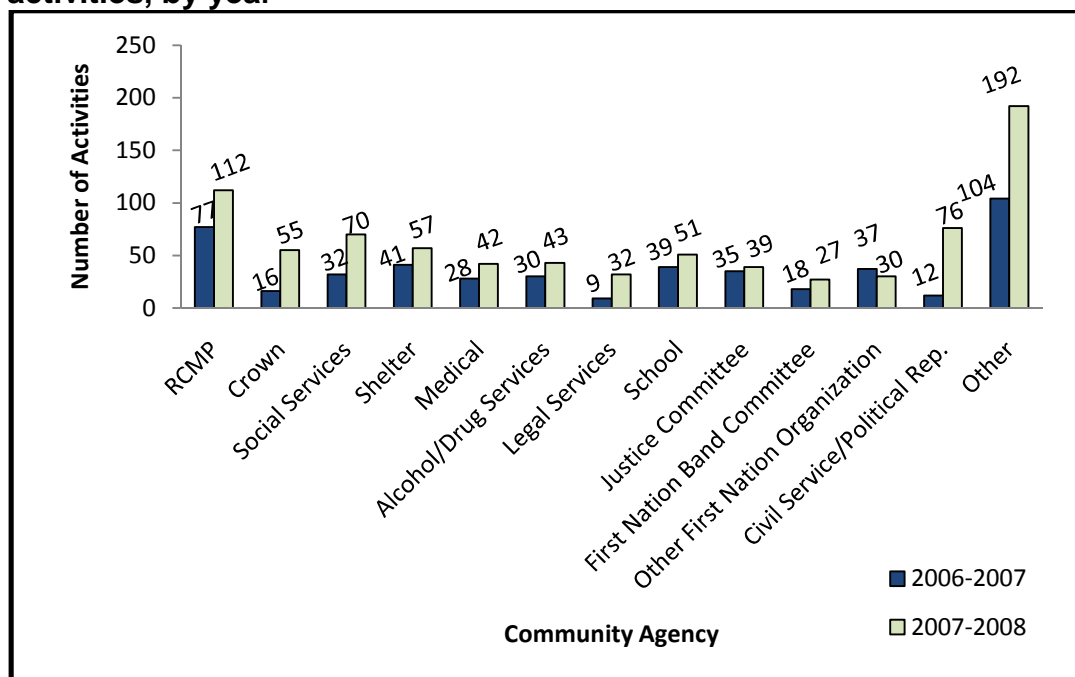
Hay River Victim Services community activities focused on increasing the awareness about and the visibility of their program and the services they had to offer. Towards this end they held their First Annual Bike Rally, a 120-kilometre cycling challenge from the Alberta border to Hay River. Money raised from this event was donated to the local women’s shelter. Local and territory-wide Bike Rally publicity raised awareness about Hay River Victim Services. The Hay River Victim Services Program Coordinator’s article, which outlined the local victim services response to the tragic death of an RCMP officer, was featured in the NVOCAW resource guide.

Fort Smith Victim Services conducted sexual abuse awareness sessions at the local high school, ‘Women’s Talking Circles’ and sponsored a Traditional Parenting Workshop in that community.

Three new wellness/addictions workers from the Tłıchǫ communities of Gamètì, Behchokò and Whatì recorded their first community activities as a result of their participation in Victim Services Worker training held in Inuvik, March 3 – 7, 2008 where they networked with other professionals while learning about their new roles and responsibilities as victim services professionals.



**Graph 8.1 Occurrences of cooperation with other agencies in community activities, by year**



Graph 8.1 represents the number of occurrences of cooperation between victim services and other agencies in community events, by year, comparing 2007-08 with 2006-07.

The top five agencies that participated in community activities with victim services in 2007-08 include: other (162), RCMP (100), Social Services (67), civil service/political representatives (58), shelters (57) and schools (51).

Activities decreased between victim services and other first nation organizations, by 19% or 7 activities.

Participation between all other agencies and victims services increased between 2006-07 and 2007-08. The percentage increase and the number of activities by agency are listed below:

- Civil servants/political representatives, 383%, by 46 activities
- Legal services, 222%, by 20 activities
- Crown, 206%, by 33 activities
- Social Services, 109%, by 35 activities
- Other agencies, 56%, by 58 activities
- First Nation Band Committee, 50%, by 9 activities
- Alcohol and drug services, 43%, by 13 activities
- Shelters, 39%, by 16 activities
- Schools, 31%, by 12 activities
- RCMP, 30%, by 23 activities

- Medical services, 4%, by 1 activity
- Justice Committees, 3%, by 1 activity

Other activities include the Territorial Women's Correctional Centre, Family Counselling/Mental Health, the NWT Victims Working Group, interagency, local FASD group, the media, retail establishments, Aurora College, the local Seniors Society, members of the public, the National Crime Prevention Centre, the Girls Craft Group, the Take Back the Night March planning committee, the Emergency Protection Order Advisory Committee, the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre, health committees, the local Treatment Centre, the National Addictions Awareness Week Planning Committee, a regional Justice Conference/RCMP Consultation, alcohol committees, the case management committee, Emergency Measures Organization meetings, career fair planning committee, homeless shelters, Arctic Tern Young Offender Facility, the Coalition Against Family Violence, consultants, the Family Violence Protocol Development, student residence, women's shelter, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and last but not least, training with mental health and victim services volunteers.

## Section 9: What roles did volunteers play in providing victim services?

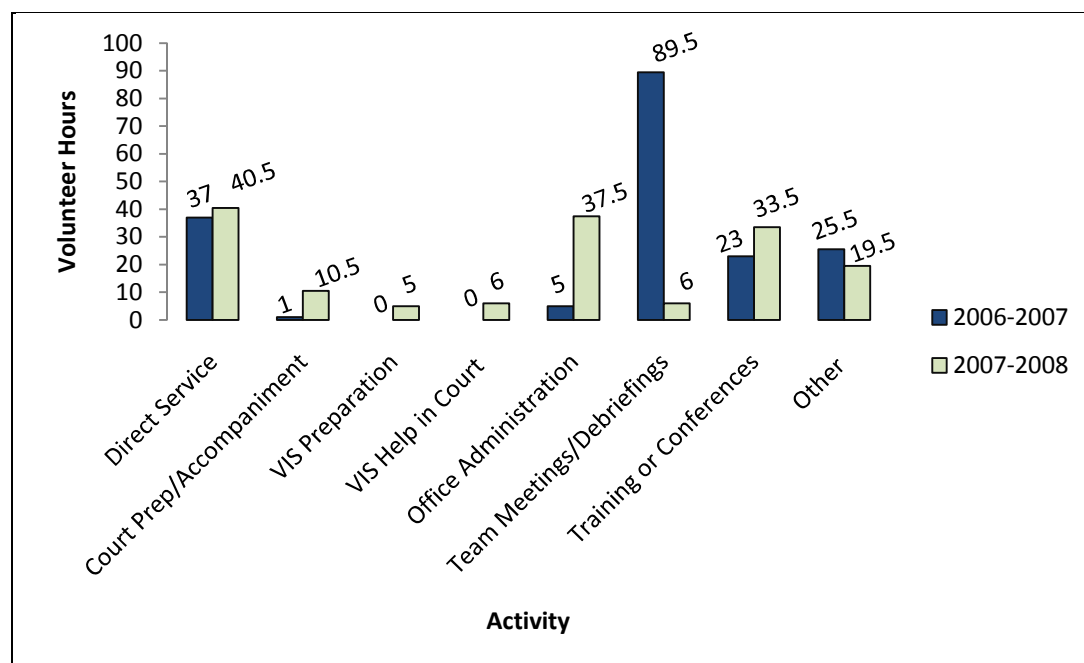
Victim service volunteers are screened to determine their suitability for service delivery. After they have been accepted for service as volunteers, they are trained in how to provide services to victims of crime.

With victim services volunteers on call during evenings and on weekends, the RCMP can call them in to provide immediate response and support to victims of tragedy and reported crime. By calling in victim services volunteers, the RCMP are able to continue with their investigations while victim service volunteers help victims to deal with the impact of trauma.

The areas of activity and service that victim services volunteers track (in number of hours) include direct services, court preparation/accompaniment, victim impact statement preparation, victim impact statement help in court, office administration, team meetings/debriefings, training or conferences, and time spent on call, as well as other activities.

In 2007-08 the 12 victim services volunteers were located in the major regional centres of Inuvik, Hay River and Yellowknife.

**Graph 9.0 Volunteer hours by category of service/activity, by year**



Graph 9.0 shows the volunteer hours by category of service/activity comparing 2007-08 to 2006-07. Without on-call hours, victim services volunteers recorded a total of 158.5 hours of service in 2007-08, compared to 181 hours from 2006-07.

However, when comparing 2006-07 to 2007-08 we see a 23-hour or 59% increase in direct services, court preparation/accompaniment, victim impact statement preparation and victim impact statement help in court.

In 2007-08, volunteers provided 46.5 hours of indirect services, including office administration, team meetings/debriefings, training or conferences and other services (in 2007-08 this category was in relation to helping with the Hay River Victim Services Bike Rally). When compared to 2006-07, this represents a 32.5% decrease or 46.5 fewer hours spent on indirect services.

In 2007-08, over and above the hours shown on Graph 9.0, victim services volunteers recorded a total of 222 hours of on-call service where they were available to respond to an RCMP call-out for service.

As mentioned in Section 5 of this report, where we asked how satisfied victims of crime were with victim services, 20% of victims surveyed who received services from volunteers reported that the victim services volunteer *"helped a lot"*.

## CONCLUSION

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In 2007-08, the first year in which existing victim services programs received an increase in funding, we saw immediate results.

When comparing 2006-07 with 2007-08 there was:

- A 17% increase in the total number of clients served;
- A 24.3% increase in the number of new clients served;
- A 42.1% increase in the number of brief service contacts;
- A 40.4% increase in the total monthly victim services caseload; and,
- A 59% increase in the number of hours of direct services provided by victim services volunteers.

Of the people surveyed who received victim services, their average overall level of satisfaction ranged from three, or somewhat satisfied, to five, or completely satisfied, with an average rating of 3.4, or satisfied. Twenty percent of victims surveyed who received services from victim service volunteers, reported that the victim services volunteer “*helped a lot*”.

In terms of comparing services delivered between 2006-07 and 2007-08, there was a 47.5% increase in the frequency with which victim services helped victims of crime complete their victim impact statements and a 113% increase in the frequency with which victim services helped victims of crime with their victim impact statements in court. Also, the results of our victim satisfaction questionnaires show that direct contact with victim services is the most effective way of providing information about victim impact statements.

In addition to the above, when comparing 2006-07 with 2007-08, there was:

- A 38% increase in the number of other organizations and agencies to which victims of crime were referred;
- An 86% increase in the number of public education activities
- An 84% increase in community liaison and networking activities; and,
- A 200% increase in the number of media events.

There is a clear relationship between community activities and the number of people to whom victim services provided services – the more often that victim services engages with other professionals, the more likely these other professionals are to refer clients impacted by crime to victim services. This results in an increase in the number of clients being served.

The downside to frequent engagement in community activities is that there is less time to spend with clients, resulting in overall fewer contacts with and services to clients.

Perhaps it is time to ask if we need to increase the number of victim services providers.