Substance Abuse and Victimization
Training & Technical Assistance Outline
Abstract

In the past, most research involving substance use and crime has focused on substance use among perpetrators involved in the criminal justice system. Little research has been done to explore the relationship between substance use and criminal victimization, whether that be victimization resulting in substance use or vice versa. Of the little research that has been conducted, multiple studies have suggested that substance use rates are higher among victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, with one study suggesting that rape victims were over five times more likely to use prescription drugs non-medically than nonvictims. As a result of the little research that has been done, there is little literature available to assist law enforcement and victim services providers with tools to assist victims of crime who have substance use disorders, and to understand the relationship between victimization and substance use. This training will attempt to fill that gap by covering many aspects of the relationship between victimization and substance use disorders, including the intersection of substance use and mental illness and substance use disorders among various victim populations, including female victims and child victims.
Learning Objectives

- Analyzing substance use disorders (SUD) as a medical diagnosis and being able to understand the basics of the science and bodily functions of addiction
- Identifying the components of the relationship between substance use disorders and mental illnesses, including comorbidity and using substances to self-medicate
- Understanding the indicators of substance use disorders, as well as screening tools available to assist in identifying substance use and alcohol use disorders.
- Distinguishing the various directions of the relationship between substance use and crime victimization, as well as how these relationships manifest differently with different kinds of victimization
- Recognizing the effects of substance use disorder on children exposed, and understanding the impact that it can have on a child’s development and future
- Identifying ways that community coordinated responses (CCRs) can assist victims of crime with substance use disorders, and the various components of a successful CCR effort.

Methodology

The principles on which this training is centered on were developed by assessing various training tools and resources that focus on various aspects of the intersection of substance use disorders and crime, focusing specifically on the relationship between substance use and victimization, including research conducted by the Office for Victims of Crime and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This training will cover these principles using various topics and videos to present the material in an engaging format. This training is designed to be presented as a whole or in parts as deemed most relevant to the site it is being provided to, and can be presented in person or in an electronic format via webinar or other available methods.

Agenda

- What is a Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?
- SUDs and Mental Health
- SUD Indicators and Screening
- Relationship between SUD and Victimization
- SUDs and Female Victimization
- Child Victims and Substance Abuse
- Community-Coordinated Responses to Assisting Victims with SUDs
- Resources