

If your child has been a victim of crime

and/or witnessed a crime taking place, and a charge has been laid by the police, they are eligible for services through Victim Services.

Anyone can make a referral to Victim Services.

Parents or caregivers can call Victim Services directly. A police officer, counsellor, social worker, teacher, etc. can make a referral to Victim Services on behalf of any child who may be required to testify in a criminal court matter.



Contact Information

For more information on **Victim Services**, contact one of the regional offices or provincial headquarters:

St. John's	709.729.0900
Carbonear	709.945.3019/3046
Marystown	709.279.3216
Clarenville	709.466.5808
Gander	709.256.1028/1070
Grand Falls-Windsor	709.292.4544/4548
Corner Brook	709.637.2603/2465
Stephenville	709.643-6588/6618
Port Saunders	709.861.2147
Happy Valley-Goose Bay	709. 896.0446/3251
Nain	709.922.2360

Victim Services Program

Department of Justice and Public Safety

4th Floor East Block

Confederation Building

P.O. Box 8700

St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

(709) 729-7970

victimservices@gov.nl.ca

victimserviceshelp.ca

Available in alternate format



Victim Services

Working together to prepare children to testify in court



When should I contact Victim Services?

Victim Services may be contacted once a criminal charge has been laid and it is suspected that a child may be required to testify. It is best to have time to prepare children rather than to be limited to one or two meetings.

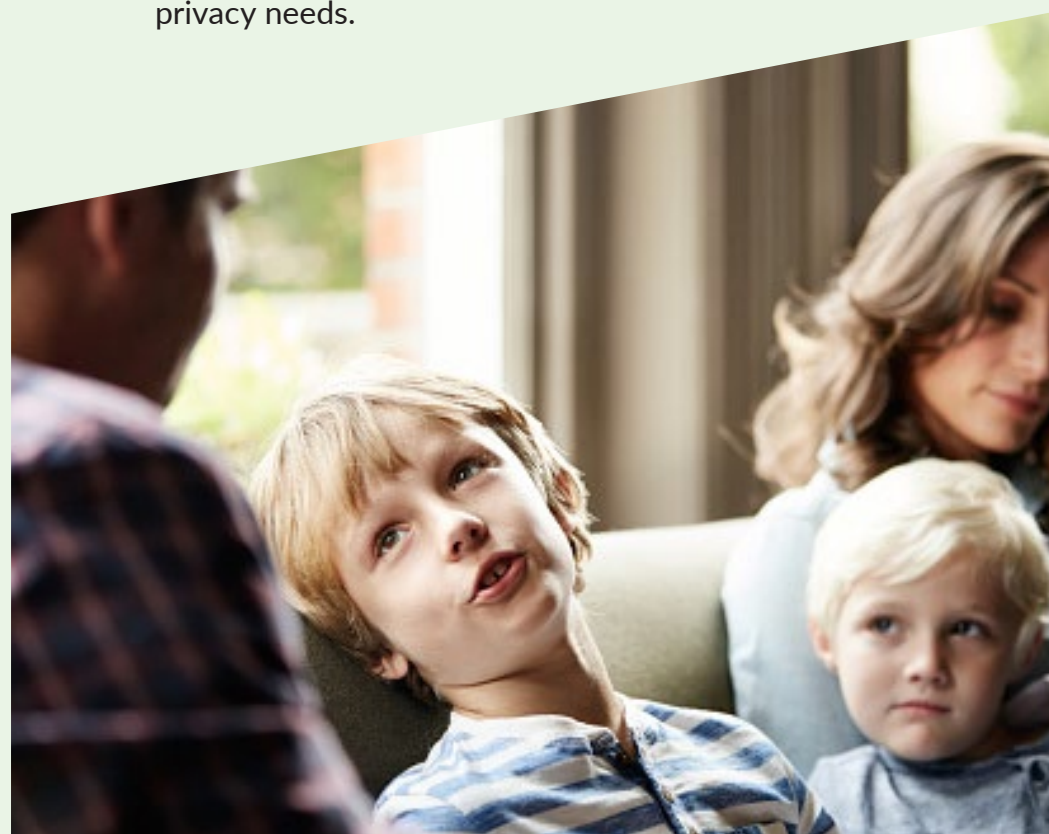
What services does Victim Services provide for children?

Victim Services can provide:

- Information on the court process for you and your child to review together.
- Court preparation to assist your child to testify.
- Updates on the status of the case as it proceeds through court.
- Funding for one trip if your child has to visit the courtroom before testifying.
- On-site support for your child and family during the trial process, where possible.
- Assistance with arranging and/or covering counselling fees if required.
- Assistance with arranging a meeting(s) with the Crown attorney for your child.

What are some things that I, as a parent/caregiver, can do to support my child or a child in my care?

- Tell your child you believe them – do not assume they know.
- Listen to your child but do not judge what your child tells you.
- Let your child know you are available to talk if they want to talk.
- Keep your child's routine as normal as possible.
- Ask your child if they want you in the courtroom when they testify – let them know you will wait outside if that would be easier for them.
- Respect your child's wishes.
- Be a support, while respecting your child's personal privacy needs.



What are some things that may be harmful to my child or a child in my care?

- Pressuring children to talk about the offence and/or what they witnessed.
- Discussing evidence with a child may have an unwanted influence on the court case.
- Blaming a child for what happened will increase any feelings of guilt they may have – children are not responsible for the behaviour of others.
- Judging a child will create and/or build on feelings they may have of self-blame.
- Allowing a child to engage in negative behavior, without an appropriate consequence, will only lead to increased negative behavior. Do not excuse inappropriate behavior because they are going through a difficult time.
- Discussing your feelings about the case or the accused, where your child can overhear you, can place stress on a child and a sense of responsibility for your feelings and keeping you safe. These are clearly not the child's to own.

We encourage you to speak with the Crown attorney and victim services regional coordinator regarding your child's specific needs. Together you can identify what may assist your child with their testimony.