

Benefits of Counseling

Some of the benefits of seeking counseling are:

- Reviewing the incident and processing the event can help victims clarify what actually occurred.
- Discussion of legal and judicial decisions can be discussed and utilized as part of the promotion of healing and resolution.
- The disruption due to trauma can make daily functioning difficult. Counseling can help develop coping skills and strategies, allowing for the continuance of school, work or relationships.
- Establishment of a support network helps to decrease the negative physical, psychological and emotional effects that often result from the traumatic experience.

Survivors can utilize the experience as an opportunity to build and practice assertiveness, confidence, and protective instinct skills.

Who can help?

The Mesa Police Department Victim Services Unit can assist with information regarding Victims' Rights, Victim Compensation, case status, navigation of the criminal justice system and referrals to appropriate helping professionals or organizations according to your specific needs.

Resources

Community Information and Referral

(602) 263-8856

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

1110 W Washington Ste#230

Phoenix, AZ 85007

(602) 364-1146

acjc@azcjc.gov

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)

P.O. Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

1-800-851-3420

Office for Victims of Crime

U.S. Department of Justice

810 Seventh Street NW., Eighth Floor

Washington, DC 20531

(202) 307-5983

www.ovc.gov

Victim Services Unit

After an Assault



Mesa Police Department
Victim Services Unit
130 N Robson
Mesa, AZ 85201
(480) 644-4075

This brochure provides information for you and your loved ones on dealing with an assault.

Common Responses

Common reactions of victims of assault are similar to those who survive other types of traumatic events and may include:

- shock
- panic
- anger
- helplessness
- embarrassment
- a sense of vulnerability
- a sense of violation
- desire to seek revenge

When we have no familiarity or connection to the offender, managing feelings and decisions may be made with more clarity and confidence. When the offender is a relative or friend the decision of reporting the crime and pursuing prosecution can be one of the most difficult decisions you will have to make.

What You Can Do

Although reactions to a traumatic event can be expected, the following tips may help:

- Refrain from excessive use of alcohol
- Exercise regularly
- Maintain a proper diet
- Rest regularly
- Continue contact with colleagues, supervisors, friends and family—people who will listen and not condemn you
- Be honest with yourself regarding your stress levels and ability to cope

Injuries

As a result of this experience you may have received injuries that were not immediately noticeable. Seeking medical attention for injuries resulting from a crime is always good.

If you currently do not have medical coverage, a Victim Services representative can provide you with contact information for Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, which is an income-based health care program.

Documentation

It is good practice to save any and all documents, materials, and receipts related to or resulting from the incident. These items may become an important part of seeking restitution or applying for reimbursement or assistance from the Victim Compensation Fund and may affect the amount of bail set or the conditions of release that may be imposed.

Interruption of your attendance at work or the inability to work resulting from injuries should be reported to your employer. This may prompt your employer to request documentation from your doctor or the hospital and, as prior mentioned, should be kept as part of your documentation. It is also a good idea to contact your Human Resources Representative or the office that handles your employment benefits.

Prosecution

Any criminal responsibility will be determined based upon the police investigation and review by the appropriate prosecutorial agency.

The Maricopa County Attorney's Office is the prosecutorial agency for felony matters and the Mesa City Prosecutor's Office is the prosecutorial agency for misdemeanor matters.

Judicial System

For many, this may be their first involvement with law enforcement or the judicial system. It is very common for people to expect what they have seen on television or movies to apply to their current circumstances. Unfortunately, these expectations are, more than often, a distorted and unrealistic snapshot of how things truly operate.

Arizona has laws and regulations in place to protect victims. For cases involving prosecution, a court advocate can provide information, education, and support that will help reduce fears and uncertainties.

Another consideration that is often practiced is that of resolution by plea agreement. By negotiation and agreement, this approach to resolution can prevent the need for testifying in court.

As with any situation, education and information about how the judicial system operates, can assist the victim and their family in the reduction of trauma.

Remember, involvement in a traumatic event can produce upsetting responses such as disturbed sleep, diminished appetite, and difficulty concentrating. These responses will likely subside with time. However, if reactions are especially long lasting or troubling, you may need to turn to a professional for assistance.