



VictimServices

Supporting Victims of Crime

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A Collection of Case Studies and Reflections

By **REMEDI: Restorative Services**

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Remedi

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My client has been a victim of attempted burglary and other ASB incidents from the public, including people throwing bricks and glass over into her garden

Provided emotional support

Contacted the council to ask to help with security

Encouraged victim to keep reporting crimes to police

I advised victim to contact her landlord for support

My client has been supported by DVS since 01.12.2022. The incidents that occurred have had a big impact on her and her thoughts, feelings and how unsafe she felt in her home. My client tried to contact the council to report the ongoing ASB from the public but had not received any support. I contacted the council to raise my concerns for the victim and shared their feelings on not feeling supported and her and her son as feeling unsafe in their home. After this report, the council went to see my client and supported her with more security in the area and her home to help her and her son feel safer. My client said her landlord was supporting her and was helping her put CCTV up around her home. My client feedback, she felt a lot safer with the councils support and her landlords support with security in the area and her home and this would not have happened without DVS intervention.

Hollie Orton

My client had been the victim of harassment and antisocial behaviour for an extended period of time

Other issues came to light whilst working with DVS and AN supported the victim building coping mechanisms to be able to report concerns safely to the relevant authorities.

Support was provided to help support the victim in feeling safe to report ongoing issues to the correct authorities

I worked with the family to make sure they had the right support in place and then found out the gaps in the support that DVS and/or GYB could then provide

When first working with my client, they felt very overwhelmed with what had been happening, lots of external factors to do with her family situation and some of her children having additional needs, made everything a lot more difficult to deal with

We worked on grounding techniques & coping strategies to help them feel less overwhelmed and more able to cope.

My client expressed that it was nice to have a service involved that didn't 'tell her' what she 'had' to do but gave her suggestions on things that may make things easier for her.

My client said she also appreciated having someone to talk to as a 'sounding board' to talk things over with.

Alix Needham

Miss X was physically assaulted in her own home by someone she trusted and considered a friend

- Weekly ES calls.
- Help communicating with the police
- Agency referrals to build up a stronger support network and the right support for Miss X

When Miss X was referred to Derbyshire Victim services the police had closed her investigation and she felt like she had no one to turn too. Miss X did not know where she could go next and felt no one could help her. After completing a needs assessment, I worked with Miss X to help her appeal this decision in writing via the Derbyshire constabulary website. Miss X was then contacted by a senior officer who reviewed her case and investigated further. The next call to Miss X she felt more positive not only because of the therapy support she had received from signposting but also because her case had been reopened and the NFA outcome has now changed to the perpetrator being charged. Although the case still had to be reviewed by the CPS Miss X said “regardless of the outcome I have found peace knowing I am not being ignored and people believe me”. Thanks to the support from DVS her voice was heard and for the victim there was justice.

DF

- Client was a victim of burglary where the perpetrators made an untidy search of the property and went through all the victims' stuff at her house (including personal and intimate things), there has been thing stolen which had a sensible value to the victim.
- Firstly, I was talking to the victim's husband who did not need much of a support as he could carry with life (as he said). The husband referred his wife for support as she was really struggling to cope with the incident and had problems with sleeping. In the first conversation, victim said that she does not want to go to her GP as she is 'not a fan of medication'. I then thought about more alternative ways to help the victim with both anxiety and problems with sleeping- I introduced her to aromatherapy and told her to speak about it with her GP as well (who later said it is a great idea)
- After numerous conversations with the victim, I had really good feeling about her progress. There had been some downfalls in her mood over the time but she was always so positive and open for any help I could offer. My victim wanted to be helped and they were willing to try new things that helped her cope. At the end of the support they were very grateful about the things I recommended, and she said she will continue in aroma therapy as her relaxation technique.

Zuzana Hribova

Racially or religiously aggravated intentional harassment, alarm or distress

I arranged a meeting with the officer in charge to have a conversation about the case and to have a statement of account taken.

The victim came into support because he was a victim of racial abuse from his previous tenant that lived in one of his homes that he was renting out.

The victim felt like he was not supported by the police even with the evidence he has provided.

The victim did not have his statement taken, I contacted 101 to find out the OIC of this case following that I booked a visit for the OIC and myself to attend the victim's property for a statement and for a meeting to take place.

The OIC could not attend but due to understanding the urgency he had a colleague of his come out instead, the victim's statement was taken and the victim was able to be reassured that his case was being investigated.

The victim had questions for the officer and these questions were answered there and then.

Although the victim did not get the outcome he wanted from the police, the support he received from myself made the victim feel informed about his case which he didn't prior to the support.

Dilnura Aisaeva

The service user was the mum of the victim who experienced aggravated harassment in Birmingham due to her sexual orientation

The work undertaken involved liaising the school the victim attended as the mother felt as though she was not being supported sufficiently by them. I had organised multiple meetings between Mom and the school, so she could express her concerns and we could have an action plan moving forward.

During this case, I had worked with another practitioner (PW) as she had supported the victim and I supported the mother. Moving forward I would recommend this approach as this enabled me to put my sole focus on mother to ensure she had all the support she needed. My aim was ensuring that both practical and emotional needs were supported as Mom stated during our initial call that she has not been able to receive support for her emotional needs. Journaling and self-care activities can be seen as useful when incorporating them into emotional support plans.

The Feedback received was "I cannot thank you enough for changing my life. You have empowered me so much to do things and make the changes I never thought I'd be able to do. You and Parriss have been a God sent and words cannot describe how thankful I am. I owe everything to you guys and just how non-judgmental and understanding you have been, I will eternally be grateful."

Hate Crime - Racially or religiously aggravated public fear, alarm or distress

The work undertaken included practical support. The victim was extremely stressed about the situation and wanted some assistance. I worked with the OIC facilitating communication between both parties and always stressing how important it was for the victim to be updated while raising the victims concerns.

The work undertaken aligned with the OIC and ended with a positive outcome; with the offending family being moved to another property and the father, who stayed in the property, being served with a Community Protection Breach.

On our last call, the victim stated that he was very happy, felt very good and everything has been peaceful whereby he was able to sleep better once the offending family was moved.

The victim feedback was as follows: “thank you for assisting me with the police”, “I really appreciate your work, I really have to thank you for everything that you did for me” and “Thank you for listening to me and helping me understand, god bless”.

The successful outcome has met victims needs and led to the case closure.

Catarina Soares

A young perpetrator was referred for the Hate Crime perpetrator programme for 3 x 1-hour sessions due to an assault on victim who identified under a subculture.

I completed 3 sessions with service user where we looked at different types of hate crimes and hate incidents, case studies, reaction compass, ripple effect, feelings and emotions, triggers and the service user completed some activities.

The service user struggled to engage to with me and the sessions to begin with as she felt very shy, although she was remorseful. By the end of the first session, she was engaging a lot better and asking questions about Hate Crime. The service user became very aware of her actions during the crime committed. The service users involvement in the incident was an assault by punching the victim once and she said at the end of the first session how much she regretted it, even more so after becoming more aware of the effects it had on the victim. The service user completed all activities that I asked her to do and said that she still feels very remorseful for what she did and that she has nothing to do with any of the other perpetrators anymore. The service user said she feels a lot more aware of her actions and that if she was to ever get into that situation again she would walk away and take herself away from it all.

Laura Ridley

The service user was a victim of abuse due to his disability and sexual orientation. The hate crime happened in Dudley.

Liaising with the OIC and ensure there is frequent communication between them and the victim.

Providing emotional support via telephone so the victim by completing an emotional safety plan

Throughout the case, there were a number of challenges such as communicating with the OIC and for the victim to feel comfortable to speak about his emotions to begin with. Due to the OIC being on leave for a while, this made the victim feel as though the issue was not being dealt with. To tackle this need, reassurance and weekly checks were completed to see if the OIC was back.

The emotional safety plan was broken down into sections and completed over two sessions, so it didn't become over whelming for the victim. The victim stated he had a tendency of bottling his emotions up, so after completing the plan, the victim described feeling more at ease. Allowing the victim to understand what triggers his mental health decline ensured that he will be able to monitor in the future.

The Feedback received was "thank you for the support you have been amazing"

Sabaa Fiaz

The victim was having ongoing problems with her neighbour reporting her to their Housing Association for noise when the victim was not making any noise

The reports that the victims' neighbour was making was having a huge impact on the victims' mental health. We worked on grounding techniques and I signposted her to the relevant MH services. I liaised with her HA to come out and record the noise to put a stop to the complaints.

In moments of stress, the victim used grounding techniques to keep herself calm. She also utilised the mental health support lines when appropriate. Although this helped her to a degree, it still did not get to the root of the issue. Through talking with her housing provider, we were able to arrange someone to come out to the victims' home to test if her next door neighbour could hear her television. They concluded that the victims' neighbour could not hear the television, even when it was on its highest volume. From this, the neighbour has stopped making complaints about the victim and she feels a lot calmer in her own home.

EW

A YP, who has been a victim of verbal and physical bullying.

1:1 work with the YP over the phone and at home.

The YP has been a victim of bullying throughout primary and secondary school, which has left the YP with little confidence. We made a confidence/achievement jar together, in which he filled up with the help of his family and others.

The YP feedback “I really enjoyed making the jar together and it has made me realise all the strengths I do have. I have this by my bed and will keep using this. Thank you Becky”.

Rebecca Smith

Homophobic verbal abuse.

Pupil was disrupting lessons by shouting homophobic abuse at a heterosexual classmate

Three sessions of work were carried out with him at school to make him aware of the impact of his behaviour and to better understand the impact on him for any future offences of Hate Crime

Prior to the sessions, I was made aware by staff that the student was extremely difficult to engage with, he did not make eye contact and could disengage quickly if pushed.

I met the student for his first session and as predicted he sat silently for most of the session, refusing to look up and refusing to answer any questions.

Session two continued the same way so I asked about any similar situations that he may have experienced, and he began to open up to me. He was able to reflect on his own feelings and was then able to empathise around what he had said to his classmate.

He felt that he was unjustly punished for shouting out in class, but he began to understand that his words could still offend the classmate and others around him despite that.

On completion of the final evaluation, his answers showed that he had actually taken in everything that had been covered during all three sessions and he had a good understanding about the impact on others and himself.

Neil Humphreys

The service user was a victim of Islamophobic abuse in Sandwell
The victim had received death threats while in a park with his son
and had a knife pointed at him

Liaised with his Mental Health doctor and GP so the victim could
re-engage with them. Communicated with his housing officer and
the OIC to understand if and when a move can happen.
Emotional support via telephone so the victim can better
understand his triggers and how to deal with them.

During this case, a lot of liaising with third party agencies had
taken place in order to achieve a great outcome for the victim.
Due the severity of the case, the victim was awarded a tier 1 and
was allowed to move to a safer location. The mental health of the
victim had improved, as well as his outlook and attitude towards
life; with increased work from partner agencies. Allowing the
victim to understand what triggers his mental health decline
ensured that he will be able to monitor this himself in the future.

The feedback received was “I cannot thank you enough for the
support, you have supported me like family. Thank you so much
for helping us through such a horrible time, we would not have
been able to do it without you.”

Sabaa Fiaz

Hate Crime: Racially or religiously aggravated Harassment or stalking with fear of violence

The work undertaken included emotional support. The victim and I started by having weekly calls to help them process and cope with what has happened. We have been talking about victims emotions around Hate Crime and coping strategies. The victim has been very proactive in recover from the Hate Crime.

Throughout the weeks, the victims has been building his confidence back and processing what happened to him and how can he move forward from the Hate Crime.

The victim is very independent and very proactive in finding coping mechanisms that are healthy for him to recover from the offence, like going on walks, journaling, and reading books, for example.

The victim stated that he had a break from work and he reflected about the New Year and decided to be more optimistic and positive. I have told the victim that he should be very proud because he is being very active on moving forward.

The victims stated multiple times that having someone that calls him and asks how he is feeling has really been helping him. The victim also stated that it's good to talk to someone who is neutral and objective.

Catarina Soares

Violence with injury- YP was assaulted whilst at school.

Weekly phone calls with YP

Liaison with school

Contacted Winston's Wish – bereavement counselling

SP contacted school and together came up with a few ideas that would support the YP in helping them feel safer. Ideas were a pass that would allow the YP to leave the classroom if needed and a daily escort off site to the bus stop.

SP spoke with YP who stated she didn't want escorting as this would bring the wrong kind of attention to her and she didn't want this, she stated that she was ok getting to the bus stop by herself. YP liked the idea of the pass and was happy to use it if the need should arise. The YP was happy with what school had suggested and felt listened to and safer, however felt she was not coping as well as she was struggling with bereavement due to losing 4 of her family members over the past couple of years. I contacted Winston's Wish and they sent bereavement packs and counselling support to the YP. YP felt happier knowing she was now getting the support she felt she needed to move forward and recognised this was not for the crime.

Sara Pinder

YP (aged 5) witnessed her dad get assaulted outside her primary school. Dad had parked across someone's driveway when collecting the YP from school, the owner of the property dragged dad out of the car and assaulted him.

SW provided face to face support in YP's school and called the YP's dad to provide support outside of school.

SW provided face to face support at YP's school.

YP's dad expressed his concerns about daughter not wanting to talk about the incident. He felt that if she continues to not talk about it then she won't process what she witnessed properly.

SW sent YP's dad activities to do with the YP over the Christmas holidays to encourage her to talk to him about it.

SW got the YP to talk about the incident by creating and decorating a worry jar. She said that she was no longer worried about the incident and if she ever did feel worried, she would be happy to put the worry in her new worry jar. She said she really enjoyed the activity.

SW

The young person suffers with anxiety which can cause migraines. The anxiety is more prominent in relation to bullying that takes place within school.

1:1 work in school

During my sessions with the young person, I have seen a massive difference in her confidence and how much she opens up about her feelings. Throughout our sessions we have been focusing on anxiety and overall happiness. We have made a happiness box which the young person uses regularly and brings to each session. We go through new things that she has put into her happiness box each week and anything she has put in there relating to her anxiety.

Mum has been keeping in touch with how the young person is doing and giving updates on her progress. Mum thanked me for the work we have done in our sessions and said that the young person looks forward to them and that she has seen a massive difference in her since the beginning of our sessions.

Emily Crozier

YP was assaulted by former school friend on local canal path.

YP wanted to feel less anxious, more confident and handle his anger better following the crime.

SW provided face to face support in YP's school and WhatsApp message support outside of school.

SW and YP created a support plan together and worked towards meeting his needs.

YP agreed to RJ with LE and wanted this to be facilitated direct.

SW provided face to face support at YP's school. SW taught YP some coping skills for when he is feeling anxious and discussed what currently works for him.

SW did activities with YP to explain the feeling of anger and how he can respond in a more controlled and calm manner than lashing out and taking it out on others such as his mum.

SW looked into a local boxing club for YP as he had expressed an interest and said it helped with his anger and anxiety. YP said this would help with his confidence too.

SW and LE worked together to discuss the RJ case and SW supported YP with his decision of a direct approach as they had questions about what had happened and why. (This is on-going)

YP is now going out socially after school and at weekends whereas before he didn't feel confident to do this.

SW and LE (RJ pract)

YP is a repeat victim of assault and bullying inside and outside of school. His family have also been victimised, as the perpetrators have targeted the house.

SW supported YP's family; using Language Line, spoken to all family members and got support in place.

SW safeguarded YP and informed YP's school about on-going incidents as YP wasn't comfortable reporting them.

SW provided face to face support to the YP and his older sister in school.

SW provided face to face support at YP's school. SW showed the YP how to record incidents in a diary format so that he could show this to a trusted adult daily, weekly to ensure that all incidents are being reported.

SW has provided face to face support to yp's older sister as she has been translating for the family in school and to the police. She also witnesses some of the incidents that occur in school and felt upset and angry that they are targeting her little brother.

SW worked closely with school as they were struggling to get YP to attend after the assault. YP's family weren't comfortable sending him to school. SW worked with both parties to ensure YP is safe and the family are communicated with regularly by school.

SW contacted Police on behalf of the family and explained how they had been feeling let down. The police were going to work with the school to investigate further.

Support is on-going.

SW

Young person was assaulted by 5 known perpetrators in their home town.

Support plan put together with caseworker and young person to support needs that was identified. Support was weekly telephone conversations to work on reducing anxiety and outburst of anger. Young person was also signposted to CEASE educational programme to support them with their thoughts and feelings since the crime happened.

YP was absconding from school regularly, this put a lot of pressure on the YP's parents. The YP was struggling with their emotions and would have outbursts of anger where he would smash up the house.

YP said the assault had left him feeling angry as he couldn't defend himself and was worried about going out in case it should happen again. YP began building up his confidence by going out with mum and he would score his feelings - they could see the more they were out of the house, the safer they began to feel. YP's confidence has built from doing this and now goes out with friends

YP started to attend the Army Cadets even though the assault had impacted his behaviour, YP likes the routine and discipline the cadets gives him. SP discussed that being back in school would provide YP with the qualifications he needs to go into the Army.

YP completed the CEASE programme- mum said YP was a different person after completing the course.

YP is now back in full time education and is doing well, there have been no outbursts of anger. YP is more positive and looking forward to the future.

Sara Pinder

YP was a victim of a violent assault that had left them with injuries and had impacted their mental health. The adult perpetrator was unknown to the victim and was an unprovoked attack.

Weekly support was provided which helped the YP talk about their thoughts and feelings without judgement. YP said they had never experienced mental health before and the overwhelming feeling of anxiety and loss of control had left them struggling. Coping strategies were in place to help feelings of being overwhelmed.

Since the crime, YP felt withdrawn and struggled daily with anxiety in crowded places especially at school.

YP's felt her anxiety was from not being in control of what happened. These anxieties affected YP when in crowded places as she becomes overwhelmed and had to remove herself from the situation. Although YP feels this is a coping mechanism, she did not want to keep removing herself as this felt isolating.

We explored coping strategies and spoke about the benefits of breathing exercises. YP felt managing her breathing before this escalated would help her not have to remove herself. YP liked the 5-finger breathing technique and I together we went through the exercise so they understood how the technique worked. On the next session, YP fed back that it was really useful as they were able to use the strategy discreetly (under the desk). Before support was in place, YP was removing herself from the classroom etc 7+ a day, however since using the strategy, they have only been out of 2 lessons the whole week. The YP said the breathing technique enabled them to refocus when the anxiety started and was able to ground themselves quite quickly.

Sara Pinder

The service user was a victim of harassment in Birmingham
HC Strand – Sexual Orientation

- Communication with the GP was based on following up a mental health referral
- Phone safety session was provided for the protection of the victim
- Emotional support in the form of a positivity jar/journal, and signposting to different agencies and going through them individually

This was the first case I had worked on where I worked alongside another practitioner which provided insight into how future cases with parents and children would work. The victim was clear that they did not want to discuss their feelings, so the approach had to be creative. It became clear some young victims are more responsive to face-to-face support or on Teams. The young person and I used positivity jars to process how they were feeling and focused on the future. This was also something that the victim could do on their own which the victim thought was useful.

Case feedback from mother of victim: “I was very disappointed in the police response but then you called us. You came over, seeing us from a personal point of view. I felt comfortable and more knowledgeable. I felt more confident knowing we weren't just left alone. I felt like someone cared for my daughter. The way you come across and the way the service comes across is brilliant. I feel like a cloud has been over us, but it is slowly moving with you supporting us I'm just happy. We are so blessed thank you so much, you're changing lives.

Parriss Williams and Sabaa Fiaz

The service user was a victim of racially aggravated harassment in Birmingham.

The work undertaken involved liaising with the OIC via telephone and email. Consent was obtained for me to advocate on the victim's behalf. In addition to this, I had worked alongside the victim's housing officer to explore solutions. The solution provided entailed the Sargent approving a Tier 1 move for the victim. I then liaised with the Housing officer to ensure the victim had all the information she needed to start the bidding process.

The Feedback received was "thank you for your support". The victim was grateful that she was able to move to a safer location. This piece of work should be celebrated as it demonstrates how multi-agencies, such as the police and housing officers, working together can achieve a goal. After speaking with the OIC, he was able to understand the severity of the of the victim's situation and how this impacted her. In addition to this, this case shows how vital it is for agencies to work together so there isn't any miscommunication and how we can all work together and provide the victim with the best solution. The victim stated that she had to endure racial abuse from the same offenders for years, so allowing her to move to a safer environment, will be beneficial for her mental health and wellbeing.

Sabaa Fiaz

The victim, her husband and 2 children were being racially targeted in their predominantly white neighbourhood in Coventry. They were constantly racially abused and were victims of racially aggravated criminal damage. The victim had over 10 crime reference numbers, but the matter was not being resolved.

I worked with the council to get the victim and her family moved into a different property. I provided a reference for the victim which led to them being moved into a newly built bungalow. I continued providing emotional support, liaising with the OIC and signposted her to her GP and multiple mental health agencies.

After a lot of hard work and persistence, a family that had lost hope in the police and local council, were moved into a new property, in a new area where they finally felt safe and welcomed. The victim and her family are now able to live a normal life. This move drastically bettered the victim's mental health, sense of safety, wellbeing, health, outlook, and a feeling of empowerment increased.

The victim thanked me many times for being there for them and for helping them during such a difficult time.

Usman Qureshi

Racially or religiously aggravated intentional harassment, alarm or distress.

Victim, school and police were involved

Communication with police completed on victim's behalf. Face to face emotional support provided. RJ unable to take place due to offender declining.

Initially victim's mum wanted the offender to get cautioned. When she was told this was not going to happen she was happy to explore RJ, but due to the offenders parents not giving consent for this, the process was not able to happen.

The victim's mum was concerned because she did not want her son to feel like he was not being listened to or heard. I suggested to go for a face to face meeting to provide emotional support and to allow the victim to feel heard.

The face to face meeting went very well the victim had a chance to express how he felt and he also listed positive points as he was recovering from the impact of the offence.

After the meeting the victim said to his mum that the face to face meeting did make him feel better and he was happy that someone took the time to listen to him and made him feel heard.

Dilnura Aisaeva

Service user was with a large (30-40) group of youths trying to prevent officers from making an arrest. Service user sprayed perfume in the face of one female officer and used homophobic language towards her.

Despite this being a police referral, service user was seen in school for the HC sessions. She is educated in a small group of behaviourally challenging pupils in a separate part of the school from the main stream. It was believed that she would struggle to engage. Three HC sessions were completed with her over two days as a 1:1 intervention.

Service user was reluctant to engage with me from the outset and initially needed a member of staff to stay with us to facilitate the conversation.

She denied any wrongdoing whatsoever, stated that she had NOT been responsible for any homophobic comments and could not see how her actions had affected anyone else.

After a short while, we began to build a rapport and the staff member was able to leave the session; service user began to open up to me showing a willingness to discuss the matter.

Despite continuing to deny the allegations, she was able to reflect on her part in the scenario and see the impact her behaviour on the officer, herself and the wider community.

Although she denied the Hate element throughout, service user worked through the sessions with me and showed a good understanding of the topic and empathy towards those who might be subjected to abuse.

Having done this, she was then able to reflect on how the officer might have felt and empathise with her.

TD worked far better than expected and showed a good level of learning in her evaluation.

Neil Humphreys

The service user was a victim of homophobic abuse in Dudley.

Face to face emotional support was taken place by going through the victim's triggers, finding other ways to express his emotions. A meeting with the school was conducted to allow mom to express his feelings.

In the initial assessment, victim had expressed he was unsure on how to express his emotions as his tended to keep them bottled up. Throughout the support, a number of different emotional release activities were conducted to find the one the victim preferred. After a few trial and errors, 'emotional plate smashing' had deemed to be the most effective in allowing the victim to express his worries and emotions. Moving forward, this will be an activity I will use more as the victim stated the activity had relieved stress and improved his mental health.

Re-engaging the victim's mom with school in order to conduct a meeting had been a pivotal point in the case as it allowed her to move closer to her end goal of having the constant homophobic abuse dealt with better. The victim's mom stated she hadn't felt heard by the school at all during the incidents had taken place, allowing her to express her concerns had silenced her worries. The mental health of the victim's mother had improved along her sense of security when she son went to school.

The feedback received was " you have been amazing, I cannot thank you enough for helping us."

Sabaa Fiaz

Thank you to all of our colleagues and service users

