

# Victim Support

## Murder and manslaughter

Information for  
family and friends

## **Bereavement by violent crime**

Losing someone through a violent crime is a devastating experience. Everyone reacts differently and your feelings may change from day to day. The important thing is to be aware that you may be affected in many different ways, both emotionally and physically.

## **About Victim Support**

Victim Support is the independent national charity for people affected by crime. We help over a thousand people bereaved through murder and manslaughter every year. Our volunteers are specially trained to give information, practical help and emotional support to help people cope. And our services are free, confidential and available to everyone.

When the police are involved in a case of murder or manslaughter, they should offer to put people bereaved by the crime in touch with us. Not everybody wants to be put in touch with Victim Support immediately after the crime, and some people find it helpful to have a Victim Support volunteer later. But, regardless of what is happening with the police, you can contact us yourself at any time.

## Helping you to cope

The support of friends and family is important after any crime, but often those around you may be affected too - especially in the case of murder or manslaughter. Many of the people we have supported have told us that they found it very helpful to talk to someone who is not directly involved. We can offer you someone who has been specially trained to listen and support you.

Our volunteers can visit you at home, or somewhere else if you prefer. If you don't want to see anyone face-to-face, you can also talk to us on the 'phone, either locally or at the national Victim Supportline on 0845 30 30 900.

You can see us for just a short time if you want, or for longer. It's really up to you.

## **Practical help**

It can be difficult to deal with everyday situations when someone has died. Even normally simple things - such as running your home or dealing with other people - can be hard. Our staff and volunteers can help you to deal with the demands and pressures you might be facing.

We can also help you to make a claim for criminal injuries compensation if you want us to, and when the time is right.

## **Information on the criminal justice system**

Dealing with the criminal justice system can be difficult, particularly for a bereaved person. Victim Support can give you information about the various agencies that might be involved after the crime. We can help you deal with and understand things such as the role of the police and the coroner; what will happen in court if the case comes to trial; and what will happen if the offender is caught and sentenced.

## **By your side**

Our volunteers can go with you to the police station or possibly to the coroner's court if you want them to.

## **Going to court**

Victim Support runs the Witness Service in every criminal court in England and Wales. If someone is charged in connection with the crime, our trained volunteers can give you and your family support at the court and information about what to expect. We can usually arrange for you to see a courtroom before the trial, and we can provide somewhere private for you to wait. We can often arrange special seating for you in court too. But we are not allowed to discuss the evidence you are giving if you have to be a witness.

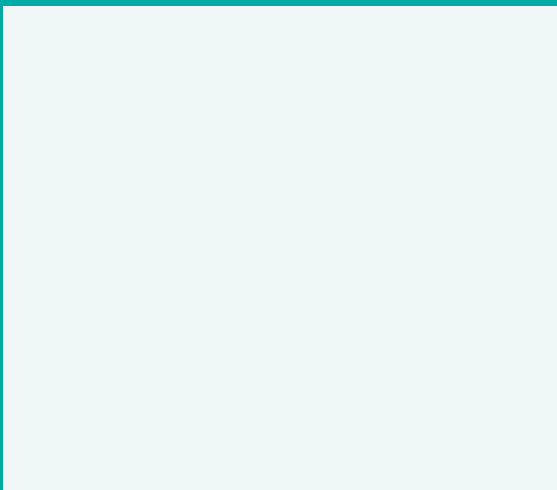
## **Other sources of help**

If you need specialist information or advice, we can put you in touch with organisations that can help, such as:

**SAMM** (Support after Murder and Manslaughter), the self-help network for people bereaved by violent crime.  
Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road,  
London SW9 6DZ Tel: 020 7735 3838  
[www.samm.org.uk](http://www.samm.org.uk)

**Cruse Bereavement Care** provides free and confidential counselling and support to bereaved people.  
Tel: 0870 167 1677  
[www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)

Contact your local Victim Support branch



Victim Supportline can also put you in touch with your local Victim Support branch.

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Victim Support National Office, Cranmer House,  
39 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6DZ  
Telephone: 020 7735 9166 Fax: 020 7582 5712  
[www.victimsupport.org](http://www.victimsupport.org)

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