

Using the Victim of Crime Star™

The Victim of Crime Star is designed to be used with people who may benefit from support with the practical or emotional impact of a crime or as they navigate the criminal justice or legal system. The Star is relevant at any point when people receive support, whether the crime was recent or not, and can be used whatever the nature of the crime. It can also be used with victims of anti-social behaviour.

The Victim of Crime Star resources consist of:

- The Victim of Crime Star Chart, Notes and Action Plan
- The Victim of Crime Star User Guide, with both brief visual scales and detailed scale descriptions
- Short illustrated Scales and Flashcards for use with victims of crime
- This Guidance for Workers
- The Development Report, explaining the development history of the Victim of Crime Star
- A web application for online completion at www.staronline.org.uk.

It helped to focus discussions with service users and enabled them to identify their own positives and negatives.

Worker, service for victims of crime

I like how it can open up conversations about certain things.

Service user, service for victims of crime

The Victim of Crime Star was developed by Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise in collaboration with Thames Valley Partnership and the Thames Valley Office of Police and Crime Commissioner. The process involved workers, managers, associated professionals and victims of crime from Victims First and the Willow Project in Thames Valley. Staffordshire Victims Gateway and Axis Counselling also contributed.

Completing the Victim of Crime Star is intended to be a helpful, engaging and empowering process that stimulates and focuses discussion and provides a useful, shared basis for an action or support plan. It is a flexible tool that relies on the skills of the professionals using it, as well as on a degree of understanding and trust between them and the service user. The Star is designed to be used one to one in services where support is provided over a period of time. The aim is to have a genuine interaction and complete it collaboratively.

Background and further information about the Outcomes Star suite of tools can be found at www.outcomesstar.org.uk

Want to use this Star?
Visit www.outcomesstar.org.uk

**Contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk
or 020 7272 8765**

Before you use the Victim of Crime Star™

Make sure that you have received training in using the Victim of Crime Star, and that you are familiar with the materials and know when and how they are used in your service. It is vital that you understand and use the Journey of Change underlying the scales – **stuck**, **taking it in**, **starting to deal with it**, **finding what works** and **coping well**. This will ensure consistent and reliable information as a basis for support planning and for use by your service. You also need to be familiar with all the scale descriptions, so you can unpack and rephrase them as needed.

How to introduce the Victim of Crime Star™

Before you introduce the Star to someone for the first time:

- Devise a short script to introduce the Star in a way that feels natural to you and clear for those you are working with
- If you meet with the service users you support in groups, it can be useful and save time to explain the Star to the group before starting one-to-one work within individual sessions
- Consider giving service users who are interested a copy of the User Guide to read before the session. Although this is quite detailed and relies on someone being comfortable with reading, the whole document is worded in accessible language, so it can be shared.

When introducing the Star:

- Explain that people may start anywhere on the journey, can move both up and down on the scale and that 5 is the top of the Star scales but not the end of the journey
- Be clear that this is about establishing where they are, their experiences and journey – it is not about being judged or being awarded an overall “score”
- Let the service user decide which scale to start with or choose one that is concrete and may be easier to discuss, such as “Safety at home”.

Some suggested phrases for introducing the Star include:

“The Star tells us where things are for you now and what needs to happen next, and it helps you and me plan our work together.”

“The Victim of Crime Star is a way of tracking your recovery from the impact of the crime and finding out where you may need support.”

It's a good visual tool to see how well you're doing and it stops you worrying because you can see physically how you've progressed.

Service user, service for victims of crime

Seeing the Star visually helps me to see that I am changing, that things are happening, that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Service user

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How to complete the Victim of Crime Star™

Complete the Star collaboratively with people in a way that responds to their needs and abilities. The aim is to engage them in meaningful discussion, and to listen and learn about them, rather than to complete the Star as quickly as possible.

Use the scale descriptors as a basis for discussion about the chosen area, or have an open discussion about the area, and then use the scale to place the service user on the Journey of Change. The brief visual scales in the User Guide and the short illustrated Scales are designed to be used directly with people you support. Although the detailed scales are intended primarily as a resource for workers, they are written to be accessible, so feel free to refer to specific points for clarification with service users. Avoid reading them out in their entirety because of their length.

Always use the scales – these are designed to reduce subjectivity, otherwise one person's 2 could be another person's 4 and the completed Star won't be a useful basis for completing the action plan and your service won't be able to treat collated Star data as reliable for reporting purposes.

If you don't agree, have a discussion – this can help you learn about someone and help them reflect on their situation and see it in new ways. If a service user is able to engage meaningfully and is at 3 or above for most of the Victim of Crime Star areas, encourage them to take the lead in placing themselves on the scales. You may need to be more directive for people in the **taking it in** stage. Those who are **stuck** in all or most areas will not discuss the Star meaningfully and you may need to do a worker-only reading. Encourage those with low confidence to see their strengths, and perhaps others to be more realistic about what the impact of the crime has been on them.

If you can't reach agreement, record both views on the Star, labelling which is your view and which is the service user's, using the Star Notes to record points from your discussion. Use your professional judgement to decide when further discussion is not helpful.

Recognise external factors. While the Journey of Change focuses primarily on the service user and on them taking in and responding to the impact of the crime for them, there may be societal factors or other conditions beyond their control – and beyond the control of your service – which make it harder for things to improve. These may include poor housing, financial difficulty or lack of suitable mental health provision or other services. These also need to be acknowledged and recorded when using the Star. Your service may then be able to use this information to identify gaps in provision, plan future developments or raise issues with policy-makers.

When you have completed all of the scales, join the points to create a shape. Mark each reading on the Star Chart and join the points. Encourage service users to do this and to create the shape. This applies whether you and they are completing the Star on paper or on screen, for example using the Star Online.

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How to use the completed Star as the basis for a support plan

Look at the shape of the completed Star together and prompt the service user to reflect on it as a basis for what to do next. Ask questions such as:

- Is the shape of the Star an accurate picture of how things are for you now?
- What does it tell you about what is and is not going well?
- What are the strengths that you bring to the areas that are going well? How might you apply those strengths in other areas of your life?
- What is most important to address first?

Once you have chosen the areas to be included in the support plan, further motivational questions for each area include:

- Where on the journey do you want to get to and by when?
- What needs to be done to bring about this change?
- Who is responsible for these actions? When can they be completed?

Complete the Victim of Crime Star Action Plan or use your service's support planning documentation.

The Journey of Change provides valuable pointers for thinking about the goals of support with the service user and achievable, realistic actions, summarised in the table on the next page:

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