Victim Legislation and Social Policies

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Victim’s advocacy programs are aimed to help victims of criminal acts with the criminal justice system (Aaron & Beaulaurier, 2017). Over the years, many victim’s advocacy programs have been developed that enable victims to pass through the processes of the criminal justice system with little difficulty. The victim's advocacy programs that are under discussion in this paper are the Victim Assistance Program and the National Organization for Victim Assistance.

**Victim Assistance Program (VAP)**

The Victim Assistance Program was developed in 1972 following a lack of support for victims of crimes (Victim Assistance Program, 2019). VAP has the vision to heal all the victims of crimes that are suffering in the country. VAP aims to enable communities to integrate and incorporate victims of crimes easily (Victim Assistance Program, 2019). There are multiple services offered under VAP. To begin with, VAP offers around the clock crisis intervention. The crisis intervention services are both individual and collective. Moreover, VAP provides on-scene assistance to assist victims with their reservations and concerns. Another service offered under VAP is advocacy. There are three kinds of advocacies offered. First one is personal advocacy that aims to enable victims to make a thoughtful decision regarding their physical and emotional well-being. The second one is court advocacy which provides victims with all the necessary support and means throughout their journey within the criminal justice system. The last one is victim rights advocacy which educates victims about their rights.

* VAP is by far an effective victim's advocacy program because it provides 24-hour assistance and crisis intervention to the victims. Another reason is that VAP educates victims about their rights.
* VAP caters to the needs of almost all the victims. However, victims of domestic violence would benefit the most from it. This is because of the round the clock crisis intervention facility that helps victims to seek help at any point of the day.
* Although VAP is a comprehensive program, it would be better if it could address the needs of the victims of mass casualties.
* Media certainly plays a vital role in addressing the needs of the victims of crime. Media positively affect the needs because it provides awareness to the victims regarding their rights.

**National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA)**

NOVA takes pride in offering services in the form of crisis response to the victims of different crimes. The most significant aspect that makes NOVA stand out from the rest of the victim's advocacy programs is that it provides services to the victims of mass casualties and natural disasters. NOVA was created in the year 1975 (NOVA, 2019). Nova helps victims to develop a normal reaction to an abnormal situation. Crisis response is central in achieving objectives that are laid down in the manifesto of NOVA. Furthermore, NOVA trains responders according to the needs of the victims. The responders that are trained under the NOVA program are skilled to assist with a broad range of victims. The NOVA teams that respond to crisis provide victims with relevant education and emotional first aid intended to enable the victim to be better prepared in coping with detrimental implications of the crime in the future.

* NOVA is effective because it not only assists victims of regular crimes but also to the victims of mass casualties and natural disasters.
* Victims of all type of crimes would benefit from NOVA. However, the victims of mass casualties would benefit the most. That is because they need compassionate and emotional aid and NOVA first responders have trained accordingly.
* NOVA is an important program that caters to the needs of almost all the victims of crimes. There is not much that could be changed in NOVA.
* Media certainly plays a vital role in addressing the needs of the victims of crime. Media positively affect the needs of the victims because it provides awareness to the victims regarding their rights.

**References**

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