

# Crime Victims' Institute



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## Our Mission

The mission of the Crime Victims' Institute is to :

- Conduct research to examine the impact of crime on victims of all ages in order to promote a better understanding of victimization
- Improve services to victims
- Assist victims of crime by giving them a voice
- Inform victim-related policymaking at the state and local levels.

**Sam Houston**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

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The Crime Victims' Institute  
College of Criminal Justice  
Sam Houston State University

## From the Director:

The Crime Victims' Institute (CVI) at Sam Houston State University enters 2013 with an ambitious agenda of research and service projects that address victimization in a variety of forms. January is Stalking Awareness Month (StalkingAwarenessMonth.org), and CVI is collaborating with SHSU's Student Health Services and College of Criminal Justice to raise awareness of stalking and to provide resources to victims. Planning has also begun for Crime Victims' Rights Week, which will include a number of activities in Austin and at SHSU during the week of April 21-27.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Inside, you will find an excerpt from an upcoming report to be published by CVI that examines school district policies on dating violence in Texas. In 2007, Texas became the first state to pass legislation requiring districts to develop dating violence policies. A number of agencies throughout the state have worked with school districts in

developing these policies. In particular, the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) provides a variety of resources and a model policy to address teen dating violence ([www.tcfv.org/resources/teen-dating-violence-policy](http://www.tcfv.org/resources/teen-dating-violence-policy)).

Promoting healthy relationships among adolescents and preventing dating violence remain important issues, and CVI will continue its line of research on this topic and will work closely with other agencies throughout the state in addressing teen dating violence.

Leana A. Bouffard, Ph.D.  
Director, Crime Victims' Institute

**STALKING. KNOW IT. NAME IT. STOP IT.**

**JANUARY 2013** StalkingAwarenessMonth.org

## Focus on:

Robin Jackson

CVI Graduate Assistant

Robin is a third year Ph.D. student at Sam Houston State University and is a lifelong Texas resident. She has earned her Bachelor of Arts degrees in Journalism/Public Relations and Criminal Justice. She has received a Master of Business Administration in General Management as well. Robin's research areas of interest are varied and include teen dating violence and victimization, substance use and abuse, gender and crime as well as race and crime. She recently represented Sam Houston State University at the American Society of Criminology's 2012 annual conference where she presented research on Texas' teen dating violence policy. Robin is currently teaching a Substance Use and Abuse class at SHSU and she is working as a research assistant on several projects with Dr. Leana Bouffard.



## Examining the Issues

### Teen Dating Violence Legislation

In March of 2003, 15-year old Ortralla Mosley was stabbed to death by her ex-boyfriend in the hallway of her high school in Austin, Texas. This was the first on-campus homicide in the state that was linked to dating violence. The intense scrutiny following this incident and the activism of Ortralla's mother and others highlighted the issue of teen dating violence (TDV), especially with regard to behaviors that occur at school and the response of school administrators. In 2007, Texas became the first state to pass a law requiring school districts to adopt and implement a dating violence policy (HB 121). According to section 37.0831 of the Texas Education Code, each school district is required to develop and implement a dating violence policy that must: (1) "include a definition of dating violence that includes the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a dating relationship" and (2) "address safety

planning, enforcement of protective orders, school-based alternatives to protective orders, training for teachers and administrators, counseling for affected students, and awareness education for students and parents."

In response to this legislation, a number of state and local victim service agencies mobilized to support school districts in their efforts to respond to this new law, producing a model policy, guides to implementation, sample protocols for dealing with incidents, and training and education. Since this law passed five years ago, however, very little systematic attention has been paid to how school districts have developed and implemented dating violence policies in connection with the legislation.

The information above is an excerpt from a CVI publication to be released in February. Please visit our website in mid to late February to view the full report at:

[www.crimevictimsinstitute.org](http://www.crimevictimsinstitute.org)

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

One in three young people experience abuse in their relationships.

Visit <http://www.teenDVmonth.org> for more information!



## In the Works....

### Look for upcoming publications from the Crime Victims' Institute on:

- Texas School Districts' Implementation of Teen Dating Violence Legislation
- Dating Safety and Victimization in Traditional and Online Relationships
- Stalking Update
- Victimization Among Asian Immigrants
- Crime Victims Compensation Fund
- Awareness and Use of Sex Offender Registries

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## Let's discuss it:

In 2007, the Texas state legislature passed the first law in the nation requiring school districts to have a dating violence policy. Teen dating violence remains an important issue that needs to be addressed in a variety of ways, including prevention and response of school officials and the criminal justice system. The Texas Council of Family Violence (TCFV) has again identified this topic in their legislative agenda for the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas legislative session. In particular, TCFV notes the need to develop policies and programs aimed at middle school students as they begin to develop healthy dating relationships (<http://www.tcfv.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/TCFV-83rd-legislative-agenda.pdf>).

Please contact us at: [crimevictims@shsu.edu](mailto:crimevictims@shsu.edu) to share your thoughts about what states, schools, and parents should be doing to prevent or respond to teen dating violence.



## Upcoming Events

### Share your ideas:

We welcome your input. Please send issues or topics you would like to see CVI conduct research on to : [crimevictims@shsu.edu](mailto:crimevictims@shsu.edu)



Texas Association Against Sexual Assault 03/04-07/12  
Austin, TX

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences 03/19-23/13  
Dallas, TX

Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma 03/19-21/13  
Honolulu, HI

National Crime Victims Rights Week 04/21-27/13

January- Stalking Awareness Month

April - Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April - National Child Abuse Prevention Month



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