

# THE DENVER CENTER FOR CRIME VICTIMS



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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**2005 CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES IMPACT STUDY**

The Denver Center for Crime Victims (DCCV) is endeavoring to study the impact of its support services delivered to children and youth who have been victims of or witnesses to violent crime. Boys and girls who participate in support groups are being asked to complete pre and post surveys that measure several indicators of acute stress. Those indicators include both somatic symptoms such as headache and stomachache and emotional symptoms such as sadness, anger and fear.

Though the sample size of the pilot study is small (N=27), preliminary results are promising.

Program evaluators predicted a 25% reduction of symptom/indicators by self-report of group participants. As the charts below illustrate, symptom reduction was much more substantial than anticipated.

| <u>Somatic Symptoms</u> | <u>Before/After</u> | <u>Reduction of 25%</u> | <u>Actual Reduction/Percentage</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Stomachache             | 3.7%/0%             | .93                     | 3.7/100%                           |
| Headache                | 14.8%/0%            | 3.7                     | 14.8/100%                          |

| <u>Emotional Symptoms</u> | <u>Before/After</u> | <u>Reduction of 25%</u> | <u>Actual Reduction/Percentage</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sadness                   | 11.1%/3.7%          | 2.78                    | 7.4/67%                            |
| Anger                     | 11.1%/7.4%          | 2.78                    | 3.7/33%                            |
| Guilt                     | 22.2%/14.8%         | 5.55                    | 7.4/33%                            |
| Recurring Thoughts        | 37.0%/22.2%         | 9.25                    | 14.8/40%                           |
| Fear                      | 29.6%/17.4%         | 7.4                     | 22.2/75%                           |

Program improvements that may be indicated by these preliminary results include:

- Increased attention to feelings of guilt and anger and additional group activity aimed at managing and reducing those feelings.
- Additional study of intrusive or persistent thoughts about the victimization and how those might be quieted and/or reduced in frequency.

According to Gabriela Jaramillo, M.A., Program Specialist for Children, Youth and Families, “the support groups for children and youth at The Denver Center for Crime Victims are a tremendous asset to families in our community. The groups are a significant factor in recovery from trauma and help kids face their daily cultural realities with skill and support.”

In its 18-year history, The Denver Center for Crime Victims has served over 100,000 victims of crime in Denver. DCCV provides comprehensive and coordinated services to victims of crime and crime prevention education in Denver.

Launched in 1998, the Children, Youth and Families Program has served more than 2,000 victims of crime between the ages of 0-17. The program helps young crime victims and witnesses of violence understand and cope with their reactions to the trauma and learn healthy options for expressing feelings and conflict resolution.

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