



Mission Statement:

To support all allied professionals to enhance the delivery of culturally relevant, quality services to victims of crime in South Dakota through collaboration, coordination and education.

2026 BASIC ACADEMY AGENDA

Day One: Monday, April 13th

7:30 – 8:00AM	Registration
8:00 – 8:10AM	Land Acknowledgment and Welcome
8:10-9:30AM	Knowing your Why: Building your Purpose—Alyssa Schaefbauer and Cindy Schmit Purpose: Participants will gain understanding of why knowing your “why” is essential for personal and professional growth. Explore how your “why” can evolve over time and learn some reasons for the purpose behind your “why”.
9:30-9:40AM	BREAK
9:40-10:50AM	History of the Crime Victims’ Rights Movement in the United States—Courtney Waid Purpose: To provide a historical overview of the field of victim studies. Special focus will center on the development of victimology as an academic field; additionally, the history of the victims’ rights and assistance movement in the United States will be covered. The major social, political, legislative, and administrative influences that led to the federal and various state governments focusing resources on victim issues will be highlighted. Specific legislation from the 1970s to the present will be covered in detail.

10:50-11:00AM	BREAK
11:00AM-12:45PM	<p>In Her Shoes—Kathy Ruttens</p> <p>Purpose: To understand the dynamics of victims of domestic violence and to increase the awareness of the struggles that victims face when navigating the different systems</p>
12:45-1:45PM	LUNCH ON OWN
1:45-3:00PM	<p>Marsy's Law—Tracey Decker</p> <p>Purpose: To understand Marsy's Law and how it applies to the work that you do with victims and how to work with other professionals to best help victims while maintaining confidentiality</p>
3:00-3:15PM	BREAK
3:15-3:45PM	<p>SAVIN—Susan Dowling</p> <p>Purpose: To understand the victim notification system</p>
3:45-3:50PM	BREAK
3:50-4:50PM	<p>Crime Victims Compensation—Nicci Rancy and Kelsey Henson</p> <p>Purpose: To understand the CVC program including assisting victims with applying and what can and cannot be covered.</p>
4:50 – 5:00PM	Wrap Up

Day Two: Tuesday, April 14th

8:00 - 8:10AM	Welcome
8:10-9:10AM	<p>Navigating the Justice System from a System Advocate Point of View--Cindy Schmit, Alyssa Schaefbauer, and Scott Hultgren, Alaina Wellnitz</p> <p>Purpose: To understand the criminal justice process from a system advocate point of view and how to best explain the process to a victim</p>

9:10-9:20AM	BREAK
9:20-10:20AM	<p>Navigating the Justice System from a Shelter Advocate Point of View—Christy VanDeWetering and Sara Krekelberg</p> <p>Purpose: To understand the criminal and civil justice process from a shelter advocate point of view and how to best explain the process to a victim.</p>
10:20-10:30AM	BREAK
10:30-11:30AM	<p>Impact of Crime on Victims—Cindy Schmit & Sara Krekelberg</p> <p>Purpose: To address the different ways crime can impact victims-physically, psychologically/emotionally, financially, and spirituality</p>
11:30AM-12:45PM	LUNCH
12:45-2:15PM	<p>Communication and Safety Planning with Victims/Survivors—Sara Krekelberg and Christy VanDeWetering</p> <p>Purpose: To introduce communication skills that are necessary for victim service providers to successfully advocate for victims in the aftermath of a crime and throughout their involvement in the criminal or juvenile justice system. The session will include discussing safety planning with victims/survivors</p>
2:15-2:25PM	BREAK
2:25-4:25PM	<p>Sexual Assault—Jeff Kollars, Tracey Decker, and Angela Lisburg</p> <p>Purpose: To describe the legal definition of sexual assault, identify and practice approaches for working with victims of sexual assault, and define the roles of Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, and Advocates.</p>
4:25-5:00PM	Networking Time

Day Three: Wednesday, April 15th

8:00 – 8:05AM	Welcome
8:05 – 10:05AM	Domestic Violence— Jeff Kollars, Tracey Decker, Anna Meredith/Amy Carter Purpose: To describe the legal definitions of domestic violence and strangulation, discuss the differences that distinguish domestic violence from other crimes, and identify and practice approaches for working with victims of domestic violence.
10:05-10:15AM	BREAK
10:15AM-12:15PM	Stalking, Sextortion and Child Victims--TBD
12:15-1:30PM	LUNCH
1:30-3:30PM	Trauma Informed Response—Cassie Nagel Purpose: To explore trauma informed responses and how to utilize those responses to provide effective services to victims of crime
3:30-3:45PM	BREAK
3:45-4:15PM	Information about 211 and the Helpline—Amy Carter Purpose: To understand and identify potential resources for victims that you work with
4:20-5:00PM	South Dakota Highway Patrol Crash Assistance Program—Natasha Penner and Marissa Cronan Purpose: To understand and identify potential resources for victims that you work with
5:00-5:05PM	Wrap Up

Day Four: Thursday, April 16th

8:00 – 8:05AM	Welcome
8:05-9:30AM	Working with Native American Victims and MMIP—Tanya Grassel-Krietlow Purpose: To understand the cultural considerations when working with Native American Victims and Missing and Murdered Indigenous People

9:30-9:45AM	BREAK
9:45-10:45AM	Working with LGBTQ+ Victims—Mary Laidlaw
10:45-10:55AM	BREAK
10:55-11:50 AM	Working with People with Disabilities—Lance Sigdestad Purpose: To demonstrate an understanding of abuse of people with disabilities including common myths and what victim advocates can be aware of
11:50AM-1:00PM	LUNCH ON OWN
1:00-1:45PM	Crimes Against the Elderly and People with Disabilities—Stephen Gemar Purpose: To demonstrate an understanding of elder abuse including potential crimes that victim advocates can be aware of
1:45-1:55PM	BREAK
1:55-4:00PM	Ethics in Victim Services—Christy VanDeWetering and Courtney Waid Purpose: To provide and encourage the use of ethical standards to support the evolution of victim assistance as a professional discipline. To provide insights and activities for becoming conscious of one's values and self-aware in terms of professional conduct in assisting victims of crime.
4:00-4:15PM	Wrap Up

Day Five: Friday, April 17th

8:00 - 8:10AM	Welcome
8:10 – 9:10AM	Parole and Pardon Processes and Advocacy in the Prison System—Shelli Gust Purpose: To understand the parole and pardon system and how advocacy in the prison system is different
9:10-9:20AM	BREAK

9:20-10:00AM	TBA
10:00-10:10AM	BREAK
10:10-AM- 12:10PM	Resiliency/Self-Care— Alyssa Schaefbauer and Cindy Schmit
12:10PM – 12:30PM	Questions for Committee Members Presentation of Certificates Class Picture

**Students will do overall evaluation via survey monkey