



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Victim Assistance Program to Launch First National Support Group for Educators Assaulted by Students

In May of 2019, Victim Assistance Program is launching a new monthly support group series, Educators Assaulted by Students. This group is open to all teachers, custodial staff, bus drivers, lunch staff, substitutes, secretaries, and others who have been assaulted by a student. This non-clinical, psycho-educational peer support group will give participants the opportunity to meet others who share similar experiences, learn about healthy ways to cope with their victimization, and become educated about the healing process.

According to a 2013 survey from the American Psychological Association, 80% of teachers reported being victimized at least once during the current or past school year. "This much needed support group is vital for the well-being of teachers and staff whose lives are suddenly disrupted by student violence," said Pamela Hinton, retired Assistant Principal from Barberton and founder of F.I.V.E.S. (Facing Incidents of Violence Against Educators & Staff.) "As a victim myself, Victim Assistance provided me with encouragement, compassion, and support to heal and move forward." Victim Assistance Program is the first agency in the country to offer a support group of this nature. "Pam opened my eyes to the reality of this unreported victimization," said Leanne Graham, President & CEO of Victim Assistance Program. "We have strived to both identify and close this gap in services offered to school personnel victimized by students."

This series will offer participants a confidential space to discuss the impact a victimization has had on their careers and everyday life and better understand the impact of trauma. Registration is required to participate in the Educators Assaulted by Students support group series. A total of twelve (12) participants will be accepted. All of Victim Assistance Program's support groups are free and confidential.

If you or someone you know is interested in participating in this support group, please contact Victim Assistance Program at **330.376.7022 x218** or support@victimassistanceprogram.org. Additionally, Victim Assistance Program is looking to partner with Summit County schools to distribute support group materials to increase awareness of this new service available to school personnel. Please call 330.376.7022 ext. 218 to request a poster or flyers.

The vision of Victim Assistance Program is a world where all victims are healed. The mission is to empower our community to restore lives impacted by crisis, violence, and tragedy. The purpose of the Agency is to provide 24-hour crisis intervention, advocacy, and education to victims of crime and trauma and the professional community who serves this population. To learn more about Victim Assistance Program's services, and ways to get involved, visit victimassistanceprogram.org or call 330-376-7022.

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