

CRIME VICTIMS
RESOURCE CENTER

FALL 2025 Newsletter

Serving victims in Mower County since 1977 • To subscribe or unsubscribe, email miller.tori@mayo.edu



**OCTOBER IS
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AWARENESS MONTH**

Unsure of calling the police?

Making a police report can be daunting. Especially if it is something you have never experienced. We had the opportunity to sit down with Lieutenant Hartman of the Austin Police Department to discuss helpful information, common questions, and misconceptions people run into when making a report.

Has a crime happened?

When should you call 911?

The simplest way to determine if a situation warrants calling the police is to ask yourself, "Has a crime happened?" In the event of an emergency, call 911. If a crime has happened but there is no emergency or danger, you can contact the non-emergency line at 507-437-9400.

What happens after making the initial call?

When you call 911 or dispatch, they relay the information to officers, who are then dispatched to your location. How quickly this happens depends on the urgency of the situation. Police have a limited number of officers at any given time, so they must prioritize each situation. Active threats, emergencies, or dangerous situations will be responded to first. If you're uncomfortable with an officer coming to your home, you also have the option to go to the law enforcement center to file the report.

After getting your statement, the officers will determine what the best action is moving forward. Every situation is different. In many cases, officers have a fair amount of discretion on how to proceed with the information they are given.

If you need to provide more information after a report is taken, you can make a supplemental police report. Lt. Hartman explained that reconnecting with the officer originally assigned to the case can help streamline communication and improve the flow of information. If you are unable to reach that officer, any available officer can take the additional information and update the report.



What kind of questions should you expect?

An officer's goal is to understand the full scope of the situation. Lt. Hartman broke down the helpful details into the 5 Ws: who, what, when, where, and why. Officers understand that you may not have all these answers. Even without all the Ws, Lt. Hartman encourages people to make a report when a crime has happened. This helps law enforcement identify patterns in the community and leads to more accurate data collection.

Expect the 5 Ws: who, what, when, where and why

What if someone is frequently violating a restraining order?

There are three different types of restraining orders: an Order for Protection (OFP), a Harassment Restraining Order (HRO), and a Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO). All three of these have a primary function, to keep people safe. Lt. Hartman states, "These orders are in place because a judge has determined that someone poses a significant danger." He encourages people to take every violation seriously. Reporting violations is what makes these orders effective and can result in an immediate arrest of the offender.

A special thank you to Lieutenant Hartman, who shared this final message, "We are here to help. It's why many of us got into this field. - We want to help people." For more information about making a police report or requesting advocacy during the reporting process, please call the Crime Victims Resource Center at 507-437-6680.

In an emergency, always call 911.

Common Misconceptions

MYTH.....

Police must make an arrest every time a crime happens.

FACT.....

Police have a lot of discretion when deciding how to handle things. Some situations may be resolved with a verbal warning, while others may require the aggressor to be arrested to ensure the situation is safe. There are some crimes, such as restraining order violations or domestic violence, that officers must make an arrest by law.

MYTH.....

TV accurately shows what law enforcement can do.

FACT.....

TV shows and media are designed to be fast, entertaining, and have stories wrapped up within 45 minutes. Law enforcement and investigations are required to follow protocols while gathering information. This, in turn, means that processes can take a significant amount of time. Depending on the situation, an investigation can drastically vary in its duration.

MYTH.....

Officers can assume someone is guilty based on prior conduct.

FACT.....

Assumptions won't be held up in court. Officers must work with what they can prove with evidence. Officers cannot make an arrest or submit potential charges based on assumptions, regardless of an individual's past conduct. Proof is crucial.

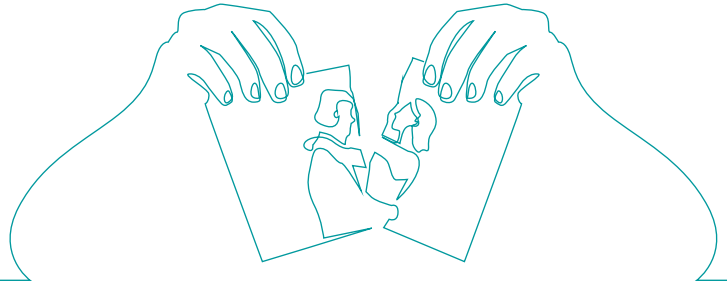
MYTH.....

Police or victims are responsible for pressing charges.

FACT.....

Police gather information and can inform people of suspected charges. Once their report is taken, it is then forwarded to a prosecutor's office, and they, otherwise known as "The State," are the ones who have the final say on what charges will be prosecuted.

WHY DON'T THEY JUST LEAVE? Wouldn't that solve the problem?



For advocates who work closely with survivors of abuse, the question “Why don’t they just leave?” overlooks the many complex reasons why someone may stay — and the very real barriers that make “just leaving” incredibly difficult, even dangerous.

1. Love and Hope for Change

Many survivors still love their partner. They focus on their partner’s positive qualities and hold on to hope that the abuse will stop — that they can help their partner change and become the person they once were or wish to be.

2. Children and Family Pressure

Children are often a significant reason survivors stay. They may fear breaking up the family, or worry about depriving their children of a parent. In many cases, the abuser uses threats like,

“If you leave me, I’ll take the kids and you’ll never see them again.”

This kind of manipulation creates a powerful emotional and psychological trap.

3. Increased Danger After Leaving

Contrary to popular belief, leaving an abuser doesn’t always make someone safer. In fact, the most dangerous time for a survivor is often right after they try to leave. Abusers may threaten, “If you ever leave me, I’ll kill you.” Unfortunately, many survivors know this isn’t an empty threat.

Every minute
32 people
experience
intimate
partner
violence in the
United States.*

*source: breakthecycle.org/domestic-violence-statistics

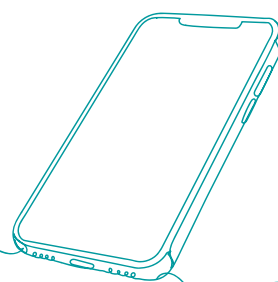
4. Continued Contact and Legal Manipulation

Even after separating, many survivors are still forced to interact with their abuser — especially when they share children. Abusers may use custody arrangements or parenting time as tools to maintain control. Additionally, many stalkers are former intimate partners, meaning physical separation doesn't guarantee safety.

Survivors may also worry about their children's well-being when left alone with an abusive parent. If someone is willing to abuse their partner, they are certainly capable of harming their children too.

5. Financial Dependence and Lack of Resources

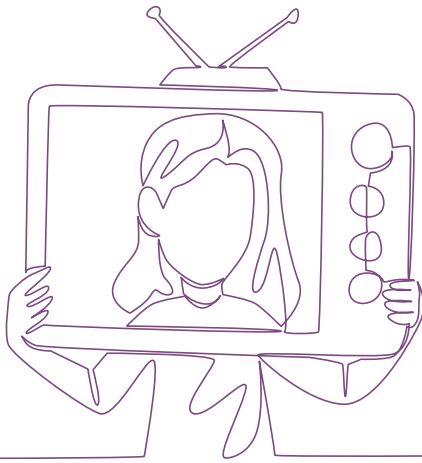
For many survivors, leaving means facing severe financial hardship. Whether unemployed or underemployed, they may not have the resources to support themselves and their children. The fear of homelessness, hunger, or being unable to afford childcare can become overwhelming.



You Are Not Alone

If you or someone you know is facing these barriers, help is available. The **Crime Victims Resource Center** offers support, guidance, and options to those experiencing abuse.

Call us at 507-437-6680 to talk with someone who understands.



THE PRICE OF FAME:

The Rise of Kid-Fluencers and the Fight for Financial Protection

Over the years, there have been countless stories of child stars who have had to fight to reclaim their earnings that were being horribly mismanaged by their own parents. As you can imagine, these young actors often had very demanding roles. Imagine working most of your childhood only to later discover that all that you earned is gone, or your parents, in charge of monitoring those accounts, refuse to give up any financial control. Stars like Shirley Temple, Aaron Carter, and Macaulay Culkin are just a few who alleged they were financially exploited by their own parents.

Fast forward to a day and age where parents now use platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok to make their children famous. These children are often referred to as 'Kid-Fluencers,' and it didn't take long for stories to surface in recent years of parents who have exploited their children for financial gain by using them in content creation. A few states have attempted to enact bills to afford protection for children involved in this content with Illinois being one of the first. Now Minnesota has joined the charge with The Minnesota Kidfluencer Law taking effect on July 1, 2025.

Key Aspects of the Bill

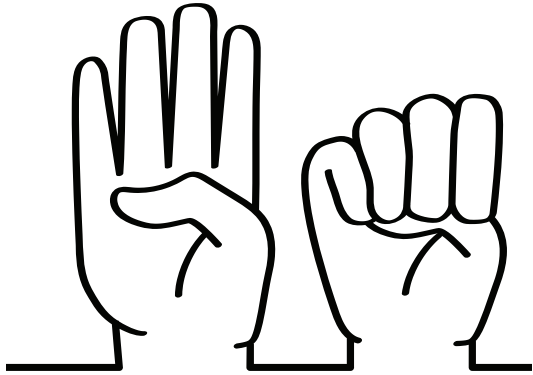
- A content creator is defined as an individual 18 years or older who creates video content performed in Minnesota in exchange for compensation.
- A minor is considered engaged in content creation when at least 30% of the content creator's compensated video content within a 30-day period included the likeness, name, or photograph of any minor, and the number of views received per video segment met the online platform's threshold for generating compensation.
- A minor aged 14-17 years old may produce, create, and publish their own content, and they are entitled to all compensation.
- A minor **under the age of 14** may not engage in content creation. If a minor is featured by a content creator, **the minor must receive 100% of the proceeds** of the creator's compensation.
- The content creator must set aside earnings in a trust fund that the minor can access upon turning 18.
- The bill outlines what type of records must be kept and for how long.
- The bill also addresses requirements in the event the minor child (13 and older) requests content to be deleted.

Important to Consider

Though this bill is primarily geared towards protecting the financial interests of the minor, there are some aspects that attempt to protect the child's overall well-being. Yet this brings into question, do we really know the impact of being a Kid-Fluencer? This is a topic that could undoubtedly use more research to gain a better understanding of the long-term and short-term effects. At the very least, being a young influencer has proven to have an impact on the child's privacy and safety. Kids subjected to this lifestyle may also experience chronic stress, self-esteem issues tied to public approval, and a loss of autonomy, to name a few.

No matter the platform, be mindful of what you are putting on the internet and who may be viewing it, especially when it involves your child. [Click here to learn more about the bill.](#)

KNOW THE SIGN



A distress and domestic violence hand signal was created at the start of Covid lockdown as a way for domestic violence victims to non-verbally seek help. It is now recognized as an international signal for 'Help Me.' Scan QR Code to see it in action.



Learn it. Watch for it. Share it with others.

1. Palm facing outwards.
2. Place thumb on the palm.
3. Move fingers down over thumb.

Crime Victims Resource Center

1000 First Drive NW, Austin · 507-437-6680

Empowering victims of crime through education, intervention, support and advocacy.

The Crime Victims Resource Center will help individuals who have been victims of many different types of crime. Some of the specific crimes we work with are:

- Accidents involving intoxicated driver
- Assault
- Burglary
- Child Abuse
- Domestic Abuse/Assault
- Elder Abuse
- Harassment
- Sexual Abuse/Assault
- Stalking
- Terroristic Threats
- Theft



Tori Miller
Director



Sasha Border
Victim Advocate



Coleena Snyder
Victim Advocate

Victim Support Services

- 24 hour crisis hotline
- Crisis counseling
- Safety planning
- Arranging emergency shelter
- Support groups
- Referrals to other agencies
- Emergency transportation
- Support during hospital examinations
- Support during police reporting
- Assistance with Orders for Protection and Harassment Restraining Orders
- Assistance with understanding the criminal justice system
- Accompaniment to court proceedings for support
- Updates on the progress of court proceedings
- Notification of victims' rights

Free and confidential service funded by The Hormel Foundation, Minnesota Department of Public Safety-Office of Justice Programs, and United Way of Mower County.