

ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF A STATE VICTIM COMPENSATION PROGRAM: A COMPARISON WITH CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Victim compensation programs have existed in the United States since the 1960s. Research has established that eligible victims are largely not participating in these programs or accessing the available funds. Previous studies have found that victims' underutilization may be due to a lack of knowledge about, or awareness of, compensation. This study examined victims of child sexual abuse who filed for compensation in one state program during calendar year 2007. The aim of the study was to determine what victim groups, in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, and county, are currently being underserved by the compensation program. This information may help to improve outreach efforts to underserved groups. In order to determine what types of child sexual abuse victims were not participating in victim compensation, compensation claims filed with the state victim compensation program (VCP) were compared to substantiated cases of child sexual abuse in the child protective services (CPS) system. Fifteen of the state's counties were examined using a secondary analysis of the data extracted from both the victim compensation and child protective services systems. While there were no differences in the types of victims entering both systems with regards to victim gender, there were some significant differences in terms of victim age, ethnicity, and geographical demographics.

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