

*Innovations in Criminal Justice Summit III
Program Summaries
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Ashland Police Department You Have Options Program



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Program Start Date: Development from 2010 – 2013; Web launch January 1, 2013

Website: www.ReportingOptions.org

Description: Agencies participating in the You Have Options Program recognize the need for a victim-centered and offender-focused response to sexual violence. The traditional law enforcement response to sexual violence tends to discourage sexual assault victims from seeking assistance through the criminal justice system. As a result, often law enforcement doesn't receive the information necessary to hold sexual offenders accountable, and those offenders go on to victimize additional persons.

The You Have Options Program provides survivors three reporting options: Information Only (which involves no investigation beyond a survivor interview or inquiry into whether an identified assailant may be a serial perpetrator); Partial Investigation (which involves some further investigation by law enforcement, and might include the collection of evidence); and Complete Investigation (which involves all the required elements necessary for a criminal prosecution). Investigators pay particular attention to identifying serial sexual predators via investigative strategies specifically tailored for that purpose.

All law enforcement agencies that participate in the You Have Options Program believe in providing victims of sexual assault with as much control over their report and any subsequent criminal investigation as the law allows. Unless legally mandated (e.g., certain instances of domestic violence; when the victim is under 18; when a victim is in continuing physical danger) or in other rare circumstances such as a significant threat to public safety, officers offer the program's 20 Elements of a Victim-Centered and Offender-Focused You Have Options Law Enforcement Response. For example, a survivor need not report in person, but can use an online form or ask an advocate to report for her, or may remain anonymous. Survivors may provide as much, or as little, information as they choose, taking time to evaluate their options. Officers must help a survivor locate advocacy services irrespective of their cooperation with an investigation or prosecution. And officer interview techniques must be trauma-informed.

Criminal Justice Partners: Operated by an Interdepartmental Task Force consisting of the Ashland Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office and the Jackson County Sexual Assault Response Team.

Evaluation/Research: The Ashland Police Department has seen a 106% increase in sexual assault reports between 2009 and 2013. The You Have Options Program entered into a commitment with the Police Foundation in 2015 to formally evaluate the program.

Implementation Guide: [Click Here](#)



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