



Road Victims Trust

Supporting victims of serious road collisions

The Road Victims Trust offers a comprehensive service to people who are bereaved or otherwise affected by fatal road collisions.

Counselling Volunteers are the basis of the services we offer – people from many different backgrounds giving up their time to support others in their own community, who have suffered because of a road collision. For victims, the fact that someone has bothered to make contact with them after a road death not because they are paid to, but as an expression of concern, is in itself a gesture of some significance.

Training for volunteers is essential to ensure that the service is appropriate and of the best possible standard. Our training is based on the belief that many people have within them the ability to offer support to individuals and families affected by road death. This training course allows people to draw on this ability and learn new knowledge and skills to enable them to work confidently in many different situations.

There are no national training guidelines for working with road death victims. We have used knowledge gained through experience, together with research and knowledge from trauma, bereavement and counselling theory to design both the services offered and the volunteer training.

The training course is designed to cover the knowledge and skills that all volunteers should have before working with victims of serious road collisions. It equips them to offer a combination of emotional support and practical information. Having successfully completed the course volunteers will be aware of the impact of a road death on those affected and have a foundation from which to provide practical information on issues such as police investigations and court procedures.

Although the training involves some theoretical input, it is mainly experiential; much of the training is based on active discussion of real issues, so that volunteers become familiar with a range of situations which they are likely to meet. It looks in depth at the challenges which may arise in the work. It also builds on volunteers' existing experience of information giving, listening and counselling skills.

While this training programme provides the basis for those who want to offer support to individuals and families bereaved or affected by a serious road collision, the learning does not end as the training finishes. Once recruited the volunteer "learning" is not restricted to organised training programmes, but continues with a regular structured individual supervision programme and group development sessions, all of which are free of charge. We aim to ensure that volunteers are able to continue to develop their skills and experience through this system which encourages discussion and reflection on all their work and their personal response to it.

For prospective volunteers there is an initial interview for acceptance onto the training course. After the successful completion of the course there is an interview for appraisal and discussion before the final decision is made to accept the trainee as a Road Victims Trust Counselling Volunteer.

For further information see www.rvtrust.org.uk or call 01234 843345