***Outreach to Clergy***

“Any suggestions on how to start doing outreach to clergy?” a member program manager asked. We forwarded this question to two experienced outreach coordinators, who quickly responded with some ideas.

“We started by contacting the Ohio Alliance of Ministers and the Catholic Diocese and we went to their regional meetings,” wrote Kelli Grace of the Ohio AG’s office. Knowing that some victims disclose crimes to their spiritual leaders or turn to them for support, the program provided materials about domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault, as well as the compensation program. “We were invited to go to several churches, and we spoke to the congregation for just a few minutes. Facts about victims and our program were added to church newsletters or bulletins.” Ethel Ford of South Carolina described how her program uses 3 outreach offices around the state to reach out to clergy (as well as other key groups), participating in various events and providing materials to them. She noted that in some communities, funeral home directors also may be clergy. She also stressed that as with any contact group, it’s necessary to repeat these outreach efforts on a regular basis to remind people about services available.