|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Graphics** | **Script** |
| Acknowledgement | The following video has been filmed on Kaurna Land.  We acknowledge this is the traditional country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and pay respect to Elders past and present.  We recognise their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land and respect that they are of continuing importance to the Kaurna people living today. |
| **Words on screen** | **Recognising the rights of victims** |
| **Words on screen** | **Right to services and support**  **Court Support Program Victims of Crime, SA** |
| Margie Von Doussa | My name’s Margie Von Doussa and I’m the Court Support Project Manager for the Victims of Crime South Australia office. |
| **Words on screen** | **Tell us about what you do** |
| Filmed interview | How it works is that our service has trained volunteers that are connected and linked to victims and witnesses, and they actually attend court with them.  Some of the most important work that the volunteers do is when they actually go into the courtroom with victims and witnesses and they sit, silently and very impartially alongside them and so whilst they can’t engage with victims while they’re giving evidence, it certainly helps reduce the sense of isolation and vulnerability by having someone sit alongside them. |
| Words on screen | **How does the Court Support Program work?** |
| Filmed interview | So court support volunteer will arrive in the morning on the day that they’re required – often the first day of a trial – not always – they’ll often meet the victim or witness and the investigating officer just outside of the court building.  They’ll then go into the court building with someone, show them where the waiting rooms are, orientate them to all the housekeeping, the basics of who’s who, what to expect, and then they’ll just wait.  The Sherriff’s Officer will call them in at the time they’re allocated, they might come in and out of that courtroom several times.  It might be that a victims’ evidence is finished in one day, so then at the end of the day they conclude – and often people have connected over something so they might have connected over football or crochet or who knows, because even though it’s a really difficult day sometimes people have had a lot of good laughs during the day in the breaks, but they wrap that service up and go their separate ways, and that’s really the conclusion. |
| **Words on screen** | **How do you train court support volunteers?** |
| Filmed interview | There’s the basics, what the role is – it’s actually really important what the role isn’t. So, we aren’t wanting people to go in, in an advocacy role, we don’t want people that are going to interfere with the criminal justice trial process.  Some of the skills that we teach are around being able to be present for people without actually feeling like you need to step into the space where lawyers or police officers or court staff have a very specific role.  We train them in how to work with people who are impacted by trauma because a lot of victims who are attending court have had a really traumatic experience.  We get our volunteers to make sure that anything they say does not impact on the court process, so no coaching, no discussing evidence, all of those things are really important, so we actually train people to do less rather than more, but do less in a really skilful way. |
| **Words on screen** | **When do you usually meet victims?** |
| Filmed interview | It’s interesting the entry point into contact with us can be really early on or it might be right just before a trial.  The contact with a volunteer will happen on the morning of trial.  In a very few circumstances a victim might say I would like to speak to the person that’s going to support me, and then we will facilitate a phone call the night before trial. |
| **Words on screen** | **Why is this helpful for victims?** |
| Filmed interview | For a victim, sitting in where they give evidence from can be an incredibly lonely and isolating experience, all eyes are on them and even though we can say people are in that room to support them, actually having someone sit right next to them, looking out at all of those people from the same perspective as they’re looking out at that courtroom, it just reduces isolation. |
| **Words on screen** | **How do victims access your service?** |
| Filmed interview | There’s actually an online referral form that any person can request court support in the district and supreme courts.  If you have an investigating officer or a witness assistance officer, a counsellor, psychologist, friend, mum – whoever it is, anyone can apply for that for you to our office.  If it is someone like your mum or your sister, we will ask whether they’ve sought your permission, so we absolutely have to keep the victim at the centre.  All of those professionals that are involved in the court process, they will all know about our service, so if you’re not sure how to find us and you forget about our website, ask someone and they’ll link people to us. |
| **Words on screen** | **What’s your advice to victims of crime?** |
| Filmed interview | Breathe. Breathe and ask questions, ask for help.  Ask our office, ask the investigating officer, if you happen to have a Witness Assistance Officer, talk to them.  It doesn’t matter what your question is – it doesn’t even matter if you don’t know the question to ask, all you have to do is say I need to talk to someone. |
| Closing card | Have you been the victim of a crime?  You have rights |
|  | Find our more at  Victims of Crime SA [www.voc.sa.gov.au](http://www.voc.sa.gov.au) |