

For immediate release  
March 27, 2013

**From Steubenville to Sandusky, we have to do better.**

Exactly 10 months ago this Friday, NCVLI issued a press release about our fight (alongside the National Center for Victims of Crime and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape) to protect the identity of Jerry Sandusky's victims. Shortly after, on June 22, 2012, Jerry Sandusky was found guilty of perpetrating heinous crimes on many young victims.

For most survivors, a guilty verdict is not an ending; rather it simply marks the passing of yet another phase in their long journey of survival. Sadly, nearly a year later, we are witness to unnecessary and public re-victimization of these survivors.

Media coverage and public conversations of the case have spotlighted the victims, often by name, without affording them a choice in the matter. This co-opting of victim stories must stop.

Respecting and supporting survivors' choice regarding what, when, how, and with whom they share their victimization is critical for survivors and our communities. When we name victims, speak for them, or doubt them, we contribute to a culture of re-victimization.

At best this culture discourages future victims from reporting and accessing services.

At worst this culture subjects survivors to reliving the loss of control, shame, and intense fear that was at the heart of their original victimization, and this can drive them to hopelessness, depression, and even suicidal ideation.

It is a sad fact that we find ourselves commenting on invasive media coverage of victims for the second time in two weeks. What we say and who we let say it has a profound effect on individual victims' well-being, on crime reporting, on public safety, and on the ability of our justice system to achieve justice. From Steubenville to Sandusky, we have to do better.

*Founded in 2000, the [National Crime Victim Law Institute](http://www.NCVLI.org) is a national resource for crime victim lawyers and advocates to support the assertion and enforcement of victims' rights in criminal and civil processes. NCVLI continues to be the only national organization whose mission is focused on enforcement of victims' rights in the courts.*