

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

New York State and the rest of the nation recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. While we are commemorating this important observance in a variety of ways, we are clear that every month – not just October – demands commitment and vigilance to end domestic violence. We won't rest until all New Yorkers can feel safe at home, and we invite *you* to join the effort.

Shine the Light on Domestic Violence!

Join us in turning New York State purple! Why purple? Purple is a symbol of courage, survival, honor, and has come to symbolize the fight to end domestic violence. For several years domestic violence programs around the State have used purple in creative ways to raise awareness about the prevalence and harm of domestic violence. The NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence is building upon that effort to "Shine the Light on Domestic Violence" by turning the State purple for the month. In addition to the Mid-Hudson Bridge in Poughkeepsie, which will be wearing a necklace of purple lights during October, and Niagara Falls, which will be lit in purple on a special day, a variety of buildings and structures are on board, ready to show their support in the effort to raise awareness of domestic violence. Many local nonprofits and businesses are joining the effort, and we encourage you to join us.

What is Domestic Violence?

IT'S NOT JUST PHYSICAL

Domestic violence is one person's use of a variety of tactics, often involving physical violence, to control another person in an intimate relationship. Although many people think of cuts and bruises when they think of domestic violence, the physical harm is usually accompanied by emotional, psychological and sometimes sexual violence as well. Specific behaviors can include physical violence like hitting, slapping, pushing, punching, or pulling hair, but also often include isolating the partner from family and friends; controlling finances; making threats to hurt or harm the partner or her/his children; following or spying on them; sabotaging work efforts; and demeaning and belittling the partner to destroy their self-esteem. A person who is being hurt by their intimate partner is most in danger when leaving the relationship, which is one reason it is so difficult for people to get and stay safe.

HOW BAD IS THE PROBLEM?

Domestic violence is far too prevalent. Police in New York State respond to nearly half a million calls for assistance for domestic violence and more than 15,000 adults and children use emergency shelters each year.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

New York benefits from a wide range of services available to help victims. There are 24/7 confidential hotlines staffed with trained counselors available to speak with victims or their friends. Every county in the State is served by a local domestic violence service provider.

A person who is being abused does not have to stay in a shelter to get help from a domestic violence program. Many programs offer services for children, counseling, support groups, help with legal services or immigrant issues, training and educational services, help getting medical care, employment and social services, emergency transportation and housing.

24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-942-6906 (English) 1-800-942-6908 (Spanish)

For more information, please visit the
NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence
website at: www.opdv.state.ny.us



TAKE ONE PURPLE STEP!

You can make a difference and help reduce the number of people who are unsafe in their homes and relationships. You can help, no matter who you are.

Here are some purple steps you can take:

1. **FRIEND?** Listen, support, and believe your friend. Don't be an expert: be a friend, and get her to the experts! Your local or statewide hotlines are good resources.
2. **EMPLOYER?** Provide information. Consider implementing a domestic violence and the workplace policy. Make a charitable commitment: local programs need your support.
3. **PARENT?** Talk to your kids about respectful relationships. Observe your children's relationships. Maintain a dialogue with your children MODEL respectful relationships..
4. **BUSY?** Donate to your local program, to the NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence, or to a national organization.
5. **WANT TO DO SOMETHING?** Find volunteer opportunities in your community. Hold a phone or other kind of drive to benefit a local program – many also need adult and children's clothing, and household goods. Educate yourself about the problem.
6. **TEENAGER OR COLLEGE STUDENT?** Read the information your school may be giving you on dating abuse. Don't confuse love and stalking. No one should ever make you feel afraid or controlled. Talk to someone at your school, your parents, or a trusted adult if you or a friend is in trouble.
7. **EMPLOYEE and/or UNION MEMBER?** Provide information. Host or sponsor an awareness event at your workplace. Domestic violence is a job jeopardy issue.
8. **BELONG TO A FAITH COMMUNITY?** Become known as a safe place. Faith leaders and members can address, acknowledge, and condemn domestic violence in lectures, discussion groups, and sermons. Educate the congregation. Speak out. Lead by example. Offer space to nonprofits. Partner with existing resources.
9. **ADULT?** Be a leader. Men can show by example that being strong does not mean being violent. Women can listen nonjudgmentally to their friends, mothers, and sisters. If someone tells you something that makes you uncomfortable, or shows that she's uncomfortable or scared, let her know you are worried for her. Listen and support her. She can ask questions confidentially, and get advice, at the New York State Hotline: 1-800-942-6906 (or 1-800-942-6908 in Spanish) 24/7.
10. **NEW YORKER?** Be proud – yours is the only state to have a government agency dedicated to this issue. But proud is not enough – take steps to make ours the safest state in the union.

EVERYONE CAN TAKE ONE STEP TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER.

For more ideas, go to www.opdv.state.ny.us

NYS Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline 1-800-942-6906 – 24/7 and Confidential

NYS Linea Contra la Violencia Domestica y Agresion Sexual – 24/7 y Confidential

Find the DV program near you, go to:

www.nyscadv.org or www.opdv.state.ny.us