

# Domestic Violence: Educating, Understanding, and Responding

## The Role of the Faith Community Seven Weeks of Domestic Violence Awareness

### Dear Members of the Faith Community,

Please join us in a community-wide effort to reduce domestic violence in Indianapolis. Clarian Health, the Indiana Partnership to Prevent Violent Injury and Death, and WTHR 13 are joining forces with many other community organizations to educate the faith community about domestic and intimate partner violence. The initiative will provide faith leaders with information regarding the dynamics of violent relationships, warning signs of violent personalities, and appropriate interventions and resources for use when facing domestic violence and abuse.

People of all ages and races, regardless of income or level of education, are living in terror, suffering emotional and physical trauma and death. In the United States in one year, three women are murdered every day by their boyfriend or spouse. Last year in Indiana, 79 individuals died as a direct result of domestic violence and almost 10,000 women and children spent over 160,000 days in an emergency shelter resulting from a domestic altercation.

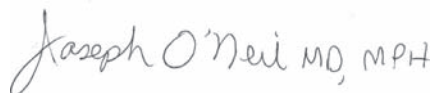
Domestic violence often occurs in a predictable pattern. If that pattern is recognized, and those involved seek help from community resources, it is possible to prevent an unfortunate tragedy. Faith leaders have the unique potential to educate and influence the community. Many persons in distress turn to their faith leaders for help, and this provides a crucial window of opportunity to intervene and provide information and resources that could prevent a violent event in that person's life.

This brochure includes seven educational messages that may be used in sermons or messages to your congregations. The information may also be inserted into bulletins, newsletters, or other educational materials. We encourage you to participate in the "Seven Weeks of Domestic Violence Awareness" by sharing these messages with your faith community on the "prescribed weeks" noted in this brochure.

Additionally, we encourage you to attend a full-day conference on November 1<sup>st</sup> at Christian Theological Seminary entitled, "Domestic Violence: Educating, Understanding, and Responding: The Role of the Faith Community." This event is free of charge to faith leaders of any faith tradition. Expert speakers will provide valuable education and resources that will help you become involved in prevention of domestic abuse.

Please consider the important role you play in helping families at risk for or survivors of violence, and share this brochure with other faith leaders. Together, we can make an impact and educate our respective communities on this important public health issue.

Sincerely,



Joseph O'Neil, MD

Associate Medical Director, Indiana Partnership to Prevent Violent Injury and Death



**For additional information,  
please contact:**

Lori Lovett  
Indiana Partnership to Prevent  
Violent Injury and Death  
317-278-0945

# "7 Weeks of Domestic Violence Awareness"

## Week of July 22 through week of September 2, 2007

Domestic violence is a serious public health issue in this state and throughout our nation. We encourage you to take action to educate your faith community about preventing intimate partner violence by participating in the "7 Weeks of Domestic Violence Awareness" education and media campaign.

You can participate by simply including the following messages in your sermon or message or adding the information to your bulletin, newsletter, or other written information on the "prescribed weeks" written below.

A community-wide approach is needed to address this issue, and your efforts are invaluable to the fight against domestic violence.

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## Week of Sunday, July 22, 2007

### **Domestic Violence Facts:**

- Domestic violence includes psychological, emotional, verbal, economic, sexual and physical violence used against an intimate partner.
- Domestic Violence is an equal opportunity offender across race, religion, ethnicity, education level and socioeconomic status.
- Eighty-five to ninety percent of survivors of reported domestic violence are women assaulted by male partners.
- Estimates range from one to three million women suffering a physical assault at the hands of an intimate partner each year.
- Thirty percent of Americans report knowing a woman who has been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend this year.
- Approximately 40% of women who seek emergency room treatment were injured by a spouse, former spouse or intimate partner.
- Estimates tell us a woman is injured due to domestic violence every 9 seconds. That adds up to 360 women assaulted every hour and over 8,000 women brutalized every day in the United States.
- On average, three women are murdered every day in the US due to domestic violence.

**You can find more statistics about the prevalence of domestic violence through the Family Violence Prevention Fund at [www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org)**

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## Week of Sunday, July 29, 2007

### **Violence in relationships does not always start in adulthood. Survivors and batterers are growing younger and younger and are engaging in abusive behaviors in their adolescent relationships.**

- One in four teens report verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse each year.
- One in five teens report being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.
- One in three teens report knowing a friend or peer who has been hit, punched, kicked, slapped, choked or otherwise hurt by his or her partner.
- Eighty percent of teenaged young women consider verbal abuse as a serious issue for themselves and their peers.
- Approximately 80% of young women who have been physically abused by their partner remain in the relationship.
- Teen dating violence most often occurs in the home of one of the partners.

**Look for further information on teen dating violence at [www.chooserrespect.org](http://www.chooserrespect.org)**

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## Week of Sunday, August 5, 2007

### **As with any other type of trauma, survivors of domestic violence often present warning signs that go unrecognized or unaddressed. The following is a list of some behaviors that family, friends, neighbors or colleagues might see from a person living in a violent home:**

- Gives up favored hobbies or activities.
- Changes in dress or appearance due to partner's disapproval.
- Increasing isolation or withdrawal from family and friends.
- Sudden changes in mood or personality.
- Hypervigilance.
- Signs/ symptoms of anxiety or depression.
- Fear of partner or fear of discussing relationship.
- Increase in alcohol or drug use.
- Unexplained injuries such as scratches, cuts or bruises (or a story that is inconsistent with the injuries).

## Week of Sunday, August 12, 2007

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**Did you know that perpetrators of domestic violence act in ways that are predictive of their violent personality? Below is a list of behavioral characteristics that are common in men who abuse their partners.**

- Abusive of a previous partner
- Jealousy
- Controlling behavior
- Pushes for an immediate commitment
- Dr. Jekyll/ Mr. Hyde personality
- Sexually aggressive
- Abusive or disrespectful gender roles
- Hypersensitive
- Blames others for his feelings or behavior
- Unrealistic expectations
- Cruelty towards animals or children

**It is possible that a person may not demonstrate a single trait on this list, but still be horribly abusive. At the same time, he or she could show every characteristic and not perpetrate any forms of violence against their family.**

## Week of Sunday, August 19, 2007

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**The adult survivor of domestic violence is often not the only victim suffering in a violent home.** Over half of female victims of domestic violence live in homes with children under the age of 12. Current studies estimate that anywhere from 3.3 to 10 million children witness some form of domestic violence annually. We also know that children who grow up in a home with domestic violence are 79% more likely to become victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse and 74% more likely to commit violent crimes. Furthermore, the US Advisory Board on Child Abuse states that the single most predictive precursor to child abuse and neglect fatalities is domestic violence.

## Week of Sunday, August 26, 2007

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### **Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Violence: Helping the Survivor-**

- Reassure them that the abuse is NOT their fault and they have done NOTHING to deserve this treatment.
- Validate their feelings.
- Recognize their right to make their own decisions, even if they decide to stay in the relationship. REMEMBER, only the person in the relationship knows when it is safe and appropriate to break away.
- NEVER tell someone to leave.
- Do not attack the batterer.
- Support them, no matter what.
- Educate yourself and the community.
- If you are familiar, provide resources for them to seek help if and when they are ready.

### **Addressing the Batterer-**

- Do not confront the batterer directly as that may put the survivor at greater risk.
- Hold the batterer accountable for his actions.



**NAMI Indianapolis**  
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill



## Week of Sunday, September 2, 2007

There are many resources available to survivors, to batterers and to the community with regard to domestic violence. Marion and the surrounding counties are home to six shelters, dozens of counseling agencies, and multiple legal resources as well. Below are just a few:

### **If you are in an abusive relationship:**

**Connect 2 Help: 211 or (317) 926-4357** - Connect 2 Help is a clearing house for social service information. They can assist with referrals to shelter, advocacy, counseling and a host of other services.

**The Salvation Army Social Service Center: (317) 637-5551** - The Salvation Army runs an emergency shelter for women and children seeking safety. They also offer services beyond shelter for those in their programs.

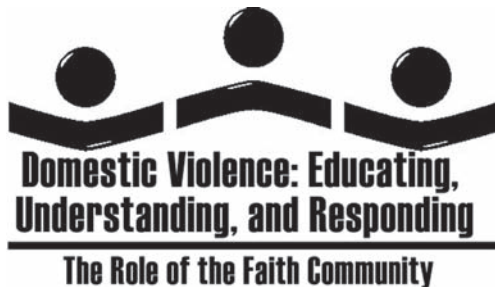
**The Julian Center: (317) 920-9320** - The Julian Center offers emergency shelter, transitional housing, counseling and case management for women and children, and outreach advocacy for adults..

**The Protective Order Pro Bono Project: (317) 327-6969** - The POPBP offers assistance obtaining and maintaining an Order for Protection for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**The Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence: (317) 917-3685** - While not a direct service provider, ICADV offers resources, both service and legal, as well as being home to the Resource Center, a library full of resources on all topics surrounding family violence. You can also access website at [www.violenceresource.org](http://www.violenceresource.org)

**NAMI Indianapolis – National Alliance for the Mental Illness - CALL 317-767-7653 for a brochure or visit [www.namiindy.org](http://www.namiindy.org).** Domestic violence sometimes can be related to untreated mental illnesses. NAMI is dedicated to improving the lives of persons and their families touched by serious mental illnesses through education classes, support groups and advocacy efforts.

**Please email Lori Lovett at [llovett@iupui.edu](mailto:llovett@iupui.edu) to share how you participated in the “Seven Weeks of Domestic Violence Awareness.” Your story could be featured on WTHR 13.**



**Thursday, November 1, 2007 8:30 a.m.–4:30 pm**  
**Christian Theological Seminary**  
**1000 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> St., Indianapolis, IN**

**Who should attend:**  
**Religious leaders of all faith traditions including:**  
**youth pastors, education directors, parish nurses,**  
**parish counselors, and lay ministers.**

### **Presenters will provide information related to:**

- the impact of domestic violence on family and community
- the role of the faith community in prevention of domestic violence
- the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish perspective on domestic violence
- the legal perspective on domestic violence
- how substance abuse and mental illness relate to domestic abuse
- community resources and how to access them

**To register, visit [www.ippvid.org](http://www.ippvid.org) or contact**  
**Lori Lovett at 317-278-0945.**

**Call Lori Lovett,**  
**Indiana Partnership to Prevent Violent**  
**Injury and Death at 317-278-0945**  
**for further information.**

**Indiana Partnership to Prevent**  
**Violent Injury and Death**  
Riley Hospital for Children, Room 0903  
702 Barnhill Dr.  
Indianapolis, IN 46202