

learn
educate mean
hope jealous
force friend
relationship anger
freedom love
domestic aid
shelter hate sister
bruise **violence**
act encouragement
awareness
help strength protection
controlling possessive
survivor plan
compassionate
shove forgiveness
victim caring
inspire 

statement of position & guide mission

Alpha Chi Omega's Statement of Position: Domestic Violence

Alpha Chi Omega promotes educational and prevention efforts to eliminate domestic violence by supporting programs designed to understand the problem, assist and protect the victims, and work for the well-being of all victims of domestic violence.

Mission of this Guide

For all Alpha Chi Omega chapters to become informed and to find the necessary tools needed in order to educate others, support victims of domestic violence and take action to help end domestic violence.

understanding domestic violence

What is Domestic Violence?

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, domestic violence is a “pattern of coercive behaviors used to control an intimate partner.” Domestic violence includes not only physical violence, but also emotional, sexual and financial abuse. Domestic violence occurs in every socio-economic, racial and religious group and across every age, gender and sexual orientation.

Domestic violence affects not only those abused, but witnesses, family members, co-workers, friends and the community at large. Children who witness domestic violence are victims too. Constant exposure to violence in the home and to abusive role models teaches children that violence is a normal way of life—placing them at risk of becoming society’s next generation of victims and abusers.

Understanding Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is about power and control. The goal of the abuser is to dominate the victim and have all of the authority in the relationship; the abuser may use violence in order to establish and maintain command and power. Perpetrators of domestic violence have usually learned abusive, manipulative methods and behaviors in their own life experiences that allow them to control others—perpetuating the cycle of abuse onto more individuals.

An abuser may use a number of tactics to gain power in a relationship, including the following strategies:

Dominance – Abusive individuals need to feel in charge of the relationship. They will make decisions for the victim and the family, tell the victim what to do, and expect the victim to obey without question. The victim may be treated like a servant, child or even as the abuser’s possession.

Humiliation – An abuser will do everything he or she can to make the victim feel inadequate in some way. If an individual believes she is worthless and that no one else would desire her, she would be less likely to leave. Insults, name-calling, shaming and public put-downs are all weapons of abuse designed to erode self-esteem and make the victim feel powerless.

Isolation – The abuser might close the victim off from the outside world in order to increase dependence. Keeping the victim from seeing family or friends, preventing him or her from going to work or school, and requiring that he or she ask for permission to leave are common forms of control.

Threats – Abusers commonly use threats to keep their partners from leaving or to scare them into dropping legal charges. The abuser may make threats to hurt or kill his or her victim, the children, other family members, or even pets. He or she may also threaten to commit suicide, file false charges against the individual, or report him or her to child services.

Intimidation – The abuser may use a variety of intimidation tactics designed to scare the victim into submission, including threatening looks or gestures, smashing things in front of the victim, destroying property, hurting pets, or putting weapons on display. The clear message is that if he or she does not obey, there will be violent consequences.

Denial and Blame – Abusers frequently make excuses. He or she might blame abusive and violent behavior on a bad childhood, a bad day and even on the victims of their abuse. An abusive partner may minimize the abuse or deny that it occurred and will commonly shift the responsibility onto the victim.

adapted from Domestic Violence and Abuse: Signs of Abuse and Abusive Relationships, helpguide.org

Individuals do not intentionally become involved in a relationship they know to be violent or abusive. Domestic violence usually has subtle beginnings. The courtship often begins with love, but turns to dominance, control and sometimes violence. Victims may stay in an abusive situation for various reasons—fear; love; threats to harm the victim, loved ones, or pets; threats of suicide; religious reasons; believing the abuser will change; self-blame; limited financial or housing options; low self-esteem; and/or embarrassment and shame.

Did You Know Hazing is a Form of Domestic Violence?

When people think of domestic violence, they often picture a woman experiencing physical or emotional abuse by a dominating male in a relationship. However, not all abusive relationships are between intimate partners, and they do not all involve physical violence. Domestic violence may also occur between individuals in other forms of relationships, including friendships where control is exerted over one of the individuals.

Alpha Chi Omega does not condone hazing—recognizing the strong correlation between the nature of hazing and domestic violence.

Alpha Chi Omega’s Statement of Position: Hazing

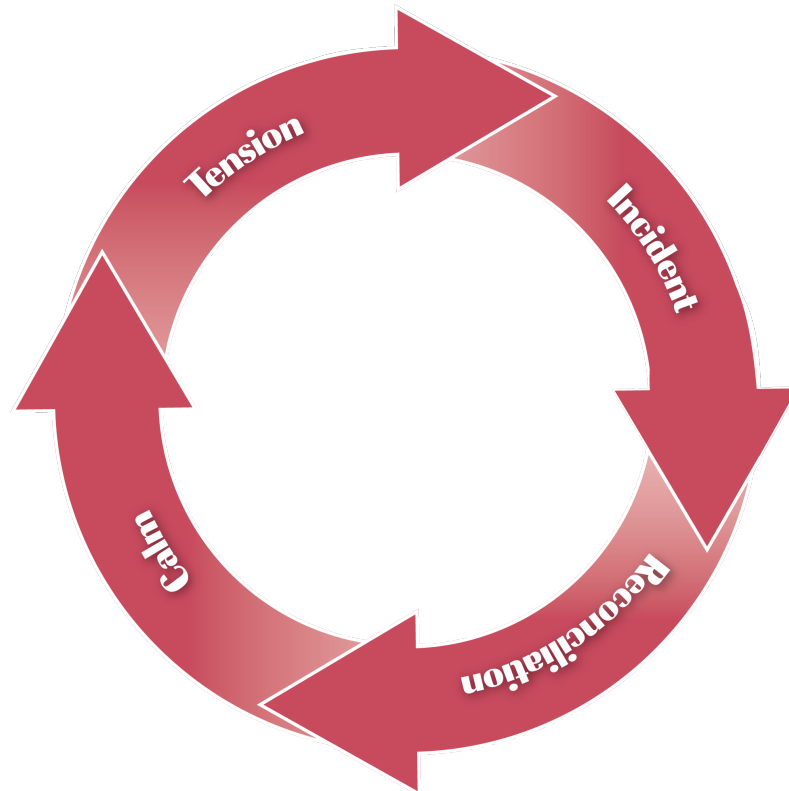
Alpha Chi Omega does not condone unkind, undignified or humiliating activities. Members of Alpha Chi Omega must not conduct hazing activities. Chapters of Alpha Chi Omega must include in their bylaws a statement prohibiting hazing and/or demeaning activities. Alpha Chi Omega considers hazing to be a form of domestic violence.

The Cycle of Abuse: Hazing

Emotional abuse is intended to break down an individual’s feelings and self-worth. Victims of emotional abuse often feel there is no way out of the relationship and that they are less without the abusive partner.

Emotional abuse may include yelling, name-calling, blaming and shaming, isolation, intimidation, and controlling behavior. Additionally, abusers who use emotional or psychological abuse often threaten their victims with repercussions if they “do not do as told.”

Domestic violence generally follows a cycle, one that may include physical and/or emotional abuse. Within this cycle, victims are both broken down and built up again. Frequently in an organization that participates in hazing new members, the organization demonstrates many of the actions found in the following cycle of abuse:



Phase One: Tension Building

Tension increases and there is a breakdown of communication. Victims become fearful and feel the need to placate or satisfy the abuser, often to feel accepted by the abuser.

Often, one finds a hazing chapter building tension and fear amongst the new members. New members are expected to placate the active members or specific chapter officers, such as new member educators.

Phase Two: Incident

This phase may include verbal, emotional and physical abuse, as well as anger, blaming, arguing, threats and intimidation.

In an organization where hazing may be prevalent, during this phase an incident or a series of incidents surrounding emotional or physical abuse occurs, such as threats about not initiating members, blaming new members for problems within the chapter, or screaming at new members to recite facts or organizational history.

Phase Three: Reconciliation

The abuser apologizes, blames the victims or provides excuses. During this time, the abuser may deny that the mistreatment occurred or suggest that it was not as significant as the victims believe.

During phase three, an organization might apologize but excuses their behavior as “tradition.” Abusers explain away the mistreatment of new members as insignificant since it has been done to new members before.

Phase Four: Calm

The incident is “forgotten” as though no abuse occurred, and the victims are treated well by the abuser.

An organization in this phase might celebrate with the new members following a stint of physical or emotional abuse, such as having an ice cream party or giving gifts to new members. The abusers then proceed with the new member period or the new members’ initiations.

adapted from The Cycle of Abuse © 2008, heart-2-heart.ca

domestic violence facts

The following statistics may be used for education, programming materials, public relations and more.

- Nearly three out of four Americans personally know someone who is or has been a victim of domestic abuse.
- One in four women (25%) has experienced domestic violence in her lifetime.
- Women, ages 20-24, are at the greatest risk of nonfatal, intimate partner violence.
- Women of all races are nearly equally vulnerable to violence by an intimate partner.
- On average, more than three women a day are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States.
- Young women, ages 20 to 24, experience the highest rates of rape and sexual assault, followed by women ages 16 to 19. Young adults, ages 18 and 19, experience the highest rates of stalking.
- There were 248,300 rapes/sexual assaults in the United States in 2007, more than 500 per day (up from 190,600 in 2005).
- In 2007, crimes by intimate partners accounted for 23 percent of all violent crimes against females and 3 percent of all violent crimes against males.
- Fifteen percent of teens who have been in a relationship report having been hit, slapped or pushed by their boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Of female murder victims in 2008, 35 percent were killed by an intimate partner; 2 percent of male murder victims were killed by an intimate partner.
- Women who have experienced domestic violence are 80 percent more likely to have a stroke, 70 percent more likely to have heart disease, 70 percent more likely to drink heavily, and 60 percent more likely to have asthma than women who have not experienced intimate partner violence.
- Average annual rates of intimate partner victimization between 1994 and 2004 are approximately the same for non-Hispanic and Hispanic females and males.
- Intimate partner violence affects people regardless of income. However, people with lower annual income (below \$25K) are at a three-times higher risk of intimate partner violence than people with a higher annual income (over \$50K).

- On average, between 1993 and 2004, residents of urban areas experienced the highest level of nonfatal intimate partner violence. Residents of either suburban or rural areas were approximately 20 percent less likely to experience such violence as those in urban areas.
- Nearly 2.2 million people called a domestic violence crisis or hot line in 2004 to escape crisis situations, seek advice or assist someone they thought might be a victim.
- Studies show that access to shelter services leads to a 60 to 70 percent reduction in incidence and severity of re-assault during the 3-month to 12-month follow-up period compared to women who did not access shelter. Shelter services led to greater reduction in severe re-assault when compared to seeking court or law enforcement protection or moving to a new location.

campus crime & sexual violence facts

These statistics are intended to help educate individuals about the importance of safety, awareness and being proactive. As members of a women's organization, it is incredibly important to consider personal safety and each other's safety. See page 21 of this guide for information about how you and your sisters may stay safe on campus and in the community.

- Of the violent crimes reported on college campuses, 1,288 (48 percent) were aggravated assaults, 882 (33 percent) were robberies, 511 (19 percent) were forcible rapes, and two (0.07 percent) were murders.
- An estimated 12 percent of women attending American colleges have been raped, and only 12 percent of rapes of collegiate women were reported to law enforcement.
- Fourteen percent of undergraduate women have been victims of at least one completed sexual assault since entering college. Five percent were victims of forced sexual assault, and eight percent were sexually assaulted while they were incapacitated due to voluntary use of alcohol or drugs.
- Sixteen percent of victims of forcible assaults and eight percent of incapacitated victims sought help from a crisis, health or victims' center after they were sexually assaulted.
- Thirteen percent of victims of forcible assaults and two percent of victims of assaults while incapacitated reported their assault to a law enforcement agency (municipal, local, city police or 911; campus police or security; county sheriff, state police or other police).
- In a national study on violent victimization among college students, ages 18 to 24, from 1995 to 2002, this group experienced violence at average annual rates lower than those for non-students in the same age group. The same study found that about 4 in 10 violent crimes against college students were committed by offenders who were perceived by victims to be using drugs or alcohol.
- Victims of rape or sexual assault were about four times more likely to be victimized by someone they knew than by a stranger.
- About 8 in 10 robberies of college students were committed by strangers, compared to about 6 in 10 assaults and 2 in 10 rapes or sexual assaults.
- Most crimes against students (93 percent) occurred off campus; of those, 72 percent occurred at night.
- In 2006, reported crimes occurring in on-campus residence halls included 1,923 forcible sex offenses, 975 aggravated assaults and 22 non-forcible sex offenses.

find this information and more at ncvc.org

warning signs of abuse

What would you do if you thought your friend was in an abusive relationship? You might not see obvious warning signs like bruises or broken bones, so how can you be sure? You should listen to your instincts; you would likely not be worried without good reason. The following are common warning signs that may lead you to suspect a friend is in an abusive relationship:

- When your friend and her boyfriend are together, he calls her names or puts her down in front of others.
- He is extremely jealous when she talks to other men.
- She makes excuses for him and apologizes for his behavior.
- She cancels plans for reasons that sound untrue.
- He knows her every move and is always checking up on her. He needs to know what she has been doing and who she has been with.
- You have seen him lose his temper. He may get out of control when mad.
- She is worried about upsetting him.
- She gives up things that used to be important to her.
- Her weight, appearance or grades have changed considerably. These changes could indicate depression—a possible result of abuse.
- She has injuries she cannot explain or the explanation does not make sense.

domestic violence & the law

Domestic violence is an issue that spans the nation; many legislators work to bring awareness to the strong effects it has on individuals. Many laws exist to protect individuals against violent relationships and crimes, and many government entities and individuals fight daily for more visibility of the issue.

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

A component of the U.S. Department of Justice, the OVW provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to reduce violence against women and administer justice for and strengthen services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. Visit ovw.usdoj.gov to learn more about their work and the legislation they support.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

The VAWA was enacted by the U.S. Congress to support government entities and victim advocacy groups in their fight against relationship violence. This law includes:

- punishments for some crimes
- programs to work toward prevention of such crimes
- legal aid for victims
- services for child victims
- programs for immigrant women and women of various races/ethnicities
- funding for help centers and hotlines
- protection for victims who have been evicted due to domestic violence
- programs for violence prevention in communities
- services for victims with disabilities

The VAWA also developed the National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women—a joint effort between the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that works to help promote the goals of the VAWA Act.

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)

The FVPSA provides the main federal funding offered to shelters and related help for victims of domestic violence and their dependents. FVPSA also provides the following programs and services:

- Violence prevention activities
- Working with service agencies in communities
- Providing Formula Grants to help states, territories and tribes create and support programs that work to help victims and prevent family violence
- Supporting the National Domestic Violence Hotline—a 24-hour, confidential, toll-free hotline providing support, information, referrals, safety planning and crisis intervention in more than 170 languages
- Running the Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancements and Leadership Through Alliances Program, which supports local programs that teach people ways to prevent violence

Domestic Violence: Colleges and Universities

The Dear Colleague Letter was issued in October 2010 by the U.S Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights to remind colleges and universities that they are obligated to respond to bullying and harassment through strict policies, as this misconduct may also inhibit the victim's civil rights. Furthermore, this letter clarifies the relationship between bullying and discriminatory harassment.

The Dear Colleague Letter affects students on campuses everywhere because these violent acts, including sexual harassment, stalking and other forms of relationship violence that occur between college students, are addressed through this letter. It reinforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

The Dear Colleague Letter Fast Facts may be found on page 27 of this guide.

Additional Resources about Domestic Violence Laws

Womenslaw.org provides a database of information about federal and state laws regarding women and relationship violence, as well as resources for women who need additional legal help in such situations. Visit this site to learn how your state protects its citizens in cases of domestic violence.

Victimlaw.com is a website designed to inform on the rights of victims of crime, as well as to suggest additional resources for victims.

domestic violence resources

The following resources are a great starting point to learn more about domestic violence awareness and how you and your chapter can get involved in the movement. These are also good places to start when seeking individuals with access to relevant information and materials to build programs within your own chapter.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

1120 Lincoln Street, Suite 1603, Denver, CO 80203

Phone: (303) 839-1852 / Fax: (303) 831-9251

TTY: (303) 839-1681

ncadv.org

This site provides contact information for the Coalition Against Domestic Violence in each state. Use these resources to find more information about local organizations that would make a great partner for your chapter.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

Phone: (800) 799-SAFE (7233)

TTY: (800) 787-3224

ndvh.org

National Center for Victims of Crime

2000 M Street NW, Suite 480, Washington, D.C. 20036

Phone: (202) 467-8700 / Fax: (202) 467-8701

Toll-free Helpline: 1-800-FYI- CALL (1-800-394-2255) (Mon-Fri 8:30a.m. to 8:30p.m. EST)

TTY/TDD: 1-800-211-7996

gethelp@NCVC.org

ncvc.org

National Council on Child Abuse and Family Violence

1025 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 1000, Washington, D.C. 20036

Phone: (202) 429-6695 / Fax: (202) 521-3479

nccafv.org

Breakthecycle.org is the site of the national nonprofit organization addressing teen-dating violence. Break the Cycle believes everyone has the right to safe and healthy relationships and works towards their mission to engage, educate and empower youth to build lives and communities free from domestic violence. This site shares tools to understand dating violence as well as information about the programs and opportunities they offer.

Loveisrespect.org is a joint project between the National Dating Abuse Helpline and Break the Cycle providing resources for teens, parents, friends and family, peer advocates, government officials, law enforcement officials, and the general public.

Heathersvoice.net is a website with the goal of educating teens about abuse and domestic violence. Created in honor of a young woman whose life was taken by an abusive significant other, this site provides tips for how to get involved in the fight against domestic violence, especially as it relates to teen violence.

Loveisnotabuse.com is an educational resource, including an eight-question quiz to learn whether one might be in a violent relationship. Since 1991, Liz Claiborne, Inc. has been working to end domestic violence. Through its Love is Not Abuse program, the company provides information and tools that men, women, children, teens and corporate executives can use to learn more about the issue and find out how they can help end this epidemic.

Youlovemeyoulovenot.org is a website developed to inform teens about the realities of dating violence. Sponsored by House of Ruth Maryland, this website also provides a "Rate My Relationship" quiz to help teens understand if violence is present in their own relationships.

Kristinskrusade.org is the official website of *Kristin's Crusade* and the Kristin Mitchell Foundation, an organization founded by a family who lost their young daughter to domestic violence. The mission of the Kristin Mitchell Foundation is to support educational efforts that raise awareness among young adults about the dangers of unhealthy dating relationships. Visit this site to learn about bringing a speaker to your campus.

Domestic Violence Awareness Resources at Alpha Chi Omega

Alpha Chi Omega headquarters is able to serve as a great resource as you begin planning events, education and activities surrounding domestic violence awareness.

Education and Leadership Initiatives (ELI)

ELI is equipped with a number of resources that will help you make domestic violence awareness a significant part of your chapter's activities. Here are just a few ways ELI can help:

Programming - ELI is a great resource for all things related to hosting a program. With fliers, handouts and fully-developed programs on file, the department is sure to find something that will help you make your next event a success. In addition, if you have your own idea for a program and would like help taking it from a thought to a functioning event, ELI is happy to be a part of the planning process.

Kristin's Story - Alpha Chi Omega offers grants to bring Andrea Cooper, whose daughter was a victim of relationship violence, to campuses across the country—sharing her story and providing awareness on issues facing college students regarding relationship violence. Contact ELI to learn more about applying for a grant or visit KristinsStory.com for more details. See page 81 of this guide for more in-depth details regarding the *Kristin's Story* program.

Luminary Kit - Alpha Chi Omega has the resources and instructions you need to create a luminary project for your next event...all in one kit. You may choose to have an entire event surrounding the display of luminaries or use them as an addition to another event. See page 79 of this guide for instructions on how to create your own luminary project.

Alpha Chi Omega Foundation

The Alpha Chi Omega Foundation supports domestic violence awareness initiatives administered nationally, but it may also be able to help your chapter by providing funding for domestic violence awareness programming through grants. In addition, the Foundation may offer suggestions as to other ways your chapter can provide financial support for such initiatives on your campus or in your community. Here are just a few Foundation options:

Love & Loyalty Grants – These grants are made from endowed funds established to support the educational, literary or charitable pursuits of Alpha Chi Omega members, chapters and the national Fraternity. Please check with the Foundation regarding which chapters have funds available specific to them. Applications are available online, and there are no application deadlines.

The Local Philanthropic Initiatives (LPI) Fund – The LPI Fund provides individuals and collegiate and alumnae chapters the opportunity to make gifts to local nonprofit organizations, including local domestic violence awareness programs, via the Alpha Chi Omega Foundation. Gifts to the LPI Fund provide a unique way to support both our national philanthropy and other worthy causes in communities around the country, while also helping to enhance the Alpha Chi Omega experience for future generations. Forms and more information may be found online.

Alpha Chi Omega
5939 Castle Creek Parkway North Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46250
Phone: 317.579.5050 / Fax: 317.579.5051
info@alphachiomega.org
alphachiomega.org

national awareness opportunities

Domestic violence touches an individual's life in many ways. Throughout the year, we are able to join with domestic violence awareness advocates across the country on designated days and months to bring awareness for diverse aspects of domestic violence.

Domestic violence awareness may include education on a variety of topics, including self-defense, self-esteem, women's rights and women's health. Below you will find a list of a number of relevant national awareness months. As a chapter, you may develop activities and programs that address many of the factors of domestic violence—consider participating in programs that relate to each month's topics, or simply address the issues through reading awareness facts at chapter meetings or events. Be sure to review activity ideas on page 35 of this guide.

August	Woman's Equality Day (August 26th)
September	National Campus Safety Awareness Month (ncsam.org)
October	Domestic Violence Awareness Month (dvam.vawnet.org)
January	Personal Self-Defense Awareness Month National Stalking Awareness Month (stalkingawarenessmonth.org)
February	Relationship Wellness Month Boost Self-Esteem Month
April	Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (nsvrc.org) Child Abuse Prevention Month (childwelfare.gov)
May	Victorious Woman Month Teen Self-Esteem Month Family Wellness Month
June	Student Safety Month

taking a stance

21 Simple Things Anyone Can Do to Take a Stance against Domestic Abuse

In Places of Worship

1. Encourage information about domestic abuse and where to get help to be included in the congregation's programs, youth groups, marriage preparation, study groups, etc.
2. Establish a committee to promote awareness of the problem and how the congregation can help.
3. Organize a drive to collect food, toiletries, household goods and other needed items for a local domestic abuse service agency.

In the Workplace

4. Display posters or brochures (in break rooms, restrooms or meeting rooms) to promote awareness of domestic abuse and how to get help.
5. Organize a brown bag lunch or other event for co-workers and invite a speaker to talk about solutions to the problem.
6. Ask what policies your employer has developed to keep employees safe from a domestic abuser who threatens the workplace.

In School

7. Encourage the editor of the school newspaper to have a special issue about dating violence and partner abuse.
8. Help organize a fundraiser to help a local domestic abuse service agency.
9. Educate professors and university staff about the connection between child abuse and partner abuse.
10. Promote education on healthy relationships based upon mutual respect.

In Community Organizations, Student Clubs or Greek Community

11. Invite a speaker to educate members about domestic abuse and publish information about domestic abuse and available resources in the newsletter.
12. Organize a fundraising event or food/toiletries drive to benefit a domestic abuse service agency.
13. “Adopt” a family seeking independence from an abuser to assist with practical needs.

In the Community

14. Ask your local library to stock books on domestic abuse and to set up displays to educate the public about the issue.
15. Speak out against domestic abuse. Expressing your view that domestic abuse is unacceptable has a powerful effect on changing the norms that support abuse.
16. Write letters to newspaper editors or send commentaries to TV and radio stations to help raise awareness about domestic abuse.
17. Vote for public leaders who take a strong stand against domestic abuse.
18. Call 9-1-1 if you see or hear a crime of domestic abuse in progress. Write down license plate numbers, locations and any other information that may be helpful to law enforcement.
19. Volunteer with a domestic violence service. Organizations need help with office activities, fundraising events, technical and professional services, and assistance to clients.
20. Donate used clothing and household goods to a program that gives these vital items to families seeking independence from an abuser.
21. Recognize, respond and refer. If you or someone you know is being impacted by domestic abuse, there is help available. Educate yourself about domestic abuse and domestic abuse service providers in the area.

find this information and more at dvnconnect.org

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