

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH — ARCHDIOCESE of CHICAGO — AWARENESS - SERVICES - PREVENTION



Good News About the Fight to End Domestic Violence

Winter 2021

Join us for a night of virtual celebration!



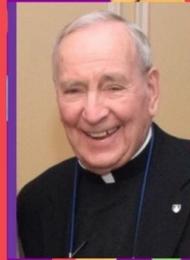
## Archdiocese of Chicago Domestic Violence Outreach Annual Benefit Gala

&

## Father Chuck's Birthday Party

Raffles,  
Music,  
Entertainment!

SATURDAY MARCH 13, 2021  
6:00PM CST  
ZOOM WEBCAST



Register today!  
[bit.ly/ACDVOGalaRegister](https://bit.ly/ACDVOGalaRegister)

Free!  
Suggested ticket donation is  
\$50 per attendee.

Donate!  
Visit [bit.ly/ACDVODonate](https://bit.ly/ACDVODonate)  
or mail checks and raffle ticket stubs to:  
ACDVO Gala 2021  
P.O. Box 238  
Brookfield IL 60513

Sing  
"Happy Birthday!"  
to Fr. Chuck Dahm!

Dance the  
Macarena!

Questions? Email [gala.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:gala.acdvo@gmail.com)



LIVE LINKS HERE: [bit.ly/ACDVOGalaRegister](https://bit.ly/ACDVOGalaRegister) [bit.ly/ACDVODonate](https://bit.ly/ACDVODonate)

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# Let's Protect Our Children

## Children Are Survivors, Too

Children are often traumatized by domestic violence even when they are not the direct target of abuse. We must be sensitive to their experience and responsive in finding them help, particularly in our parishes and schools.

Growing up in a family torn by domestic violence can be devastating. Some victims mistakenly think their children are unaware of the abuse they suffer. "It happens late at night," or "only in the bedroom," they say. Most counselors recognize, however, that children are generally more perceptive than parents realize. They may not know the whole story, but they know when there is anger and fighting, and the conflict takes its toll.



The consequences for children are not surprising. They may become hyperactive or withdrawn; they may turn aggressive or violent, passive or sullen; they may be afraid, angry or sad; they may fall behind in schoolwork, lose interest in their favorite subject or hobby. And even more tragic, they may carry the traumatic effects for a lifetime, causing depression, anxiety or other personality disorders.

We should respond to children exposed to domestic violence much like we do to victims of domestic violence. Listen carefully, believe them, be supportive, help them understand that the abuse is not their fault, assure them they are not alone and can trust us. Most importantly, find them professional counseling. We can't expect them to brush it off and just forget these very real and emotional experiences.

## Adverse Childhood Experiences and Domestic Violence

Today much attention is given to traumatic experiences children have that cause long-lasting negative effects. These are called Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs. They can be numerous, varied and have a cumulative effect. They might include violence, divorce, death, alcohol/drug abuse, suicide, prison, or a family disaster like unemployment or a tragic accident.

Stressful social conditions also cause ACEs, such as living in under-resourced or racially segregated neighborhoods, poverty, frequently moving and hunger. Toxic stress from ACEs can change brain development and affect attention, decision-making, learning and response to stress. About 61% of adults surveyed across 25 states reported they had experienced at least one type of ACE, and nearly 1 in 6 reported they had experienced 4 or more types of ACEs.

Children growing up with domestic violence or those experiencing teen dating violence will most certainly suffer some trauma which could easily result in difficulty forming healthy and stable relationships, finding steady employment or avoiding depression. These effects can also be passed on to victims' own children.

ACEs are preventable. Creating and sustaining safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for all children and families can prevent ACEs and help all children reach their full potential.



## ACDVO Executive Committee

Fr. Charles W. Dahm, O.P., [cdahm13@gmail.com](mailto:cdahm13@gmail.com), *Director*  
Adele Bach, [abach.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:abach.acdvo@gmail.com), *Communications*  
Jan Burdulis, [jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com), *Administration*  
Pam Davis, [pdavis@catholiccharities.net](mailto:pdavis@catholiccharities.net), *Catholic Charities*  
Deborah Hammond, [dhammond@catholiccharities.net](mailto:dhammond@catholiccharities.net),  
*Catholic Charities*

*Social Media:* Annie Ryder, [aryder.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:aryder.acdvo@gmail.com)

Bernita Johnson, [depaulgrad08@yahoo.com](mailto:depaulgrad08@yahoo.com), *St. Katharine Drexel*  
John Monaco, [jcmonaco.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:jcmonaco.acdvo@gmail.com), *COO/Education*  
Diane O'Brien, [quiltsnow@icloud.com](mailto:quiltsnow@icloud.com), *Parish Support*  
Bibiana Tohme, [tohmebibiana@gmail.com](mailto:tohmebibiana@gmail.com), *St. Bernadette*  
Valerie Yokie, [valeriyokie@gmail.com](mailto:valeriyokie@gmail.com), *St. Raymond*

*Newsletter:* Barbara Condon, [barbaracondon22@gmail.com](mailto:barbaracondon22@gmail.com)

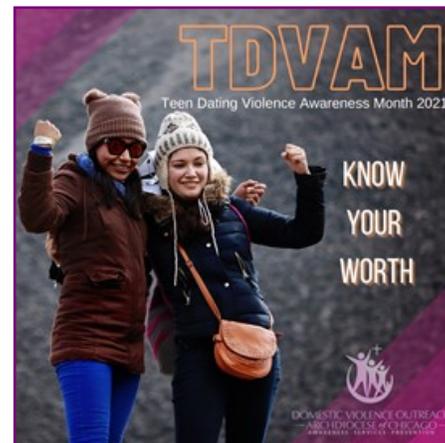
# And Stop DV Before It Starts



## February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

In February 2007, the National Domestic Violence Hotline launched [loveisrespect](#), a National Dating Abuse Helpline to serve as a 24-hour resource for teens experiencing dating violence or relationship abuse. In 2011, The Hotline partnered with Break the Cycle, a national leader in preventing dating violence which enabled [loveisrespect](#) to grow into an organization and offer 24-hour text services, chat sessions, and other live help.

This February, we celebrate Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM), and [loveisrespect](#) has chosen “Know Your Worth” as the 2021 awareness month theme. By helping young adults learn about healthy and unhealthy relationships and how to focus on self-empowerment, we can stop dating abuse before it starts. This theme emphasizes that every young person deserves healthy, positive relationships. ACDVO will participate in TDVAM by dedicating to a 28-day digital campaign sharing facts, tools, resources, and daily inspiration on our social media accounts. Learn more by following us on Instagram ([@dvochicago](#)), Twitter ([@dvochicago](#)) and Facebook ([@domesticviolenceoutreach](#)).



## Coercive Control: Is Emotional Abuse a Crime?

Some lawmakers are beginning to craft legislation that recognizes controlling and isolating behaviors in domestic violence as criminal. While these behaviors, often referred to as “coercive control,” may lead to physical violence, they can be criminally abusive in their own right. Advocates hope that by broadening the definition of abuse, they can help victims recognize and name the abuse they experience and free themselves from it.



In September, California passed a law that allows coercive control behaviors, such as isolating partners, to be used as evidence of domestic violence in family court, and Hawaii became the first state to enact anti-coercive control legislation.

While physical abuse is rampant in domestic violence (one in three women experiences physical or sexual abuse in her life), emotional or verbal abuse is the most common form, yet the most difficult to detect or document. Many victims say these behaviors hurt more than physical abuse because they attack the human spirit. The constant belittling, berating, jealousy and isolation may devastate one’s self-esteem and sense of self-worth.

Police and courts generally do not accept verbal or emotional abuse as proof of a crime. They want to see physical abuse to prove the violence. Coercive control, however, has been illegal in England and Wales since 2015. Scotland passed a law and then provided training to police, support staff and the judiciary to assure consistency. For the law to be most effective, police, social workers and courts need to understand how emotional abuse can become criminal.

## ACDVO Promotes Prevention in Catholic Schools

To help children avoid teen dating violence and understand and embrace healthy relationships, ACDVO is piloting the curriculum developed over eight years by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Dating Matters](#) (DM) starts in 6th grade and in 3 years progresses to 8th. It focuses on teaching healthy relationship skills early, reducing risky behaviors, and in the long-run avoiding teen dating violence and ultimately domestic violence. The curriculum includes valuable prevention strategies for students, families, schools, and neighborhoods. DM is low cost and [evidence-based](#), i.e., students participating in DM report less teen dating violence than other prevention programs. Schools interested in participating should contact John Monaco at [jmonaco.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:jmonaco.acdvo@gmail.com). ACDVO also gives talks on teen dating violence for parishes, including virtual presentations.



# What's New with ACDVO

## Diane O'Brien Mentors Ministers



Diane O'Brien uses skills she gained at St. Xavier University (SXU) School of Nursing to compassionately serve victims of domestic violence. She is a member of the Executive Committee of ACDVO. Recently, she was featured in the SXU Alumnae Magazine and has been an Alumnae Board member for years.

While raising six children, Diane served as a public health nurse for 14 years and later as a parish nurse at St. Joseph (Homewood) and Sacred Heart (Palos Hills). "I assisted parishioners with care for their minds and bodies, but also their souls. I loved the opportunity to help," she said.

Diane puts her caring skills to good use at ACDVO. After a parish hears preaching about domestic violence, Diane jumps into action. "I train mentors so they can guide parish volunteers to organize themselves, connect to domestic violence services, obtain resources, and promote awareness about domestic violence in their parishes."

Diane believes the best way to help domestic violence victims is to listen, believe and be compassionate. "Be able to give them the help they want and need right now. I encourage victims to start the healing process by getting support and counseling."

Diane has made new alliances through her ministry. Together with Bibiana Tohme, a survivor of domestic violence and active ACDVO Executive Committee member, she has formed a working group of domestic violence ministry committees from a large group of south and southwest side parishes.

Anyone interested in working in a parish domestic violence ministry should contact Diane at [quiltsnow@icloud.com](mailto:quiltsnow@icloud.com).

## Catholic Charities Expands DV Services

Catholic Charities has taken a bold step, creating a multidisciplinary program on domestic violence at the Fr. Augustus Tolton Peace Center in Chicago's West Side Austin neighborhood. Thanks to generous donors, CC is responding to deficient health services in communities of color and expanding its work on domestic violence. Four full-time staff make up the team: director, therapist, case manager and outreach worker.



Beth Klieger, LCSW, CDVF is the director, with years of experience in domestic violence counseling and child welfare. Staff is already conducting training sessions for local hospital and clinic staff to sensitize them to issues of domestic violence and acquaint them with Tolton's services. Outreach work will extend to churches, schools and other community organizations so that this underserved area will gain access to the services it needs.



*Beth Klieger, LCSW, CDVF  
Director, Domestic Violence  
Tolton Peace Center*

### *Thank You So Much for Your Generous Support*

Thanks to all who donate so generously to support our ministry. We are all hunkered down, our parishes are restricted in pastoral ministry, and donations are down. We will host a virtual gala on March 13 and ask for your support. We appreciate anything you might share at this time. Our work is moving forward. Help us reduce, if not eliminate, domestic violence from our midst. May God bless you with good health, love and peace.

Contact Charles W. Dahm, O.P., 1914 S. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60608, 312-371-7752, [cdahm13@gmail.com](mailto:cdahm13@gmail.com)