

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



Good News About the Fight to End Domestic Violence

Summer 2020

## Domestic Violence Surges During Pandemic

Covid-19 has made life more dangerous for many already at risk. Financial crises, home confinement and prolonged stress have increased the frequency and intensity of domestic violence. The Illinois DV Hotline has reported that calls for help increased 50% in March, from 60 to 90 a day. Nationwide estimates of DV emergency calls to 911 range from 10% to 30% increase and even higher.

Those causing harm to their partners are under greater stress during the pandemic. Their behavior of power and control is exacerbated because social contacts and movement of both spouses are severely restricted. Victims lack freedom to talk to friends or confidants, not to mention calling for help. Sadly, child abuse has also increased because whole families are confined in close quarters day and night. Statistics of child abuse, however, are lower because, now out of school, children have less opportunity to seek help.

Let's recognize these challenges and call those we think might be suffering abuse in any way to express our willingness to help. If you know or suspect someone is a victim, please check on them! If they are in immediate need, help them call 911, the National DV Hotline: 800-799-7233, the Illinois DV Hotline: 877-863-6338, or a reputable domestic violence agency for help.



## Responding to Systemic Racism



This year we witnessed much anger and pain sparked by the brutal and senseless killing of George Floyd. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends. His cruel murder represents one more blatant and unjust attack by police and a criminal justice system that has oppressed people of color for centuries. The murder is one more example of our country's long history of institutional racism that cries out for justice. While ACDVO's mission focuses on domestic violence, it is important, at this time in history, to express support for people of color who have experienced the violence of systemic racism for generations and a failure of most of the basic institutions white people take for granted.

We support peaceful protests against the injustices inflicted on people of color. We are saddened they often are overshadowed by violence, whether by a small number of protesters or the police. This response is clearly a consequence of centuries of racial discrimination and abuse. We must not allow the violence to distract us from focusing on the injustice of institutional racism. This historic moment helps us recognize past sins that live on today. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. chose the path of justice and nonviolence, recognizing that violence breeds violence and without justice there is no peace. Let's follow his advice: "The nonviolent resister is willing to accept violence if necessary, but never to inflict it."

The severe inequalities experienced by communities of color, whether in housing, education, employment, health or criminal justice, must end. It is not enough to have empathy for those who suffer; we must take action to right the wrongs of the past. Our efforts to reform police and the criminal justice system, and all other systems oppressing people of color, are the best ways we can honor George Floyd and so many others. As Catholics, we must also address systemic racism in our Church, particularly in regards to inequitable distribution of resources within our archdiocese. Furthermore, we must assure that services to victims of domestic violence and their children, as well as those who cause harm, are provided equitably and sensitively in communities of color. While all lives matter, this is the moment to express solidarity with Black Lives Matter.



## Why Addressing Teens about DV Is Important

Abuse among dating couples follows the same dynamics as domestic violence among adults. Data about this intimate partner abuse is shocking. A survey of U.S. high school students suggests that 1 in 5 female students and 1 in 10 male students who date have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual teen dating violence during the past 12 months.<sup>1</sup> Among adult



victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner, 1 in 5 women and nearly 1 in 7 men first experienced some form of partner violence between 11 and 17 years of age.<sup>2</sup>

This experience has devastating consequences that last a lifetime for both the victims and the perpetrators and certainly affect subsequent relationships.<sup>3</sup> The victims demonstrate increased absenteeism in school, problems in non-dating relationships, decline in a sense of well-being, failure to participate in school activities, and poor academic performance. The victims also experience generalized fear and may also consider suicide. They may feel depressed and anxious and begin abusing drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco. Sometimes they demonstrate delinquent behavior and cause injury to themselves or others.

Those who perpetrate abuse also demonstrate poor academic performance as well as loss of respect and alienation from family and friends, resulting in a sense of loneliness. In the end, they might be expelled from school, lose their job and even end up in the juvenile justice system.

A recent study evaluated the relationship between dating violence and suicide attempts among urban teens aged 14 and older. It found teen girls who experienced recent dating violence were 60% more likely to report at least one suicide attempt in the past year than those who did not experience recent dating violence.<sup>4</sup> Nearly 3 in 10 women in the United States, 28.8% or approximately 34.3 million, have experienced rape, physical violence and or stalking by an intimate partner.<sup>5</sup>

1. Vagi, Olsen, Basile & Vivolo-Kantor (2015), <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25730143/>
2. CDC, [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS\\_Report2010-a.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf)
3. Olshen et al (2007), <http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=570505>
4. CDC, Dating Matters: Understanding Teen Dating Violence Prevention Training Handbook, [https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/sites/vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/dating-matters-toolkit/themes/dmh\\_ng\\_bootstrap/assets/pdf/Educator-Training-Manual-Combined-PDF.pdf](https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/sites/vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/dating-matters-toolkit/themes/dmh_ng_bootstrap/assets/pdf/Educator-Training-Manual-Combined-PDF.pdf)
5. Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M.R. (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (CDC).



## ACDVO Executive Committee

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# Parishes Promote Prevention



## How Can Your Parish Prevent Teen Dating Violence?

Teen dating violence (TDV) occurs much too frequently for any parish to ignore it. We want to keep our children safe, prepare them for healthy relationships and thus avoid more domestic violence. Here are some simple things parishes can do to help young people understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships.

1. **Religious education:** Religious education and confirmation programs serve elementary and high school students. These offer perfect opportunities to instruct pre-teens and teens on healthy dating relationships. Teen dating violence begins as early as age 11. Studies show that 60% of youth experiencing TDV never tell anyone and holding it in aggravates its negative consequences. In addition, parents should also be trained about TDV because much abuse happens without their recognizing it. ACDVO is happy to assist a parish and could possibly provide a speaker. Please contact Jan Burdulis for details: [jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com).
2. **Youth Ministry:** For parishes with youth ministries, ACDVO has speakers available to address youth on healthy dating relationships as well as sexual assault on college campuses. Please contact Jan Burdulis for details: [jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com).
3. **Parish School:** The Center for Disease Control has created *Dating Matters*, a curriculum on healthy and unhealthy relationships for 6th-8th grades. *Dating Matters* is evidenced based, which means it was scientifically validated. It works! This fall ACDVO will pilot the 6th grade curriculum at St. Mary School, Riverside, and St. Agnes School, Little Village, and then expand into more schools. We hope eventually all Catholic schools will incorporate this curriculum.



## Prepare for Domestic Violence Awareness Month By Annie Ryder

October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM), is an opportunity to unite in a national effort to raise awareness. No More ([www.nomore.org](http://www.nomore.org)), a national organization working to end domestic violence and sexual assault, has chosen #ChangeHappensHere as DVAM 2020's theme. No matter who we are or where we are – at home, work, or six feet away, we all play a role in ending domestic violence.

We hope that parishes will soon be able to host prayer services, film screenings, and speakers. ACDVO will actively share local activities on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Visit our Online Resource Manual for a list of activities in which your parish ministry can participate. In addition, ACDVO will feature a “31 Dedicated Days” digital campaign, posting each day current statistics, Chicago-area activities, lifesaving tools for victims and inspiration from survivors. By committing to a daily campaign, we will demonstrate that ACDVO is paving the way in creating change within our churches while breaking the silence on domestic violence. Stay updated by following us on Facebook ([@domesticviolenceoutreach](https://www.facebook.com/domesticviolenceoutreach)), Instagram ([@dvochicago](https://www.instagram.com/dvochicago)) and Twitter ([@dvochicago](https://twitter.com/dvochicago)).

## New ACDVO Posters Available for Your Parish - Contact Jan Burdulis

(Partial representations)





## What's New with ACDVO

**Website Updated:** Check out our newly expanded and streamlined website for information and resources: [www.domesticviolenceoutreach.org](http://www.domesticviolenceoutreach.org).



**Webinar:** ACDVO conducted a large group training webinar in June, in which Fr. Chuck explained opportunities and challenges for parishes to reach out to victims of domestic violence by developing a local parish ministry. 60 people participated. To view this recorded webcast, visit our webpage: [www.domesticviolenceoutreach.org](http://www.domesticviolenceoutreach.org).

**Trainings:** ACDVO has provided trainings to 75 parish committees and 26 parish staff groups, but we would like to do more; contact us. Currently we are developing an online training option for use by other dioceses across the country.

**Fall ACDVO Network Meeting:** Representatives from nearly 80 parishes with Domestic Violence Committees are scheduled to meet Saturday, September 19, 2020 at 9:30 am-11:00 am. Because of Covid-19 restrictions, ACDVO will conduct this as a virtual meeting by Zoom. An agenda and Zoom link will be sent to all network members by email.

**5th Annual Domestic Violence Survivors' Mass:** Save the Date for the annual ACDVO Mass scheduled at Holy Name Cathedral for 5:15 pm on September 26, 2020. The Mass may be live-streamed if pandemic restrictions on large gatherings are in effect.

## October Collection of Items for DV Shelters

Last October, ACDVO

partnered with The Safe Haven Network to collect and distribute supplies for shelters for victims of domestic violence and their children.

This successful effort engaged approximately 30 parishes, and donations were distributed to 12 shelters throughout metropolitan Chicago. This



collection is a great way for parishes to directly assist domestic violence victims and their children, as well as raise awareness among parishioners about the scourge of domestic violence.

ACDVO is recruiting a volunteer as the lead and liaison to work with The Safe Haven Network and a volunteer coordinator at each participating parish. To receive a list of volunteer responsibilities for the ACDVO Lead Coordinator and/or Parish Collection Coordinator, contact Jan Burdulis: [jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com](mailto:jburdulis.acdvo@gmail.com).

### *Thanks So Much for Your Support*

Thanks to all those who have donated so generously this year. While we received many donations at the time of our canceled Benefit in March, we did not receive as much as if we had celebrated the event. If you can donate something now, we will be very grateful. Our work is moving forward, as this newsletter reflects. Help reduce, if not eliminate, domestic violence from our midst. May God bless you with good health, love and peace.

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