

Shine the Light on Domestic Violence

Talking Points

“Shine the Light on Domestic Violence” is a low or no-cost campaign that connects communities across New York by turning the state purple during October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) coordinates the campaign.

The purpose is to raise awareness of domestic violence – to get everyone talking about “purple” as a way to discuss domestic violence, and to let victims know they’re not alone and that resources are available no matter where they live.

Purple is the symbolic color for domestic violence awareness and, historically, the battered women’s movement.

Domestic violence programs have been using purple to promote awareness of domestic violence for years. The “Shine the Light” campaign supports their work and gives them the ability to say they’re part of a larger, statewide effort.

Some well-known locations that have been illuminated purple include Niagara Falls, the Empire State Building, the Mid-Hudson Bridge, the Electric Tower in Buffalo, the Peace Bridge and Syracuse University.

Each year, a specific day in October – usually the third Thursday – is designated as “Wear Purple Day,” in which all New Yorkers are asked to join the national effort to raise awareness by wearing purple. The 2017 “Wear Purple Day” is **Thursday, October 19**.

The purple illumination of the Empire State Building in 2009 received national attention and was recognized as “one of the top three inspirational events [for Domestic Violence Awareness Month] in the United States.”

When a business participates, it shows the community that they care about ending intimate partner violence. They can shine a purple light on their building, put flyers on a counter or hang a poster.

This year, New York State celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Shine the Light campaign, and recognizes the many people, organizations, and communities who have contributed to the campaign’s awareness raising success over the past ten years. You can see some of these efforts in OPDV’s Facebook photo albums, at: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/NYSdomesticviolence/photos/?tab=albums>

History

In 2007, Haven House, a program of Child and Family Services, Erie County, seeking an impactful way to raise awareness of domestic violence, arranged to have Niagara Falls illuminated in purple from both the U.S. and Canadian sides. The effect was beautiful and empowering and it generated widespread visibility for their work to end domestic violence.

In 2008, with Haven House’s approval, the NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) adopted the idea as an annual statewide public awareness campaign and named it “Shine the Light on Domestic Violence.”

For Participants:

Download the “Shine the Light on Domestic Violence” Toolkit containing ideas, posters, handouts and more at: http://www.opdv.ny.gov/public_awareness/campaigns/shinethelight/

For help or information, write to: opdvpurple@opdv.ny.gov

Send photos to opdvpurple@opdv.ny.gov and post them to Instagram with the hashtag #shinethelight



Office for the
Prevention of
Domestic Violence