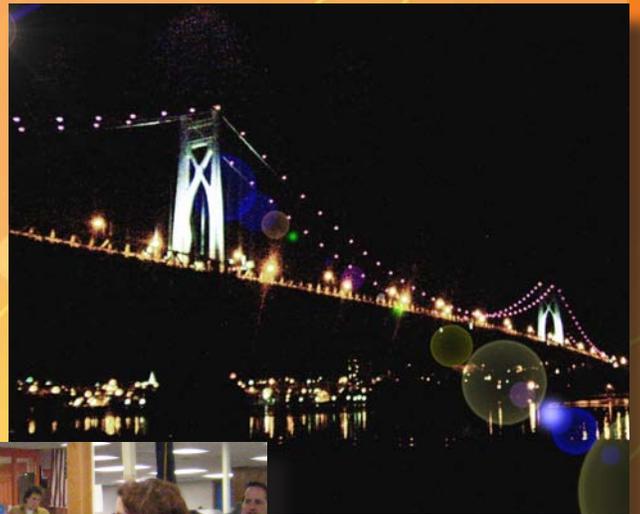


NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ANNUAL REPORT: 2008





Message from Governor David A. Paterson

I am pleased to introduce the first New York State Domestic Violence Annual Report. This document is a testament to the State's commitment to eradicating domestic violence and reducing the harm it does to our residents and communities.

New York holds a special distinction as the only state in the nation to have an executive-level agency dedicated solely to eliminating domestic violence and we continue to make significant progress against domestic violence. In the last year, the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) has led this effort and has partnered with state agencies, local governments and non-profit organizations to achieve results. It is now more important than ever to ensure that victims of domestic violence have access to the resources available to help get them to safety. Additionally, I am proud to have signed a law ensuring that all victims of intimate partner violence will have access to civil orders of protection.

I believe the right to be free and safe in our homes and relationships is among our most fundamental of human rights. The effort against domestic violence has been a priority throughout my career in public service, and together with your help, we will continue to make New York State a place where domestic violence is not tolerated.

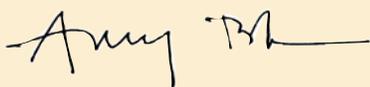
David A. Paterson

David A. Paterson
Governor of New York State

Message from Amy Barasch

We release this year-end report at a time when domestic violence feels like it is in the news more than ever before. Public attention is high due largely to a few high profile cases nationally and in our own State. These cases build on the generalized anxiety about the economy, and lead many to ask if domestic violence is increasing, or if the economic downturn explains these headlines. The first, important response is that an economic downturn cannot cause domestic violence. People who harm their intimate partners have made a choice to use violence, and must be held accountable for that choice. That being said, some studies have indicated a risk of increasing severity of violence when economic times are tough –not that an economic crisis causes domestic violence, but that it might exacerbate already abusive situations. It might also make it more difficult for victims of violence to take the steps they need to get and stay safe.

New York State, facing its own challenging economic reality, has nonetheless accomplished many important achievements in the fight against domestic violence over the past year, and has laid the groundwork to begin to measure the prevalence of domestic violence as well as the State's response to it, so that we can be more certain in knowing what strategies are most effective, and how they respond to trends. Following are a few highlights of the important steps the State took last year.



Amy Barasch, Esq.
Executive Director
NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

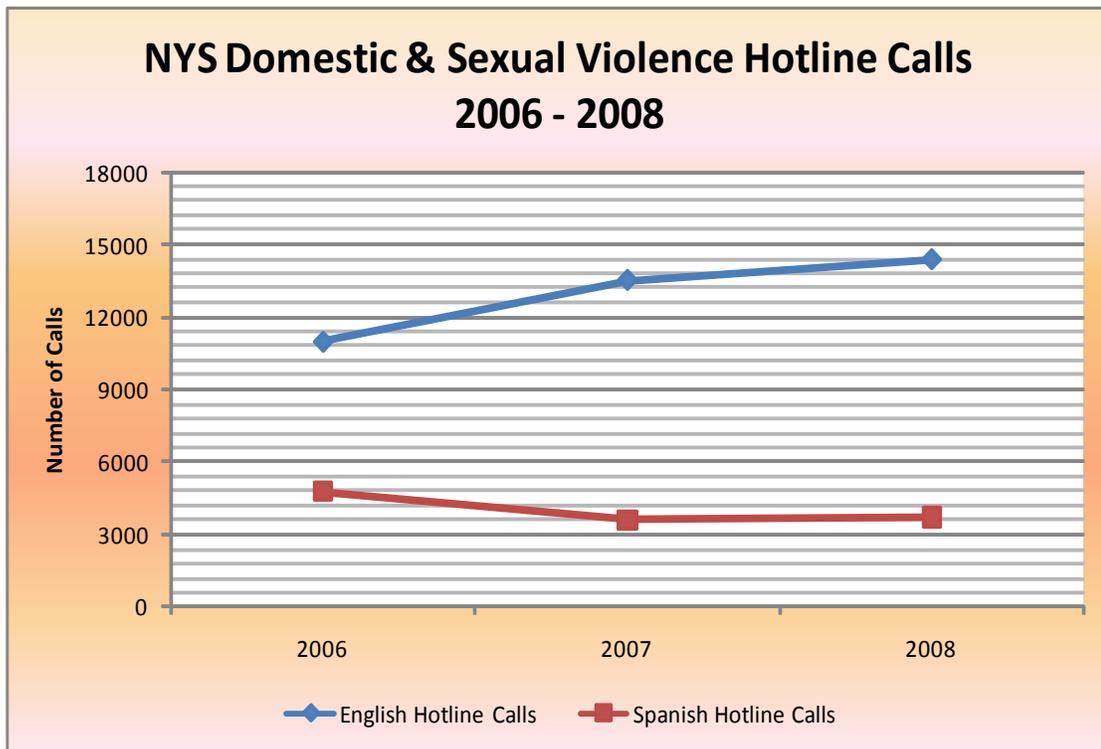


INTRODUCTION

New York is the only state in the country to have an executive-level agency - the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) - dedicated to domestic violence, which is strong proof of the State's long-standing commitment to this complex issue. This office stands in partnership with the State's broad network of advocates who launched New York's leadership by making it home to the Nation's first domestic violence shelter 32 years ago.

In 2008, domestic violence became even more integrated into a broad range of interagency initiatives, and New York State expanded its presence as a leader and resource for others in the field. Much of the direct services delivered to domestic violence victims takes place at the local level. New York State does support two statewide victim hotlines, which together receive over 18,000 calls from individuals seeking help, and all NYS police departments combined responded to over 400,000 calls for service in domestic violence cases last year. Those and other responses continue every day of every year.

Below are the highlights of the State's accomplishments in the field last year, some indications of the growing profile of the State's expertise in this area, as well as an indication of where OPDV and its partners hope to go next year.



During 2006 through 2008, the Hotlines answered almost 51,000 calls for assistance.



PUBLIC EDUCATION

Education of the public and the provision of information to direct service providers about domestic violence and related issues is crucial to the fight against domestic violence. Here are some examples of information distributed by OPDV and its colleague agencies in 2008:

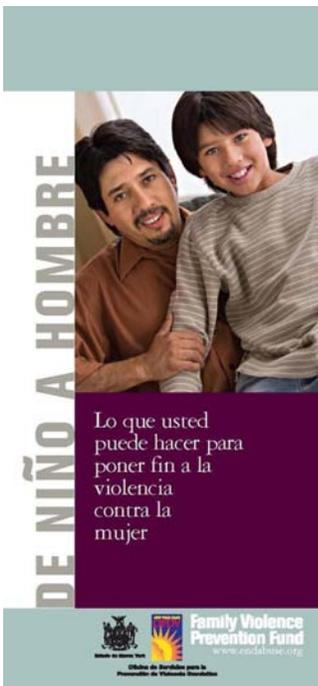
- OPDV launched a redesigned website in October, 2008, which is organized for easy access to the wealth of information available for service providers, victims, friends and family.
- *Finding Safety and Support*, OPDV's comprehensive victim guide, was re-issued with a new look, and cover designed by a domestic violence survivor.
- The New York State Crime Victim's Board, an essential financial resource for all crime victims, but especially for victims of domestic and/or sexual assault, enhanced its website including an on-line discussion board for the provider community.
- A new quarterly e-Bulletin was launched by OPDV promoting useful state programs, informational articles, and straightforward Q&As about topics in the field.
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) published the first Domestic Violence Homicide Report, based on 2007 data.
- DCJS published an analysis of detailed domestic violence crime data from a subset of NYS jurisdictions that use the Incident Based Reporting (IBR) reporting system.
- OPDV published 5 informational guides on special topics in the field, all available for download from www.opdv.state.ny.us



PUBLIC AWARENESS

Coaching Boys Into Men. In 2008 New York State concluded its *Coaching Boys Into Men* campaign. Through a statewide effort, that is still running in certain jurisdictions, the message that men can talk to the young men in their lives to encourage them to respect women and engage in healthy relationships was spread through television and radio spots; billboards; phone and bus kiosks; newspaper ads; coasters and coffee sleeves. Over 1 million individuals viewed this campaign. Posters and other materials are still available in five languages through OPDV. DCJS made a public kiosk available to this campaign, further promoting it in libraries, museums, and at sporting events.

Coaching Boys Into Men brochure featured in Spanish



Coaching Boys Into Men poster featured in Haitian Creole



Coaching Boys Into Men poster on NYC bus kiosk.



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Turning the State Purple. October 2008, Governor David A. Paterson signed a Proclamation declaring the month to be Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). Purple has come to signify the fight against domestic violence, and New York State built upon the local effort of Buffalo nonprofit, Haven House, to turn buildings, bridges, and even state employees purple. The simple idea – to “Shine the Light on Domestic Violence” by making our State landmarks stand for this fight against domestic violence in October – was a terrific success. Photographs of many of the State landmarks and locations that were lit in purple are posted on OPDV’s website. This effort will be re-launched in 2009. Everyone is invited to invent new and creative ways to build upon this awareness strategy. The campaign received national attention, and we look forward to seeing purple spread across the country during DVAM in years to come.



Electric Tower, Buffalo
©Caroline Bronckers, Exposure: Buffalo Photography



NYS Office for Children & Family Services domestic violence awareness event during October 2008.

POLICIES AND PROJECTS

Domestic Violence and the Workplace Policies in all NYS Agencies. Last year, all 83 New York State agencies issued a Domestic Violence and the Workplace Policy. NYS now boasts the most comprehensive such program in the country. All agencies have: trained individuals within their agency to whom a victim can disclose; provided information regarding services available to employees; and established mechanisms for holding employees who are abusive accountable. OPDV worked with all of the agencies to adapt the model policy to meet the needs of their agency, trained relevant staff, and continues to provide technical support and assistance on individual cases as well as on-going training and response to implementation questions. OPDV will issue its first annual report to the Governor on this project in October 2009.



Director Barasch standing with State Commissioners from the Governor's Office for Employee Relations, Department of Labor, Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Consumer Protection Board, Division of Parole, and Council on Children and Families, to announce all New York State agencies have a Domestic Violence and the Workplace Policy.

Domestic Violence Advisory Council activities. By law, OPDV convenes the Domestic Violence Advisory Council at least twice a year, with representatives from 14 state agencies, and 9 members appointed by the Governor. In 2008, the Council broke into several subcommittees which met regularly. Out of this work was born the Domestic Violence Dashboard Project, detailed below; a commitment to identifying a unified grants management system for all NYS funds distributed to domestic violence providers; and an interest in using the power of the Council to address prevention issues.

Division of Criminal Justice Services' Operation IMPACT Addresses Domestic Violence. New York State's successful crime-fighting approach, which directs crime analysis funds and assistance to the 17 jurisdictions that represent 80% of the crime outside of NYC, invited the jurisdictions to address the reduction of domestic violence for the first time in 2008. Several communities proposed to use IMPACT resources to address domestic violence in their communities, and OPDV has supported their efforts.

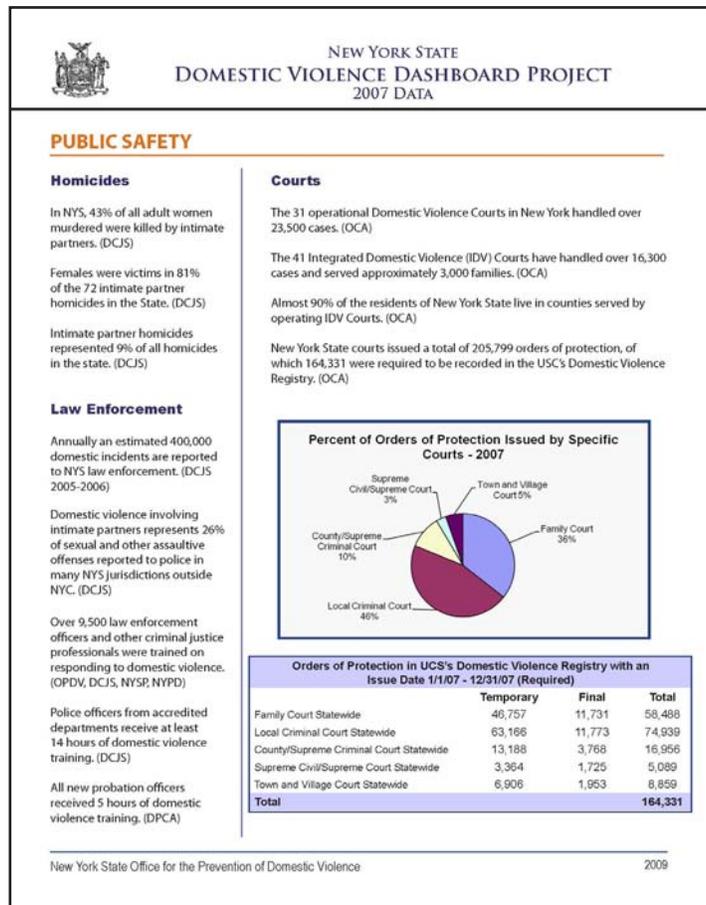


NY State Police, NYS Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (DPCA) and New York State Parole DIR Policy. The New York State Police, with support and encouragement from DPCA and the Division of Parole, issued a directive to all of their members to share Domestic Incident Reports when prepared for an incident involving an offender known to be under the supervision of either Parole or Probation. This policy will strengthen relationships among law enforcement agencies to hold offenders accountable.

Domestic Violence Regulations Workgroup. Regulations promulgated and enforced by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), with funding that runs from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), govern domestic violence residential and non-residential programs. Drafted twenty years ago, the regulations are no longer reflective of the current realities of service-delivery, and pose challenges for providers and local districts alike. OPDV, OCFS, and OTDA created a joint workgroup to analyze the regulations and aim to provide recommended reforms. The workgroup includes participation from local social services commissioners and local nonprofit providers, and all materials are publicly available on OCFS' website. The group hopes to devise recommendations before the end of calendar year 2009. All parties interested in participating in these conversations are welcome. Visit the OCFS website for details www.ocfs.state.ny.us

Domestic Violence Dashboard Project.

The prevalence of domestic violence is notoriously difficult to measure because much of it goes unreported to policing, health care, and other systems. In New York State, that challenge is compounded by the decentralized nature of our systems, which include over 550 police departments, 57 local social services departments, and more than 200 hospitals statewide. Knowledge of prevalence is essential to measuring whether the programs designed to prevent and respond to domestic violence are effective. The Domestic Violence Dashboard Project identifies data relevant to domestic violence from a broad range of agencies, and assembles them in one document, a dashboard. This year's dashboard as the first in a series, provides a snapshot of just one year's worth of information. Through this collaborative project, more data elements will be added to the Dashboard annually, to develop a rich map of trends over time.



LEGISLATION

2008 was a banner year for domestic violence legislation, through the passage of legislation that helped to increase the criminal liability of offenders, enhance services for victims and strengthen the laws and protections available in family court. Below is a summary of some of the highlights of the 2008 legislative session:

Expanded Access to Family Court. After 20 years, Governor Paterson was proud to sign into law a provision enabling all victims of intimate partner violence to petition for a civil order of protection, which had previously been limited to those who were or had been married, are related by blood or had a child in common. Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein and Senator George Winner sponsored the bill; OPDV is instructed in the legislation to issue a report on the impact of the bill on law enforcement by 2011.

Criminal Mischief/Joint Property. This law, allows criminal mischief charges to be brought against an offender when he destroys property jointly owned with the victim. Prior to this legislation an abuser could not be charged with criminal mischief for the destruction of jointly owned property, a very common occurrence in domestic violence cases.

Order of Protection/Supervision or Detention. This law requires that criminal and family courts provide copies of orders of protection issued against incarcerated or supervised individuals to the appropriate state or local correctional facilities, probation and parole. This measure will assist in the enforcement of orders of protection.

Preventing an Emergency call. This law makes it a crime to prevent a person from calling for help by intentionally disabling or removing a telephone or teletypewriter device.

Custody/Child Abuse Allegations. The law prevents a parent from being penalized in a custody and visitation proceeding, when the parent in good faith raises allegations that a child is a victim of child abuse, neglect or domestic violence or when the parent takes actions to protect or seek treatment for the child.

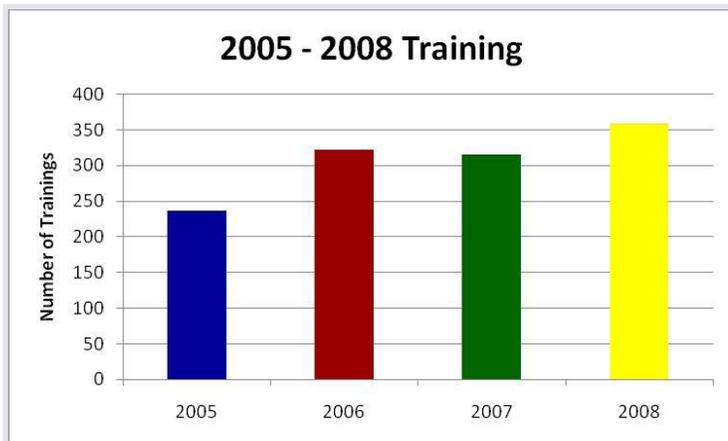
Undocumented Alien Shelter reimbursement. Now, when immigrant victims of domestic violence seek services in New York State, domestic violence programs can receive reimbursement for the services they provide to these victims, regardless of their immigration status.



TRAINING

OPDV serves as a training academy on domestic violence for NYS governmental employees. In 2008, as part of its regular mandate, OPDV trained over 12,000 professionals, including child welfare and protective staff, public assistance workers, police and probation officers. In addition, domestic violence is integrated into the basic training provided to many agency staff, such as accredited police departments, probation departments, and public assistance domestic violence liaisons. New training efforts conducted in 2008 include:

- OPDV trained 1,759 staff from the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services across the state, and provided a virtual presentation explaining the correlations between substance abuse and domestic violence.
- OPDV trained 78% of the employee assistance program staff that serve NYS employees.
- In collaboration with Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS), OPDV offered a new series of training conferences for child welfare workers that addressed working with abusive fathers: the conference proceedings can be viewed at the OPDV website.
- DCJS' Violence Against Women Act Unit and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) sponsored a series of trainings regarding the link between domestic violence and pet abuse. These trainings addressed: how animals are used to threaten and manipulate victims of abuse, as well as new law which extends orders of protection to include pets of those individuals protected by the order.



During 2005 through 2008, NYS OPDV conducted over 1,200 trainings for professionals from the fields of criminal justice, human services and health care.

INTERAGENCY INTEGRATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The issue of domestic violence cuts across many areas and affects all types of people. New York State recognizes the necessity of integrating recognition of domestic violence into a wide range of policy-making, which is one reason OPDV hosts a Domestic Violence Advisory Council (see the back cover for a list of partners). Another indication of this integration is the participation of OPDV in the following groups:

- Veterans Affairs Roundtable
- Interagency Offender Reentry Task Force
- Governor's Children's Cabinet
- AIDS Institute Interagency Task Force
- Juvenile Justice Advisory Board
- ACTION Initiative
- Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking
- Crime Victims Board Advisory Council
- Victim Assistance Academy
- Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives
Crime Victims Workgroup
- Operation IMPACT
- Internal Control Association
- Training & Development Council
- New York State Forum for Information Resource
Management



LEADING THE FIELD

New York State officials were interviewed and quoted on the topic of domestic violence on local cable television, and in community newspapers, as well as national publications such as the New York Times, Newsday and the Huffington Post. OPDV is a regularly linked resource on websites of local and national domestic violence organizations, as well as on popular sites such as Oprah.com.



In collaboration with DCJS, OPDV produced a cable television show on domestic violence that was broadcast on a wide range of NYS local networks. OPDV staff were invited to participate in national conferences such as the National Judicial Training Institute. The City of Philadelphia sought OPDV's assistance in implementing workplace policies in their Department of Health. Two of OPDV's staff received recognition from the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence as among 30 outstanding contributors to the domestic violence movement over the past 30 years.

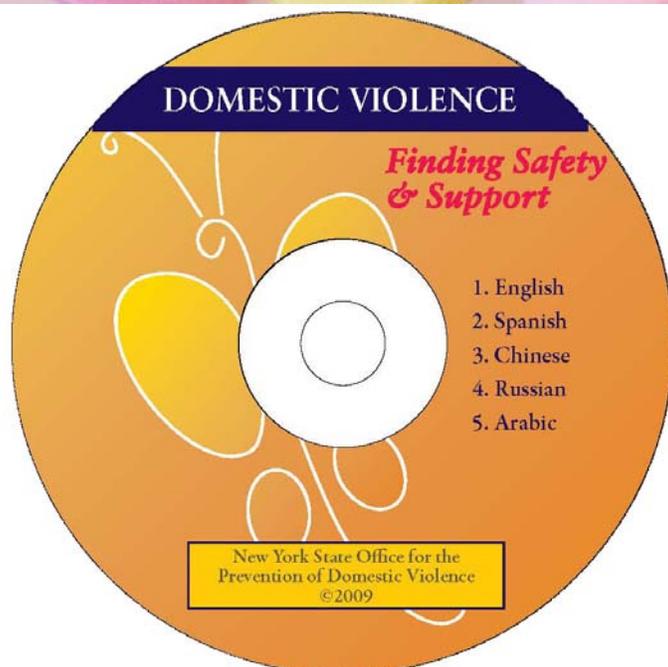
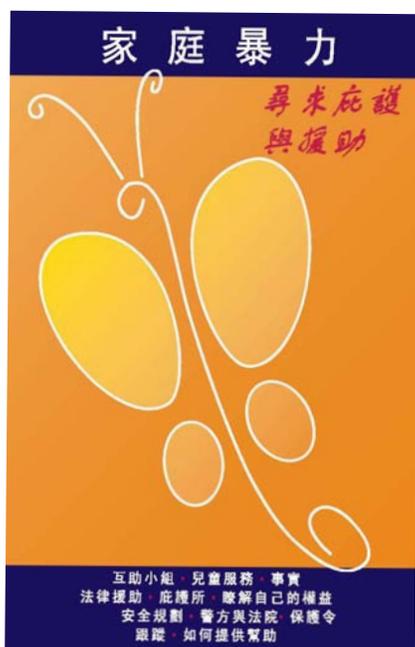
New York State's advice is even being sought internationally: OPDV was referred to as a model for "Cosc," Ireland's National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, and senior level staff advised communities in India on appropriate screening for domestic violence. Thanks to electronic means of communication, OPDV's publications have subscribers as far away as Argentina.



PLANS FOR 2009

As comprehensive as New York State's response was in 2008, 2009 promises to be at least as innovative. Two such projects have already taken place. First a teen dating awareness effort was promulgated in early February; the NYS Education Department distributed a web-banner with related materials through all State schools and non-profits that serve the schools. A poster was developed for individualization and download by local programs, and a model school policy and tips for educators were made available on OPDV's website. In addition, OPDV's victim guide, *Finding Safety and Support*, is now available in five languages – English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic - both in hard copy and on CD-ROM.

CONTROL IS NOT LOVE, IT'S ABUSE.



Above: Finding Safety & Support featured in Chinese; Teen Dating Violence web banner; and Finding Safety & Support CD which contains the available languages of the guide: English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian and Arabic.

Even under the current economic constraints much progress can be made in fighting domestic violence by making more focused use of existing resources, strengthening collaboration to forge partnerships and eliminating duplicative efforts, and ensuring that we maintain high expectations for our current system. When circumstances are more difficult, solutions must be more creative. New York State is ready for that challenge, and will continue to work together to ensure that all individuals can be safe in their intimate and family relationships.

A few of the projects planned for 2009 include the following:

- Domestic Violence Regulations workgroup recommendations to Office for Children and Family Services (OCFS) domestic violence program regulations for residential and non-residential programs;
- Enhancement of the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) screening tool to more accurately identify patients involved in domestic violence;
- Training of all Veterans' Affairs counselors on domestic violence;
- Domestic Violence and the Workplace Report to the Governor;
- Enhanced effort to *Turn the State Purple* in recognition of domestic violence awareness month in October;
- Analysis of media coverage of domestic violence in New York State to increase dialogue between media outlets and domestic violence professionals;
- The revision and release of an enhanced model policy for schools on teen dating violence and abuse;
- Materials on domestic violence for college campuses to distribute to students;
- Enhancements to Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (DPCA) case management system to better track domestic violence offenders;
- Continued inclusion of domestic violence in DCJS' Operation IMPACT;
- Training and publications development on Traumatic Brain Injury and domestic violence for domestic violence providers;
- Work with Empire State Development Corporation, local Chambers of Commerce and local domestic violence programs to develop a recruitment plan for women who were abused into entrepreneurial training programs and provide support for them to open and sustain their own businesses;
- Specialized domestic violence training for child protective supervisors; and
- Training on domestic violence for OCFS' Healthy Families New York home visiting program staff.

NEW YORK STATE

OPDV MISSION:

To improve New York State's response to and prevention of domestic violence with the goal of enhancing the safety of all New Yorkers in their intimate and family relationships.

OPDV VISION:

To create a State in which communities and systems are committed to supporting and promoting equality, dignity and respect so that individuals can feel safer in their intimate and family relationships.

NYS Domestic Violence Advisory Council members:

*Maggie Fronk, Executive Director
Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Services of Saratoga County*

*Barbara Hale, Executive Director
YWCA of Genesee County, Inc.*

*Mary Kornman, Chief, Bureau of Strategic Planning & Crime Control Strategies
Westchester County District Attorney's Office*

Susan John, Assemblywoman

*James Murphy, III District Attorney
Saratoga County District Attorney's Office*

*Sharon Townsend, Vice Dean for Family and Matrimonial Law,
New York State Judicial Institute*

*Jessica Vasquez, Executive Director
NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence*

Helene Weinstein, Assemblywoman

*Angela Yeboah, Attorney
Sanctuary for Families*

NYS Department of Correctional Services

NYS Department of Health

NYS Department of Labor

NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services

NYS Division of Parole

NYS Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives

NYS Education Department

NYS Office for the Aging

NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

NYS Office of Children and Family Services

NYS Office of Court Administration

NYS Office of Mental Health

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance