

Domestic Violence Press Kit

September 2004



THERE'S
NO EXCUSE FOR
ABUSE

Utah Domestic Violence Council

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Judy Kasten Bell, Executive Director

Dear Journalist

The Utah Domestic Violence Council (UDVC) is proud to present this press kit to the media of Utah. The purpose of this kit is to provide all Utah media outlets with the tools and information needed to provide the public with informative and accurate domestic violence related reports.

Founded in 1978 by the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), the UDVC was initially formed as a community forum to start the necessary dialogue about domestic violence in the state of Utah. The UDVC incorporated in 1993, and in 1994 the Council became independent of DCFS. In 1998 the UDVC was designated as a 501c3 not-for-profit organization.

The UDVC is recognized nationally as the state domestic violence coalition in Utah, therefore it receives its funding from two federal grants; the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) state coalition grant, and the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant. The VAWA grant is currently for outreach to underserved communities and training.

The UDVC is comprised of 36 voting members, employs five staff and has 13 working committees. The Council also works closely with and provides funding for Utah's 23 local domestic violence coalitions, as well as collaborating with and providing resources and information to many individuals and agencies.

The UDVC's unique status as both a grass roots open community forum and a not-for-profit Council as well as its local and national relationships allow it to function with extraordinary efficiency and effectiveness. Throughout the past 25 years the UDVC has shown outstanding achievement in becoming the leader of the collaborative statewide effort to eliminate domestic violence in the state of Utah.

The Council meets the third Tuesday of each month, except December. For more information about the UDVC please contact our office at (801) 521-5544 or visit our website at www.udvc.org.

Sincerely,

Judy Kasten Bell
Executive Director, UDVC

Brandy Farmer
Chair, UDVC



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Judy Kasten Bell, Executive Director

Dear Journalist,

I am a survivor of domestic violence. I believe it's important that before any reporter covers a story as traumatizing as domestic violence, they become educated on the subject. It is important for you to interview survivors so that your audience gets a better understanding of domestic violence. I have been interviewed by many local and national journalists regarding the issues of domestic violence and it is clear that most reporters have similar questions. Before you start asking your questions, one of the most important things to remember is to never blame the victim. No one is to blame for the abuse except the abuser.

In the place of a victim, who is still in a dangerous relationship, you may consider speaking to a survivor who is ready to talk. Survivors are no longer victims and want people to focus on their strengths, not their past. Survivors have begun the process of healing and moving on. Give each survivor a chance to express themselves and to tell their own story.

I ask that in each interview you conduct, you focus on the positive. Survivors who agree to be interviewed want to help the victims that aren't in a safe place by letting them know they are not alone. They also want to send a message to the family and friends of all victims to tell them not to give up, but to continue to be supportive and available. Survivors want to tell the audience things that many times victims don't have the strength or freedom to say... yet.

Sincerely,

Vicky Doherty, Survivor

Brandy Farmer, Survivor

Irene Jensen, Survivor

Lori Porter, Survivor

Sarah Southerland, Survivor

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Domestic Violence Facts and Statistics

Domestic violence crimes are about power, control, domination and fear. When one person exhibits a pattern of attempting to gain power and control over someone they have or had a relationship with, by using physical and sexual violence, threats, emotional abuse, financial control, legal status, harassment, or stalking, he/she is committing domestic violence. These control factors are also used to alienate victims from their family, friends, and co-workers, providing the victim no feasible support system to leave the relationship. Domestic violence is also known as partner abuse and spousal abuse. - *The Utah Domestic Violence Council, August 2004*

Prevalence of Domestic Violence

- Estimates range from 960,000 incidents of violence against a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend per year¹ to three million women who are physically abused by their husband or boyfriend per year.²
- Around the world, at least one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused during her lifetime.³
- Thirty percent of Americans say they know a woman who has been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend in the past year.⁴
- In the year 2001, more than half a million American women were victims of nonfatal violence committed by an intimate partner.⁵
- Intimate partner violence is primarily a crime against women. In 2001, women accounted for 85 percent of the victims of intimate partner violence (588,490 total) and men accounted for approximately 15 percent of the victims (103,220 total).⁶
- Intimate partner violence affects people of all races, from all cultures, socio-economic groups, countries, and religions.⁷
- Male violence against women does much more damage than female violence against men; women are much more likely to be injured than men.⁸
- Women are 7 to 14 times more likely than men to report suffering severe physical assaults from an intimate partner.⁹
- One in five Utah women have contacted the police regarding a domestic violence situation either for themselves or for someone else.¹⁹

Domestic Homicides

- On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in this country every day. In 1999, 1,642 murders were attributed to intimates; 74% of the intimate partner victims were women. In 2000, 440 men were killed by an intimate partner.¹⁰
- Women are much more likely than men to be killed by an intimate partner. In 2000, intimate partner homicides accounted for 33.5 percent of the murders of women and less than 4 percent of the murders of men.¹¹

Health Issues

- About half of all female victims of intimate violence report an injury of some type, and about 20 percent of them seek medical assistance.¹²
- Thirty-seven percent of women who sought treatment in emergency rooms for violence-related injuries in 1994 were injured by a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend.¹³
- Due to domestic violence one in ten Utah women have considered harming themselves, and one in seventeen have attempted suicide.¹⁹
- *Family violence costs the nation from five to 10 billion dollars annually in medical expenses, police and court costs, shelters and foster care, sick leave, absenteeism, and non-productivity.*
- Of the estimated 322,230 intimate partner rapes each year, 116,647 result in injuries (other than the rape itself), 36,161 of which require medical care.²²
- Of the nearly 4.5 million intimate partner physical assault victimizations, more than 1.8 cause injuries, 519,031 of which require medical care.²²
- One third of female rape victims, 26.4% of physical assault victims, and 42.6% of stalking victims said they talked to a mental health professional, most of them multiple times.²²

Domestic Violence Facts and Statistics Cont.

Domestic Violence and Youth

- Approximately one in five female high school students reports being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner.¹⁴
- Forty percent of girls age 14 to 17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.¹⁵

Domestic Violence and Children

- In a national survey of more than 6,000 American families, 50 percent of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently abused their children.¹⁶
- Slightly more than half of female victims of intimate violence live in households with children under age twelve.¹⁷
- Studies suggest that between 3.3 and 10 million children witness some form of domestic violence annually.¹⁸
- One in five women in Utah relate that their children witness or hear verbal abuse, while one in fourteen report their children witness or hear physical abuse.¹⁹
- About one in four Utah women witnessed domestic violence as a child and one in eight were abused by their parents.¹⁹

Stalking

- Seventy-eight percent of stalking victims are women. Women are significantly more likely than men (60 percent and 30 percent, respectively) to be stalked by intimate partners.²⁰
- Eighty percent of women who are stalked by former husbands are physically assaulted by that partner and 30 percent are sexually assaulted by that partner.²¹
- About one in fourteen Utah women have obtained a civil protective order.¹⁹

¹ U.S. Department of Justice, *Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends*, March 1998.

² The Commonwealth Fund, *Health Concerns Across a Woman's Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women's Health*, May 1999.

³ Heise, L., Ellsberg, M. and Gottemoeller, M. *Ending Violence Against Women*. Population Reports, Series L, No. 11., December 1999.

⁴ Lieberman Research Inc., *Tracking Survey conducted for The Advertising Council and the Family Violence Prevention Fund*, July – October 1996.

⁵ Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001*, February 2003.

⁶ Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001*, February 2003.

⁷ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Violence Against Women: Estimates from the Redesigned Survey*, August 1995.

⁸ Murray A. Straus and Richard J. Gelles, *Physical Violence in American Families*, 1990.

⁹ National Institute of Justice and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*, November 1998.

¹⁰ Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001*, February 2003.

¹¹ Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001*, February 2003.

¹² National Crime Victimization Survey, 1992-96; *Study of Injured Victims of Violence*, 1994.

¹³ U.S. Department of Justice, *Violence Related Injuries Treated in Hospital Emergency Depts.*, August 1997.

¹⁴ Jay G. Silverman, PhD; Anita Raj, PhD; Lorelei A. Mucci, MPH; and Jeanne E. Hathaway, MD, MPH, "Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Vol. 286, No. 5, 2001.

¹⁵ Children Now/Kaiser Permanente Poll, December 1995.

¹⁶ Strauss, Murray A, Gelles, Richard J., and Smith, Christine. 1990. *Physical Violence in American Families; Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Justice, *Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends*, March 1998.

¹⁸ Carlson, Bonnie E. (1984). Children's observations of interpersonal violence. Pp. 147-167 in A.R. Roberts (Ed.) *Battered women and their families* (pp. 147-167). NY: Springer. Straus, M.A. (1992). Children as witnesses to marital violence: A risk factor for lifelong problems among a nationally representative sample of American men and women. Report of the Twenty-Third Ross Roundtable. Columbus, OH: Ross Laboratories.

¹⁹ Domestic Violence Incidence and Prevalence Study, Dan Jones & Associates, Inc., April-May 1997

²⁰ Center for Policy Research, *Stalking in America*, July 1997.

²¹ Center for Policy Research, *Stalking in America*, July 1997.

²² National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. Center for Disease Control and Prevention; 2003



Media Resources

Local Resources

- Utah Domestic Violence Council
Judy Kasten Bell, Executive Director
(801) 521-5544
<http://www.udvc.org>
- Utah Department of Health, Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee
<http://www.health.utah.gov/vipp/domesticViolence/homicide.html>
- 1994-1999 Intimate Partner Death Review Team Report
<http://www.health.utah.gov/vipp/pdf/ipvdrreport.PDF>
- Utah State Domestic Violence Cabinet Council, 2004 Annual Report
<http://www.justice.utah.gov/CCJJReports/2004DVRreport.pdf>
- Utah Emergency Department Survey on Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence
<http://www.health.utah.gov/vipp/pdf/DVreport.pdf>

National Resources

- U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/welcome.html>
- National Network to End Domestic Violence
<http://www.nnedv.org/>
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
<http://www.ncadv.org/>
- End Abuse, Family Violence Prevention Fund
<http://endabuse.org/>
- National Center for Victims of Crime
<http://www.ncvc.org/>
- Intimate Partner Costs Statistics, CDC
http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/ipv_cost/IPVBook-Final-Feb18.pdf
- General Domestic Violence Statistic Packet, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
<http://www.mcadsv.org/mrcdsv/resource/stats/DV%20Stats%20NRC.pdf>

Victim Resources

Local Resource

- Utah Domestic Violence Hotline
[1-800-897-LINK \(5465\)](tel:1-800-897-LINK)
<http://www.informationandreferral.org/dv/index.htm>

National Resource

- National Domestic Violence Hotline
[1-800-799-SAFE \(7233\)](tel:1-800-799-SAFE)
<http://www.ndvh.org>



Warning Signs of Domestic Violence

This list identifies a series of behaviors typically demonstrated by batterers. All of these forms of abuse - psychological, economic, and physical – come from the batterer's desire for power and control. This list of behaviors should be used to help educate the public about how to recognize violent and unhealthy relationships. The behaviors listed are not all inclusive.

Verbal Attacks: Name-calling; mocking; accusing; blaming; yelling; swearing; making humiliating remarks or gestures; constantly pointing out your faults. Laughing at your goals.

Pressure Tactics: Rushing you to make decisions through intimidation; threatening to withhold money; manipulating the children; telling you what to do.

Disrespect: Interrupting; changing topics; not listening or responding; twisting your words; putting you down in front of other people; saying negative things about your friends and family.

Abusing Trust: Lying; withholding information; cheating; being overly jealous.

Emotional Withholding: Not expressing feelings; not giving support, attention, or compliments; not respecting your feelings, rights, or opinions.

Minimizing, Denying & Blaming: Making light of the abusive behavior and not taking your concerns about it seriously by making statements such as "You're too sensitive"; saying the abuse didn't happen; shifting responsibility for abusive behavior by blaming others or saying "This is your fault".

Economic Control: Interfering with your work or not letting you work; taking financial control; taking your car keys or otherwise preventing you from using the car; threatening to report you to welfare or other social service agencies.

Isolation: Preventing or making it difficult for you to see friends or relatives; monitoring phone calls and/or computer use; telling you where you can and cannot go; locking you in your home or a room in your home; taking all access to transportation and outside communication away.

Stalking and Harassment: Making uninvited visits or calls; following you; checking up on you; embarrassing you in public; refusing to leave when asked; checking your phone records, vehicle mileage and/or gas use; acting jealous and/or possessive.

Intimidation: Making angry or threatening gestures; use of physical size to intimidate; disappearing with the children; driving recklessly or threatening to harm other family members; threatening deportation or other legal ramifications.

Destruction: Destroying your possessions or essential household items; punching walls; throwing and/or breaking things– especially things that are important to you.

Threats: Making and/or carrying out threats to hurt you or others; threatening to obtain and use weapons of any kind.

Sexual Violence: Using degrading treatment or discrimination based on your sex or sexual orientation; using force, threats or coercion to obtain sex or perform sexual acts; telling lewd, crude jokes; making you have sex with others; making fun of your body and criticizing your sexual ability; touching you when you don't want to be touched; forced use of pornography.

Physical Violence: Being violent towards you, your children, other family members or household pets by slapping, punching, grabbing, kicking, strangling, pushing, biting, burning, stabbing, and/or shooting. Throwing things at you; holding you down; pulling your hair.

Suggested Interview Questions

- What made it difficult for you to leave? (Rather than, "Why did you stay?")
- What advice would you give to someone in a situation similar to the one you were in?
- If a woman is not ready to leave, what can she do to prepare herself for when she is ready?
- Whom did you ask for help, where did you find help, or what services or service providers could have helped you? (Rather than, "Why didn't you ask for help?")
- Were police involved in your case; and if not, could the police have helped you? (Rather than, "Why didn't you call the police?")

The following recommendations are from survivors. If followed the suggestions will provide media persons a more complete and accurate interview while helping to keep survivors safe.

Do:

- Educate the audience about what they can do to recognize and help stop domestic violence.
 - Ask questions that will help the audience understand how to recognize domestic violence.
 - Explain why abusers batter: to gain power and control.
 - Explain the dangers in leaving and why it is difficult to leave a dangerous relationship.
- Consider the safety of the person being interviewed.
 - Be careful to not reveal locations or personal details.
 - Protect the privacy of children and family members involved.
- Craft questions carefully to avoid blaming the victim.
- Ask survivors to describe their process of becoming a survivor, then be willing to listen and let him or her share his or her experience.
- When possible, let the survivor decide when and where to talk, this will help give back some of the control the abuser took away.
- Ask questions to relate the survivor's story to the issue at hand.
- Be aware that you may be triggering secondary trauma by asking questions.
- Screen interviews and stories for chances to educate the public about the dynamics of domestic violence. For example, if neighbors say, "Oh, he was such a nice guy," remind the audience that part of the dynamics of DV often include the abuser having a kind of Jeckel and Hyde persona; abusers are often viewed as kind and compassionate by those outside the home.
- When doing any domestic violence story, always give local and/or national hotline numbers for victims to call.

Do *Not*:

- Focus on sensational details.
- Push for more personal information than survivors want to give.
- Second guess how a survivor reacted in specific situations.
- Assume domestic violence is a cultural or economic issue.
- Be judgmental or place any blame on the victim.
- Broadcast/print parts of a story that would put a survivor in danger.

*These recommendations have been adapted by those created by SOAR (Sisters Overcoming Abusive Relationships), a task force of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence.