

# Domestic Violence:

## Why doesn't she just leave?

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# A bit about Language...

- In the majority of cases, the person using violence (Batterer) is the male partner so I'll be saying him and he for the batterer.
- Likewise, the person being controlled (Victim) is typically the female partner. So I'll be using she and her for the victim.
- Domestic Violence, Battering, Intimate Partner Violence, Spouse Abuse – it's all the same!



# Definition

- Domestic violence is a pattern of physical, sexual and psychological maltreatment of one intimate partner by another with the intent to control. This misuse of power harms the psychological, social, economic, sexual and physical well-being of the victim. It usually escalates in frequency and severity and can lead to death without intervention.

# Historical Perspective

- The word “family” comes from a Roman word “familia” which meant the slaves and servants belonging to a man.
- Until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century it was not illegal for a man to beat his wife.

# Historical Perspective

- The Code of Hammurabi in 18BC decreed that a husband could physically punish their wives for walking outside without his permission.
- In medieval Europe, a woman was publically punished with an iron muzzle if she talked back to her husband.

# Historical Perspective

- “A wife isn’t a jug. She won’t crack if you hit her ten times.” Old Russian Proverb
- “One hundred women are not worth a single testicle.” Confucius, 559-471 BC
- “Men should beat their wives. Wives should kiss the rod that beats them.” Pulpit Advise, Middle Ages, 467-1453
- “Every woman needs a good pounding now and then.” Justice Donald Roberts, Franklin County, NY, 1997

# Historical Perspective

In 1100 AD the Catholic Church High Bishops had a meeting in France. By one vote they declared women to be human.

In 1700 British common law included the “Rule of Thumb” which was used in America until 1871.

One hundred years later the Woman’s Right’s Movement began speaking out against domestic violence

# Historical Perspective

- The first shelter opened in KY in 1977
- Currently there is a shelter in each region of the Commonwealth
- In the 1980's criminal and civil sanctions became available

And in Kentucky...

- In 1992 it became illegal for a husband to rape his wife
- In 2015 a dating partner could petition for an order of protection



# Prevalence

- 4 million American women are abused annually
- Nearly 1 in 4 women during their lifetime
- Every 12 seconds a woman is beaten
- Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women ages 15-45 - more than car accidents, rapes and muggings combined.



# KY Perspective

## Lifetime Prevalence of IPV: Kentucky vs. National

- **Physical abuse by an intimate partner**
  - 34.9% of Kentucky women vs. 22.1% of women nationally
- **Sexual abuse by an intimate partner**
  - 9.4% of Kentucky women vs. 7.7% of women nationally
- **Stalking and very frightened by an intimate partner**
  - 14.8% of Kentucky women vs. 4.8% of women nationally

# Emergency Protective Orders

- 25,173 EPOs were granted in KY in 2014 (VINE)
  - 19,499 were served
  - 5,674 (23%) were not served.
- 
- 27 Kentucky women were *known* to be killed by their male partner in 2014 (KCADV)

# Working Principles



- Domestic violence is *criminal* behavior.
- Violence is a *learned* behavior.
- Violence is a *pattern* of behavior based on power and control.
- Violence is a *choice*.
- The victim is *not* to blame.
- The perpetrator is *responsible* for his choices and behavior.



# Dynamics of Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is about

**POWER AND CONTROL!**



# Dynamics of Domestic Violence

Violence is learned through . . .

- Observation
- Experience
- Reinforcement



# Who are battered women?

- any race, ethnicity, religion, education, socio-economic group
- married, divorced, single
- heterosexual, bisexual, lesbian
- young or old
- may or may not have children
- may be economically dependent or may have a good job and income
- may or may not have seen violence in her home as a child
- may be of any size or strength



# Who are battered women?

- may be documented or undocumented
- may or may not have mental or physical disabilities
- may be from a rural area, town, or big city
- may be passive or aggressive or assertive
- may have great self-esteem or low self-esteem
- may be alcoholic, drug addicted, or sober
- may be isolated or may have an active community life

***There is no typical woman who will be battered!  
The best determinant of abuse is gender.***



# Characteristics of Abusers

**Abusers may demonstrate some or none of the following traits:**

- Excessive jealousy and possessiveness
- Emotional dependency on the victim
- Poor impulse control, explosive temper, limited frustration
- Controlling partners thoughts, feelings and actions
- History of family violence



# Characteristics of Abusers cont.

- Objectifies women seeing them as property or sex objects
- Cruelty to animals
- Demonstrates little remorse or guilt for actions
- Blames abuse on alcohol or drug use
- Minimizes and/or denies violent behavior by blaming outside forces of influences
- A Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde personality



# Domestic Violence is NOT caused by:

- Genetics
- Illness
- Alcohol and drugs
- Anger and stress
- Behavior of the victim or problems in the relationship

**Domestic Violence is a choice and a crime**

# TYPES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- PHYSICAL
- SEXUAL
- PSYCHOLOGICAL
- ENVIRONMENTAL

# PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Non accidental injury committed by a partner

Hitting, kicking,  
using a weapon, biting,  
strangling, burning, etc.



# SEXUAL ABUSE

- Any form of forced sex, violent sexual acts or sexual degradation
- Rape, unwanted touching, forcing partner to view pornography, pose for pictures or have sex with others.
- Making sexually hurtful and/or degrading remarks, accusing partner of having affairs.

# PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

- The deliberate misuse of emotional factors in order to manipulate and intimidate the victim or attack her self esteem.
- Threats of harm, name calling, blaming, lying, extreme jealousy, humiliation, ignoring needs.

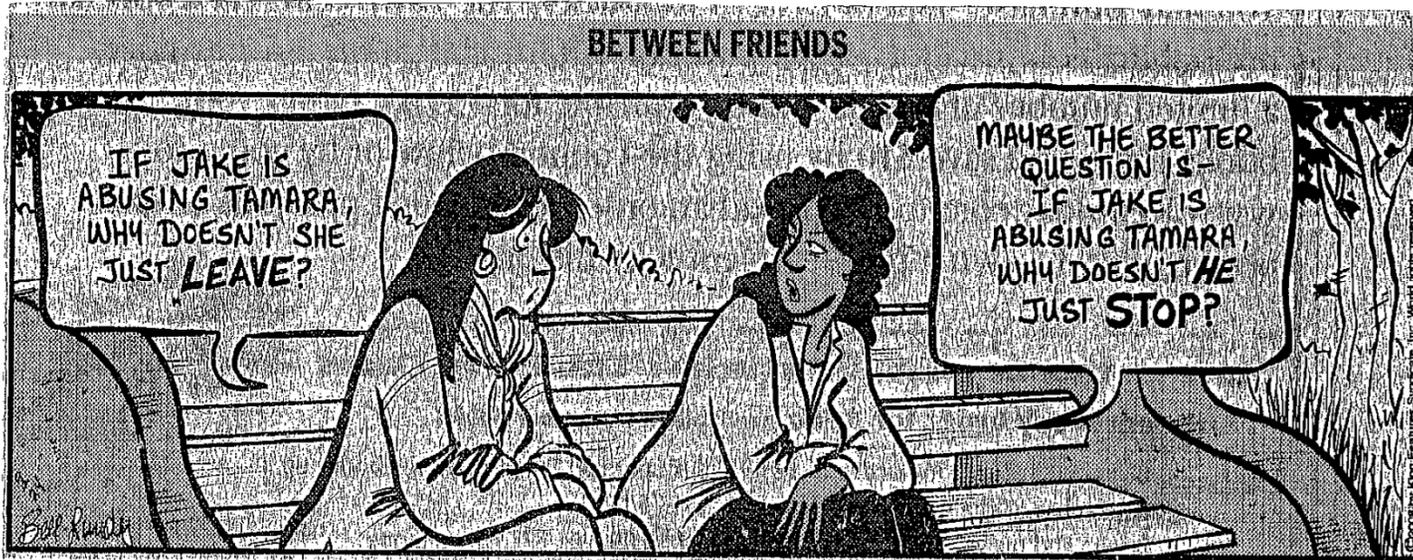
# Environmental Abuse

- The perpetrator exerts control over the victim's environment.
- Isolation
- Monitoring telephone calls
- Monitoring mail
- Destroying property
- Limiting access to transportation
- Economic abuse
- Discouraging friends and family
- Monitoring clothing, make up
- Disallowing school, social activities



# The #1 Question of Domestic Violence

**“Why does she stay?”**





## Why Does She Stay?

Leaving a violent partner  
is the most dangerous  
time of the relationship.



# Separation

- The rate of attacks on women separated from their husbands was 3x higher than that of divorced women and 25x higher than that of married women.
- Over 75% of women who are killed are killed when or after they leave.
- 75% of those women were stalked first.
- The majority of homicide/suicide occur at separation

***It is not as simple as leaving; it is about escaping***



# Barriers to Escaping

## Losing Kids

- Threats to take custody of the children
- Threats to hurt the kids if she leaves

## Love

- Partner promises to change
- People often want the violence to stop, not the relationship to end

## Fear

- Violence escalates overtime
- Threats of injury or death

## Isolation

- Emotional, physical and/or geographic separation from friends and family
- No transportation



# Barriers to Escaping

## Financial Dependency

- Does not or cannot have a job
- Inadequate wages
- Unable to afford childcare

## Guilt

- Feels duty to fix relationship
- Feels violence is her fault

## Pressure

- Friends, family, religious institutions and communities tell her to try to make it work

## Shame

- Embarrassed to admit her partner abuses her
- Embarrassed that she stayed in the relationship
- Received a bad response from the community

# Barriers to Escaping



## Systemic Discrimination

- **Discrimination within institutional systems**
- **Equal services are not provided to all survivors**
- **Survivors may be stereotyped and therefore more vulnerable to abuse**

## Substance Abuse

- **Her partner may be her dealer**
- **She may not be able to take her children with her to treatment**
- **Her partner has threatened to report her to police**



# Children Exposed to Domestic Violence

# Types of Exposure

- SEEING (direct exposure)
- HEARING
- AFTERMATH (moving to shelter, seeing holes in walls, medical attention, police intervention in home)
- USED AS TOOL (physically or emotionally- child hit or threatened, hostage, used as physical weapon against a parent, spying on mom, blame from abuser for family break-up or manipulation)





## Statistics

- Approximately 3.3 to 10 million children witness domestic violence each year (NAIC, 2005)
- Research indicates that children exposed to domestic violence are at an increased risk of being abused or neglected (NAIC, 2005)



# Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

- DV is a major precursor to child abuse in the U.S.
- Approximately 50% of homes where DV is present children are also abused
- 1,500% higher rate of risk for children to be abused
- ½ of non-custodial parent abductions occur in the context of DV
- Mothers who are beaten are 6-8 times more likely to abuse their children



# Exposure to Domestic Violence

## COGNITIVE EFFECTS

- Attention deficits
- Blunted intellectual development
- Distorted belief systems
- Poor identity and boundary distinctions
- Negative world view

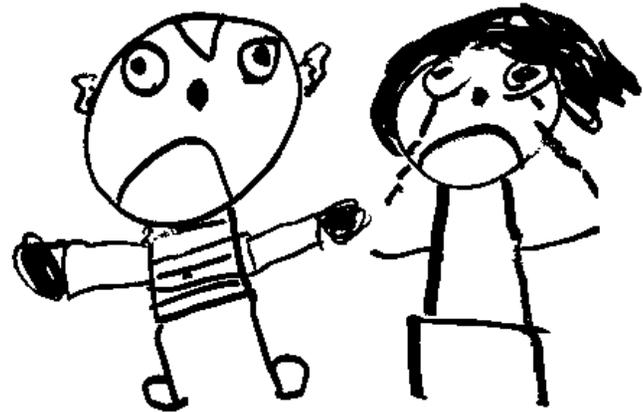




# Exposure to Domestic Violence

## BEHAVIORAL EFFECTS

- Pecking order battering
- Using violence as problem-solving techniques
- Treat others like objects
- Become overly passive
- Over-eager to please adults
- Isolation
- Poor impulse control
- Inability to form boundaries





# Exposure to Domestic Violence

## SOCIAL – EMOTIONAL EFFECTS

- High levels or constant anxiety
- Fear or constant state of panic
- Guilt
- Mixed feelings
- Loss of control of emotions
- Depression
- Issues with trust, poor self-esteem, or PTSD



Getty



# Exposure to Domestic Violence

## PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS

- Poor health
- Failure to thrive, low birth weight
- Higher susceptibility of infectious disease
- Sleeping difficulties
- Speech disorders
- Headaches and other stress related ailments
- Gastrointestinal disorders, skin diseases, visual disturbances
- D.V. causes more birth defects than accidents and illnesses combined



# Exposure to Domestic Violence

## PERSONALITIES OF CHILDREN WHO WITNESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- **Parentified child**: the child that takes on parental roles in the household
- **Overachiever**: the child who uses perfection as a means to cope with the violence
- **Aggressor**: easily angered, aggressive with other children, non-compliant

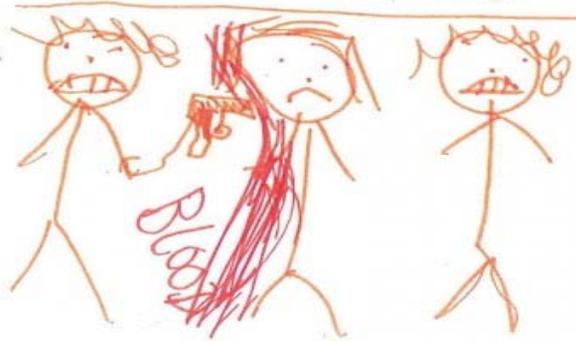
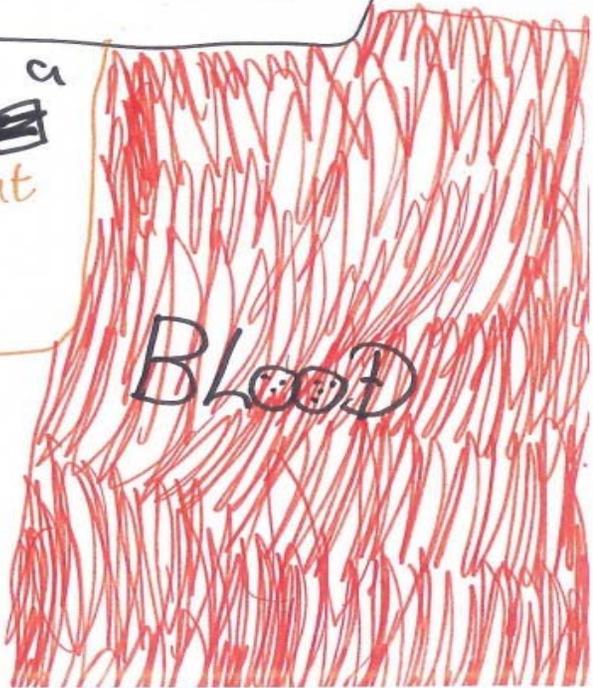




The weapon was a



My what  
clad  
souse





# Resiliency – Good News!

The impact of domestic violence on children depends on the resiliency of the child, i.e., not all children will show signs of maladaptive adjustment.





# Protective Factors

- Social competence
- Intelligence
- High self-esteem
- Outgoing temperament
- Strong sibling and peer relationships
- Supportive relationship with an adult



That adult could be you.....



# Working with children who have witnessed Domestic Violence

- Trust is a major factor
- Let them know you care about them
- Use books, art, music and play to help children open up and express feelings



# Working with children who have witnessed Domestic Violence

- Help them make realistic safety plans
- Listen and provide them with space and respect
- Encourage their autonomy, let them know you value their ideas, feelings and thoughts.





# Responding to Disclosure

- What do I say?
  - “ I am so glad you told me about this, I know it is a hard thing to talk about”
  - “Please remember none of this was your fault”
  - “I am going to do my very best I can to help you (or help your mom)”
- What do I NOT say?
  - “I promise not to tell anyone what you tell me”- you will break that promise as a mandatory reporter

Through helping  
the mother who is a victim of  
domestic violence to be safe, you  
are also helping her  
children to be safe.

# A CHILD'S POEM

My Daddy is a monster.  
He hurts my mommy.  
He hurts me too.  
Sometimes he hits.  
Sometimes he says things  
That scare me and  
Make my mommy cry.  
After he leaves  
Sometimes I wish he  
Won't come back....ever.  
I love my daddy.



# Reporting Domestic Violence

# Mandatory reporting



KRS 209A.030

(2) Any person, including but not limited to, physician, law enforcement officer, nurse, social worker, cabinet personnel, coroner, medical examiner, alternate care facility employee, or caretaker, having reasonable cause to suspect that an adult has suffered abuse, neglect, or exploitation, shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with provisions of this chapter.

# Mandatory Reporting



- Any person having reason to believe a **married person** of any age has been abused or neglected by their spouse must report it to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.
- The Cabinet, in turn, is required to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- There is no law that requires reporting of intimate partner abuse absent the partners being married.



# Reporting to Police vs. DCBS

- Reporting to Police – Immediate and on the premises
- Reporting to DCBS – Suspicion of DV occurring in the home

**(877) 597-2331**

**\*877 – KYSAFE1**

# What Information to Report?

- Contact Information
- The exact information that was witnessed by you or reported to you (who, what, when, where, how)
- Any prior documentation that is relative to the current situation

Recap



MYTH: Stress causes battering.

FACT: Obviously some batterers experience stress, but stress does not cause abuse. Many men under severe stress do not batter. Even if the practitioner helps the batterer reduce his stress, the violence will continue or eventually resume because the batterer still feels entitled to assault his partner.



**MYTH:** Drugs and alcohol cause the violence.

**FACT:** Addictions are used as excuses to free the batterer from responsibility for the behavior. This theory does not explain why the batterer uses violence, why he targets a woman for abuse, nor why he batters when sober. The addictive batterer must be treated for two separate problems--his addiction and his violence. He will not necessarily stop battering if he gains control over his addiction.



**MYTH:** Battered women provoke the violence.

**FACT:** Any woman can find herself battered. The victim is not at fault but rather the batterer, the partner who has committed a crime. No one can be responsible for another person's deliberate choices and actions. Domestic violence victims, however, frequently hear comments from their abusers like, "I did it for your own good," or from outsiders, "you must have really made him mad." These statements can confuse a woman and lead her to take responsibility for the violence or blame herself. No matter what, domestic violence is not the victim's fault.



**MYTH:** The problem is couples assaulting each other.

**FACT:** Again, nearly ninety-five percent of victims are women. Although some women are violent to their partners--often in self-defense-- it is impossible to understand battering by counting up the number of times one person hits another. Domestic violence is a pattern of abuse in the attempt to increase power and control.



**MYTH:** Domestic violence occurs only in poor urban areas.

**FACT:** Women of all cultures, races, occupations, incomes, and ages are battered by husbands, lovers, boyfriends, and partners. One in four pregnant women has a history of partner abuse.



**MYTH:** Domestic violence is a push, a slap, or a punch and does not produce serious injuries.

**FACT:** Battered women are often severely injured and even murdered. Between 22% and 35% of women who visit emergency rooms are there for injuries related to ongoing partner abuse.



**MYTH:** It is easy for a battered woman to leave her abuser.

**FACT:** Women who leave their abuser are at 75% greater risk of being killed by the abuser than those who stay. Nationally, 50% of homeless women and children are on the street because of violence in their home.



**MYTH:** Domestic violence does not affect children.

**FACT:** Child abuse occurs in up to 70% of the homes where domestic violence occurs. When a parent is victimized by domestic violence, children are abused at a rate 15 times the national average.



**MYTH:** After a woman leaves an abusive partner, the abuse stops.

**FACT:** Separated women are three times more likely than divorced women, and 25 times more likely than married women living with their husbands, to be victimized by a batterer. Batterers frequently take advantage of court-ordered visitation to inflict harm on their former partners and their children.

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# Resources



Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence

111 Darby Shire Circle

Frankfort, KY 40601

(502) 209-KDVA (5382)

[www.KCADV.org](http://www.KCADV.org)



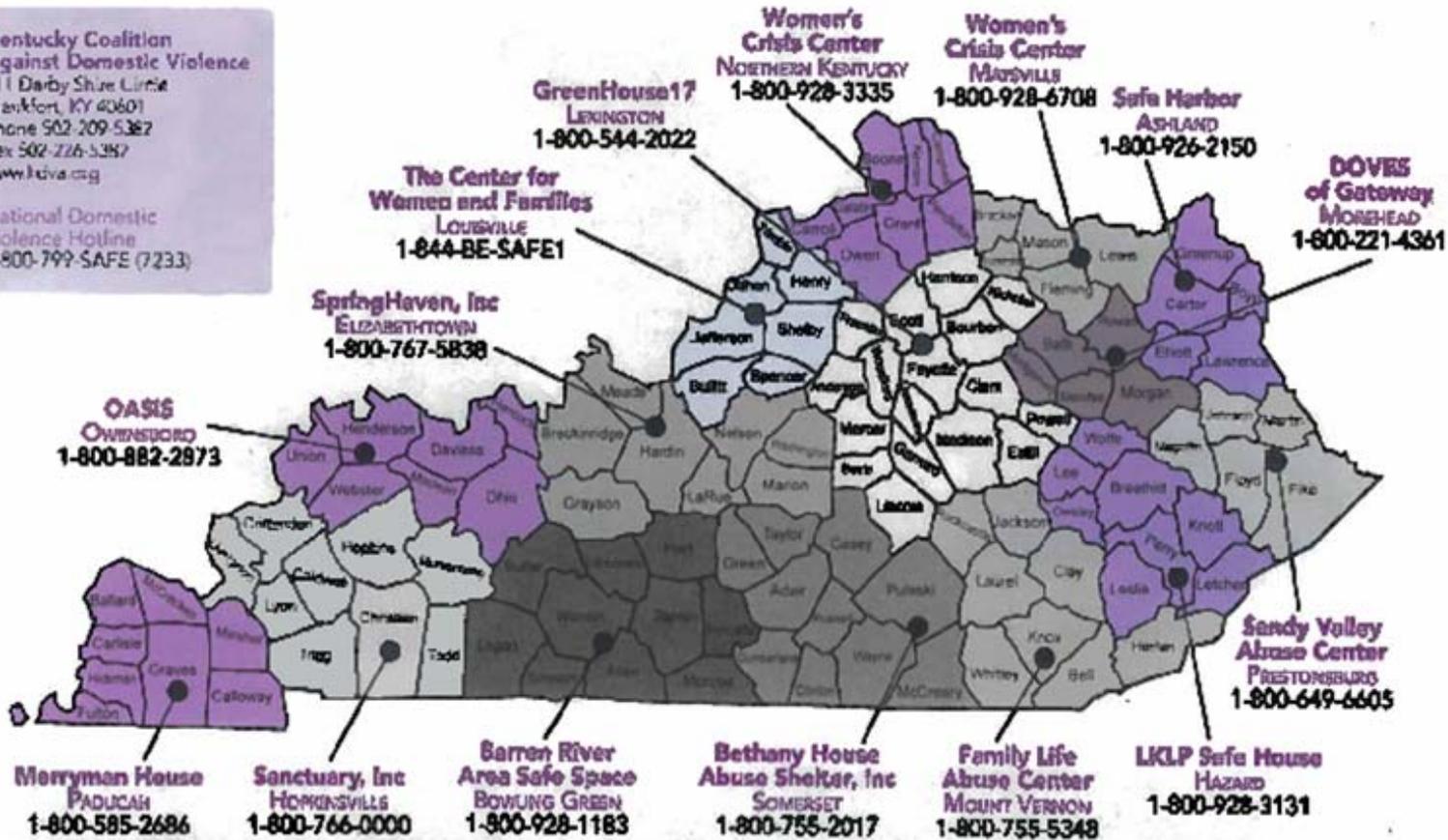
Kentucky Coalition  
Against Domestic Violence

**KCADV**

# Domestic Violence Programs in Kentucky

**Kentucky Coalition  
Against Domestic Violence**  
 111 Darby Shire Circle  
 Frankfort, KY 40601  
 Phone 502-209-5387  
 Fax 502-226-5387  
 www.kcadv.org

National Domestic  
 Violence Hotline  
 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)



Prevent • Empower • Support



**Thank you for  
your time!**