

Ways to Connect with Ending Domestic Violence

“Victims need to be empowered and equipped to walk away from the violence, but they may have scars for which they need medical care. They also may have emotional scars for which they need counseling. They are going to have spiritual scars for which they need the church.”

~Stanley Taylor, Knoxville Leadership Foundation

Make a Difference Through Prayer

- Pray for victims of abuse to find the courage to reach out for help, and for their safety as they seek to escape their abusers.
- Pray for the physical, emotional and spiritual healing of victims of abuse, and for the children of victims to break the cycle of family violence.
- Pray for abusers to be brought to justice, but also to experience God's transforming grace.
- Pray that abuse in "good Christian families" would no longer be covered up or tolerated.
- Pray that staff and volunteers ministering to victims of abuse would serve with God's wisdom, compassion and strength.
- Thank God for the many resources in Knoxville and pray for the ongoing success of collaborative efforts.

Make a Difference Through Your Life

- Work toward healthy relationships within your family, and set a good example of managing anger and control issues in a positive way. Make sure that children in your family know about appropriate touch and that older youth have received guidance on healthy dating relationships.
- Take a stand against offensive humor, video games, movies or anything else that degrades women or children as possessions or passive objects. Set a policy of zero tolerance for violence in relationships.
- Learn the warning signs of abuse and where to go for help, so that you can take appropriate action if you suspect a child or adult is being abused.
- Realize that abuse can happen to anyone. Don't think, "It can't happen here." Victims often work hard to hide their situation.
- Don't take it personally when an abuse victim withdraws from friendships or church life. Abusers often isolate the victim from family and friends and may punish her for making contact with others. Work to keep lines of communication open, without putting the victim into further danger.
- Find ways to reassure victims that they are loved and worthy of love, that no one deserves physical or emotional violence, and that there is hope for a better future. Don't give up on victims, even when they return repeatedly to their abusers.
- The Knoxville Family Justice Center operates a 24 hour helpline (865-521-6336) for anyone who needs help to escape a dangerous or abusive situation.
- If you find yourself using violence or control in relationships with your children, spouse or elderly relative, please get help immediately. Call the Knoxville Family

Justice Center helpline (865-521-6336) for a confidential referral.

Make a Difference Through Your Church

- Take care not to endorse domestic violence or discourage women from seeking help in how the church teaches about marriage and family relationships. Emphasize that Scripture does not teach that wives or children must submit to abuse.
- Display materials at the church that describe warning signs of abuse and inform victims where to seek help. Safety cards are available free of charge through the Community Coalition on Family Violence (865-521-6336).
- Join the Clergy Task Force Against Family Violence, an interfaith group that trains congregations and community groups about domestic violence and serves as a resource for church leaders confronting domestic abuse (865-688-3366, <http://www.clergytaskforce.weebly.com>).
- Hold an annual community-awareness event about domestic violence so that victims know they are not alone and help is available (potentially in October, which is Domestic Violence Awareness Month). Join area ministers in preaching against abuse on the last Sunday of January. See the Clergy Task Force website (<http://www.clergytaskforce.weebly.com>) for scriptural commentary and worship helps (call 215-6864 for more information).
- Educate church leaders and members in how to identify and respond to suspected abuse among children, dating youth, spouses, and elders—particularly people in positions that may have legal reporting requirements for abuse.
- In cases of suspected abuse, use caution in attempting to mediate or to provide marital/family counseling. This can actually provoke more violence. Seek guidance from professionals on how to address the situation without further endangering victims.
- The Knoxville Family Justice Center (865-521-6336) needs volunteer chaplains to counsel clients and offer spiritual nurture without proselytizing. Trained Stephen Ministers qualify as chaplains (see <http://www.stephenministries.org>).
- Host a support group and biblically-based counseling for people recovering from abusive relationships, or for recovering batterers.
- Commit to walking alongside an abused woman and children starting a new life – financial assistance, housing, food and household supplies, help finding and keeping a job, transportation, child care, emotional support, and spiritual renewal. Contact the Community Coalition on Family Violence (865-521-6336) to reach out to a family.
- Cultivate an ongoing relationship with a domestic violence shelter and offer support as needed: meals and groceries; facilities maintenance; items to furnish rooms; toys and playground equipment; regular visits and activities with residents; Bible studies, prayer and support groups; childcare and children's programs; supplies for women moving into new residences; bus tickets for women starting over in another city; etc.
- Recruit families in the church to open their homes to children removed from violent family situations.

Make a Difference as a Volunteer

Connect with the following organizations that serve those affected by domestic violence:

Emergency Lock Change Ministry (Grace Baptist Church): 865-691-8886,
<http://www.gracebc.org>

Changes the locks of domestic violence victims at no charge, usually within 24 hours of receiving a call.

- Volunteer to change door locks and talk with victims.
- Place follow-up phone calls to victims after the lock change.
- Talk to your church about becoming a partner in this ministry to give better coverage to victims in your church's community.

Family Crisis Center (Child & Family Tennessee): 865-637-8000, <http://www.child-family.org>

Offers holistic, comprehensive domestic violence services for adults, children, and elders including crisis response, emergency shelter, transitional housing, support groups, children's services, counseling, advocacy, and accompanying victims to court hearings. Staff are available to meet with victims anywhere in the community.

- Respond to calls that come into the 24-hour crisis line.
- Care for children living in the shelter while their mom runs errands.
- Women can offer makeovers and massages to the residents, teach skills like word processing, or share hobbies like crochet and dance.
- Families: Cook and share a meal with the mothers and children living at the shelter; spend time together in structured activities such as game nights or picnics.
- Groups: Assist with yard care, gardening, and home maintenance.

Knoxville Family Justice Center: 865-521-6336, www.fjcknoxville.org

Gives victims of domestic abuse one-stop access to a range of services to build a future of choice, safety and opportunity. Reduces obstacles keeping individuals in abusive situations by providing a coordinated, comprehensive approach to family violence.

- Welcome clients to the center, guide them through appropriate paperwork, and watch children in the playroom.
- Provide emotional support and comfort to clients as a part of the volunteer ecumenical chaplain corps. Specialized training is provided.
- Join the Speakers' Bureau to present information to groups, answer questions, and distribute literature to raise public awareness and encourage volunteerism.
- Groups: Help organize and staff public awareness events.

Additional organizations that work with domestic violence in the Knoxville area:

Clergy Task Force Against Family Violence: 865-688-3366,
<http://www.clergytaskforce.weebly.com>

An interfaith group that provides education, advocacy, and support for clergy to: 1) minister to victims of family violence; 2) work to prevent family violence in our community; 3) and find common ground as spiritual leaders to address an issue that affects people of all religions, backgrounds and classes.

Community Coalition on Family Violence: 865-521-6336, <http://www.ccfv.org>

Provides a community-wide approach to family violence through a coordinated effort

among public and private agencies, local governments, and courts. Promotes education, prevention and intervention.

Joy D. Baker Center (Salvation Army): 865-525-9401,
http://www.uss.salvationarmy.org/uss/www_uss_knoxville.nsf

Provides services and shelter to women affected by domestic violence, as well as homeless women with children. Safety is a top priority in this monitored, secure facility. The 24-hour staff serve as counselors and liaisons with courts and school systems, and assist with job placement and referrals to other agencies.

Knox County Sheriff's Office Family Crisis Unit: 865-215-6820,
<http://www.knoxsheriff.org>

Located at the Family Justice Center, this unit handles all calls related to domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse. Detectives follow up with victims to assist in obtaining warrants. Offers community prevention and awareness programs.

Knoxville Police Department Domestic Violence Unit: 865-215-6810,
<http://www.cityofknoxville.org/kpd/familycrimes.asp>

Provides comprehensive services to victims and investigates criminal offenses to hold offenders accountable. Provides services including safety planning, Order of Protection assistance, case analysis, research and preparation for prosecution.

Legal Aid of East Tennessee: 865-637-0484, <http://www.laet.org>

Ensures equal justice for elderly, abused, and low-income people by providing a broad scope of legal assistance and advocacy. Helps abuse victims obtain Orders of Protection.

Managing Emotions Non-Violently: 865-246-1100, <http://www.child-family.org>

Group counseling and intervention for men with anger and abuse issues. Attendees include both court-ordered and voluntary participants.

Serenity Shelter (Knox Area Rescue Ministries): 865-971-4673, <http://www.karm.org>

Long-term residence for single women in crisis fleeing domestic violence and other circumstances. The shelter's location is undisclosed for security reasons. Offers recovery services including job skills training, individual/group counseling, and addiction treatment programs.

Victim Advocacy Program (YWCA): 865-523-6126, <http://www.ywcaknox.com>

A court advocacy non-shelter program that provides a comprehensive victim support program including education, safety, and crisis intervention. Addresses health issues for women and children affected by domestic violence and offers parenting classes.

How to Learn More

- Contact the Knoxville Police Department's Domestic Violence Training Specialist (865-215-6864) to schedule an educational presentation.
- The Community Coalition on Family Violence (865-521-6336) is the education center for domestic violence and offers education specialists for community events.

- The Family Crisis Center (865-637-8000) has knowledgeable speakers available for presentations at churches and other local groups about domestic violence and the services offered by the Crisis Center.
- Participate in conferences sponsored by the Clergy Task Force Against Family Violence (865-688-3366, <http://www.clergytaskforce.weebly.com>) to train congregations how to preach on issues surrounding domestic violence and how to offer appropriate pastoral care.