

For Immediate Release  
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## **State Coalition of Advocates Calls for Funding Stability in the Face of Increasing Demand for Services**

Topeka, KS, February 8, 2012 – This week, The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) hosts its 9<sup>th</sup> annual Safe Homes, Safe Streets event in which advocates and community leaders from across the state gather in Topeka to raise awareness of the current realities of domestic and sexual violence and stalking in Kansas and what is being done to meet the current needs.

Unfortunately, sexual assault and domestic violence numbers have not gone down in recent years and, in fact, remain very high.

- Between 2008 and 2010, DV-related homicides increased: from 19, to 35, to 32; (2010 KBI Report)
- Statewide in 2010, the percent of homicides that were DV-related increased from 14.84% to 31.07%; (2010 KBI Report)
- Statewide numbers from 2011 are not in but local numbers are:
  - In 2011, in Wichita, domestic violence-related homicides represented 37% of the total homicides in that city;
  - In 2011, in Johnson county, 64% of total homicides were domestic violence-related; it was 25% locally the year before;
- Domestic battery, rape & sexual battery consistently rank in the top 10 person crimes in the most populated areas of Kansas;
- Preliminary data from a recent Center for Disease Control report estimates that 29% of Kansas women have been the victim of sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking in their lifetimes. This translates into roughly 312,000 Kansas women;
- There are less than 500 beds available in DV shelters statewide
- Victims' services programs are operating at capacity almost all the time.
- Victims are using the shelters and the face-to-face services at much higher rates and staying longer in shelters. **Their needs are more acute; their situations more lethal; and their lives much more complicated.** Many victims receive services for longer periods of times as they struggle with job insecurity, community economic conditions, or the inability to find or afford safe housing. These issues, which impact many Kansans, work against victims who may be forced to delay leaving dangerous situations.

## KCSDV Calls for Stability

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After nearly a 25% cut in funding between 2009 and 2010, the Kansas Legislature has held funding steady. KCSDV and its member programs thank our representative and senators in the Kansas Legislature for their support.

In the face of this distressing news communities and programs are pulling together to overcome these staggering numbers.

- Family Crisis Center of Great Bend has expanded their offices to reach more victims;
- The Newton community and the Harvey County DV/SA Task Force has implemented a city-wide response to domestic violence;
- SAFEHOME, Inc. of Overland Park, is working with their local police departments to respond immediately and directly to the most lethal situations.

What this says is that our communities are continuing to pull together to help provide safety for victims and to hold perpetrators accountable. This is not the time to reduce services for survivors.

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*Founded in 1982, the purpose of KCSDV is the prevention and elimination of sexual and domestic violence through a statewide network of programs providing support and safety for all victims of sexual and domestic violence and stalking, with primary focus on women and their children; direct services; public awareness and education; advocacy for victims; comprehensive prevention; and, social change efforts. Learn more at [www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org).*