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Kansas Observes October as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Topeka, KS, 10/01/2013 – The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) welcomes October as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women aged 15 to 44, and, on average, three women are killed every day at the hands of a current or former intimate partner. One in four women in the U.S. will be the victim of domestic violence at some point in her lifetime. This translates into about 312,000 Kansas women. The Kansas Bureau of Investigation indicated that, in 2011, there were 24,159 incidents of domestic violence reported to law enforcement, the highest number Kansas has seen in 20 years.

“Domestic violence impacts all Kansans: Adults, children, families, friends, communities, workplaces, schools, religious institutions and many others,” says Joyce Grover, executive director of KCSDV. “The month of October is a time for us to reflect on and raise awareness to the issue of domestic violence, and to encourage people to come together to support life-saving services for victims in their communities.” In Kansas, there are 29 community-based advocacy programs located throughout the state that provide safety services and support to victims of sexual and domestic violence in all 105 counties. Kansas advocacy programs regularly serve more than 17,000 victims of domestic violence annually while also responding to nearly 23,000 crisis hotline calls, and the demand for these critical services continues to rise.

“In Kansas, almost one in four of the homicides are domestic violence-related. We know, even with these startling numbers, that domestic violence is preventable,” says Grover. “By promoting healthy relationships that include equality and respect, and through large scale community education and action, we can reduce the likelihood that someone will turn to abusive behaviors in a relationship.”

Kansas domestic violence advocacy programs are also using October as a time to raise awareness in their local communities. Options, Inc., in Hays is one of several agencies collaborating to host a Domestic Violence Summit on October 15 with longtime activist Rus Funk as a featured presenter. In Great Bend, the Family Crisis Center, Inc., is encouraging community members to ‘Turn Our Town Purple’ (the color used to raise awareness to domestic violence) on October 7. SOS, Inc., in Emporia will host its annual Domestic Violence Summit on October 4 with national risk assessment expert, David Adams. The Topeka YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment will host their 2013 Week Without Violence, and Catholic Charities Harbor House and StepStone in Wichita are co-hosting a dialogue on October 18 called “Men Standing Up Against Domestic Violence.” These are just a few of the many events happening across Kansas to raise awareness to domestic violence. Governor Brownback has also demonstrated his support by proclaiming October 2013 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Kansas. “October is a time to talk about domestic violence, to send messages in your community that domestic violence will not be tolerated, and to let victims know that they are and will be supported,” says Grover. “Ending domestic violence takes us all.”

Learn more about what you can do, and find a list of statewide events at kcsdv.org or check with your local DV/SA program. Join the conversation at [facebook.com/kcsdv](https://www.facebook.com/kcsdv).

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.