

PRESS STATEMENT

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New Numbers Released on Domestic Violence, Rape & Stalking

Domestic violence reports to law enforcement are at a 20-year high, according to a recently released Kansas Bureau of Investigation Domestic Violence, Stalking and Rape Report. Domestic violence-related murders continue to hover at around 25% of all murders in Kansas. Reported rapes are occurring every 8 hours across the state. Rape is one of the most underreported of all crimes. Stalking incidents are up over 250% since Kansas updated its law.

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV), a network of 29 programs that provide services in small and large communities across Kansas, says the experiences of the direct service providers support what these numbers show. They are serving more victims for longer periods of time. The circumstances of the abuse and rape are more severe, more lethal, and more complicated, the advocacy organization says.

“Since 2009, the reported domestic violence incidents and murders in Kansas have been at all-time highs,” stated Joyce Grover, executive director of KCSDV. “During the same period of time,” Grover said, “Kansas and the nation have experienced a significant economic downturn. Bad economic conditions do not cause domestic violence and rape but these conditions can be like throwing gasoline on a fire.” “Coupled with cuts to local, state, and federal funding, fewer grants available, and the impact of sequestration, this is a dangerous time for Kansas victims and their families.” Grover said. The legislature has managed to keep state general funding for these services fairly level since 2009, but the numbers of victims needing services continues to rise. “Level funding is no longer adequate; it does not keep heads above the water line,” Grover stated.

“We must continue to hear and respond to the voices of victims and their children as they reach out for help, and, these numbers tell us that victims are doing so in record numbers,” stated Grover. “The patterns apparent through the last several years are very alarming,” Grover said, “we call on our communities and our governments, both state and federal, to respond to these critical safety issues.”

“As we all head into the winter holidays, please remember that not all homes are merry and bright. Please reach out to your friends, your neighbors and your family members who may be in need of a helping hand,” Grover urged, “We can only end this violence if we work together.”

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KCSDV is a network of 29 sexual and domestic violence advocacy programs in Kansas. These programs provide direct services to victims of sexual and domestic violence. KCSDV’s purpose is to prevent and eliminate sexual and domestic violence by providing technical assistance, training, legislative advocacy, and policy analysis on a variety of topics for member programs, professionals and ally organizations across Kansas.