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NATIONWIDE SURVEY REVEALS URGENT NEED FOR INCREASED FUNDING FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Nearly 66,000 Domestic Violence Victims Helped On a Single Day, But Almost 10,000 Requests for Help Go Unanswered

TOPEKA, KS – March 10, 2014 –The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) released a new research report last week that found, in a single 24-hour period, more than 66,000 victims of domestic violence received help and support from service organizations in the United States, yet nearly 10,000 more who needed assistance could not be helped due to a lack of adequate resources.

In Kansas, 727 victims of domestic violence received services in that 24-hour period, but 296 could not be helped because local programs here in Kansas did not have sufficient resources, of which 83 were for emergency shelter.

“We are very concerned that victims cannot receive all the services they need in their own community. The number of victims who had to be referred elsewhere is more than twice what it was the year before. This is unacceptable,” said Joyce Grover, executive director for the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV). All Kansas domestic violence programs participated in this study conducted by NNEDV. “Reductions in funding, not enough staff, and reduced donations to Kansas domestic violence programs were among the top causes of these unmet requests for help,” said Grover.

The report, “Domestic Violence Counts 2013: A 24-hour Census of Domestic Violence Shelters and Services,” examined a random day, September 17, 2013, and collected information from 1,649 domestic violence programs throughout the United States from midnight to midnight on that day. It identifies needs that were met and unmet on that day and provides a snapshot of how budget cuts are affecting the staffing and resources of these organizations.

Key findings for Kansas include this 24-hour data from September 17, 2013:

- 727 domestic violence victims and their children received services in just one day.
- 333 calls to domestic violence hotlines were answered.
- 384 individuals were educated on domestic violence during trainings conducted by programs.

“Every day in this country, victims of domestic violence are bravely reaching out for help, and it’s essential that they have somewhere safe to go,” said Kim Gandy, President and CEO of the NNEDV.

“We have made so much progress toward ending violence and giving survivors avenues for safety. But continued program cuts jeopardize that progress and jeopardize the lives of victims.”

When program providers were asked what most likely happens when services are not available, 60% said the most likely outcome was that victims returned to their abusers, 27% said the victims become homeless, and 11% said that victims end up living in their cars.

“Kansas has seen an increase in referrals to domestic violence programs through community initiatives such as lethality screening and referral by law enforcement,” said Grover. “While these initiatives are critical and can be life-saving, they are often unfunded without adequate resources to meet the need.”

In 2013, 1,696 staff positions were cut by domestic violence programs nationwide due to funding reductions, an average of 1.2 staff per program. Of the staff cut in 2013, 70% were direct service positions, such as advocates, shelter staff, and child advocates. In Kansas, domestic violence programs have also experienced staff cuts and continue to try to meet an increased demand for services with fewer resources.

“When one in four murders in Kansas is related to domestic violence and the number of domestic violence incidents reported to law enforcement is at a 20 year high, more attention and resources must be dedicated to these essential, life-saving services,” said Grover.

Download the full “Domestic Violence Counts 2013” census report, including the Kansas census summary at www.nnedv.org/census.

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About 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.

About NNEDV

The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), a 501(c)(3) social change organization, is dedicated to creating a social, political and economic environment in which domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking no longer exist. As the leading voice for domestic violence victims and their allies, NNEDV members include all 56 of the state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence, including over 2,000 local programs. NNEDV has been a premiere national organization advancing the movement against domestic violence for almost 25 years, having led efforts among domestic violence advocates and survivors in urging Congress to pass the landmark Violence Against Women Act of 1994. To learn more about NNEDV, please visit www.nnedv.org.