

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pulaski Community Partners Coalition teams with Women's Resource Center of the NRV for Domestic Violence Awareness Month campaign

Almost everyone recognizes physical violence as a potential sign of domestic violence, but what about name-calling? Controlling a bank account? Harming a family pet? The impact on children who are exposed to violence in the home? Or living in fear of threatened harm?

On average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States. Over the course of a year, that equals more than 12 million women and men.

To help address these issues on a local level, officials with the Pulaski Community Partners Coalition (PCPC) and the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley (WRC-NRV) have announced a new campaign to call attention to Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The tag line for the campaign is, "Power Up to End Domestic Violence."

"Ending domestic violence is a community problem that requires a community solution," explains Laura Beth Weaver, Executive Director of the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley. "We are very pleased to have the support of the Pulaski Community Partners Coalition in raising awareness of an issue that quite frankly affects us all in some way."

A key component of the campaign will be a weekly series of videos featuring a variety of community leaders and stakeholders from Pulaski County. The introductory video, which is scheduled to be published on Monday, October 5, will be followed each Monday by a video with a different topic related to domestic violence, including: Keeping Youth Safe, Animal Abuse & Domestic Violence, and Men as Allies.

"The support from our community partners in developing this video series has been incredible," notes Anthony Akers, Chair of PCPC. "Our friends with the Women's Resource Center have been valuable members of our coalition and we are grateful to be working with them on such an important issue."

"Sadly, Pulaski County is no different from any other community in this country and we are not immune from the devastating effects of domestic violence," adds Akers. "However, our community does have a very strong network of agencies and professionals who are deeply invested in doing whatever it takes to not only address the issue, but to make sure every citizen feels safe and supported."

Weaver notes that 1 in 4 women nationally is the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner while 1 in 7 men experiences severe physical violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime.

She adds that up to 70% of domestic violence victims have pets, and 48% of women in an abusive relationships delay leaving a dangerous situation out of concern for their pet's safety.

"Being an ally means not ignoring abusive behaviors," explains Weaver. "Keeping victims safe means holding perpetrators accountable."

“We are making a point to encourage men in our community to get involved to end domestic violence,” Akers adds. “Being an ally means speaking up when you hear someone express an attitude or belief that supports violence against another person.”

In addition to the weekly video series, PCPC and the Women’s Resource Center are encouraging community members to support the campaign on social media with selfie videos using the hashtag #powerup. Instructions on how to participate in this effort can be found on PCPC’s Facebook page at facebook.com/officialpcpc.

To learn more about the “Power Up” campaign, or the services and programs offered by the Women’s Resource Center of the New River Valley, visit www.wrcnrvalley.org. The Women’s Resource Center also offers a crisis line at 540-639-1123, as well as a chat line for victims who may not be comfortable speaking by phone.

“Domestic violence doesn't end when October does, and neither will our efforts to raise awareness about domestic violence,” concludes Weaver.