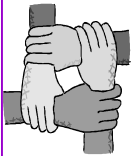


ACTION TOOLS: Community Activism



Legislative action involves more than interacting with elected officials. A great way to get your message out to legislators, the media, and the community as a whole is to plan an event focused on domestic violence. You can plan an activity any time of the year, but **October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month**, is a particularly good time to get your message out.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month evolved from the first Day of Unity observed in October, 1981 by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence in order to connect domestic violence advocates from across the country. The Day of Unity soon transformed into a week-long event, when activities related to domestic violence were held at the local, state, and national level. In October 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed, and in 1989 the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month Commemorative Legislation was passed by the U.S. Congress. Each year legislation is introduced in the House and Senate to recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness month. Listed below are some great ideas to help you plan your own Domestic Violence Awareness event.



Ribbon Campaigns

Distribute purple ribbons to clergy, police chiefs, judges, librarians, emergency room personnel, teachers, and others in your community.



Utility Company Campaign

Ask local utility companies to include a message about domestic violence in their monthly bill.



Library Campaigns

Contact public libraries in your area and provide them with materials for a display.



Candlelight Vigil

Organize a candlelight vigil to mourn those who suffered or lost their lives to domestic violence, and raise awareness on intimate partner homicide.



Cell Phone Collection

Collect used cell phones and donate them to your local domestic violence shelter or safe home — visit www.verizonwireless.com/hopeline for more information.



Placemat Campaign

Print paper placemats with information on domestic violence and local service providers, and ask local restaurants to use them in October.



Religious Institute Campaigns

Send a mass mailing to all religious institutions in your area asking them to address the issue from the pulpit or in their bulletins and newsletters.



Chili Cook-Off

Have a chili cooking contest with prizes and entertainment. Invite individuals, teams, and restaurants to compete, with tasting open to the public. The proceeds benefit a local shelter.



Teen Dating Violence Essay Contest

Hold an essay contest about teen dating violence in area schools, with an awards ceremony for the winners.