

# ACTION TOOLS: Planning a Town Hall Meeting



## ATTEND A TOWN HALL MEETING OR ORGANIZE YOUR OWN.

Lawmakers often host town meetings in their districts so that they can hear directly from their constituents. Town meetings are a great time to meet your representative and utilize a public forum to discuss domestic violence issues. If your lawmaker does not currently host town meetings, organize your own meeting.

Below are a few tips to remember when attending or organizing a town hall meeting.

### Attending A Meeting:

- **Get On The Invite List.** Write or call your lawmaker and ask if there is an invite list and request to be added to it.
- **Prepare Questions Ahead of Time.** Have specific questions ready or ask for your legislator's position on issues.
- **Get An Answer.** These meetings are a chance for you to

ask direct questions and get straightforward answers. Make sure the legislator answers your question — even if it is not the answer you hoped for.

### Organizing Your Own Meeting:

- **Determine Your Issue.** It is important to know exactly what issue you want to address and how you want to present information. Use town meetings to plan community events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October), discuss the relationship between local law enforcement and local programs, address an incident that recently happened in the community, or publicize the need for more services.
- **Schedule.** Pick a convenient date, time, and location. Give the public ample notice. If you work with a local government, they may be able to provide a venue for you to use.
- **Send Invitations.** Send formal invitations to a variety of potential speakers. Consider inviting legislators, local law

enforcement, domestic violence advocates, survivors, and health care professionals. Follow up the invitations with phone calls.

- **Structure The Meeting.** Possibly have a panel discussion around one key speaker (such as a member of Congress). Make sure to leave plenty of time for questions and answers
- **Publicize The Meeting.** Remember, the purpose of your meeting is raise awareness about domestic violence in your community. Make sure everyone in the community is invited. Make flyers and signs to post at grocery stores, libraries, and local shops. Submit a press release or media advisory to local newspapers, TV stations, and radio stations.
- **Work With Others.** A great way to reach a larger audience is to organize the event with other domestic violence organizations. This is a good way to network with other groups and lessen the individual cost of the event.

## DECLARE OCTOBER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH!!!

Join our Town Hall Meeting  
Monday, October 1, 2004 at 7:00pm

Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library  
901 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001

## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

SPONSORED BY: NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

For More Information: Contact the NCADV Public Policy Office. 202-745-1211 or [publicpolicy@ncadv.org](mailto:publicpolicy@ncadv.org)