



SIGNATURE PROGRAM

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AWARENESS & PREVENTION

2026-2028 GFWC CLUB MANUAL

STAND UP. SPEAK UP. SHOW UP.

The goal of the GFWC Signature Program is to increase awareness of and help prevent the widespread occurrence of domestic and sexual violence in communities across the nation by working with national domestic violence networks, supporting existing activities, working with various established programs, and initiating educational opportunities for club members and local citizens. GFWC aims to be a powerful voice for victims and survivors.

In partnership with GFWC and community members, we pledge to work together with passion and purpose to advocate for survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence and to educate the public on the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence in our local communities and to improve outcomes for survivors through member education and awareness.

The GFWC Signature Program has eight areas of focus:

- **Campus Sexual Assault**
 - Campus sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs on a school campus without the explicit consent of the recipient.
- **Child Abuse**
 - Child abuse includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child.
- **Elder Abuse**
 - Abuse later in life includes physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, or stalking of an adult age 50 years or older.
- **Human Trafficking for Sexual Purposes**
 - Sexual human trafficking is any act that has been induced by recruitment, harboring, transporting, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for purposes of a sex act in which anything of value is given to or received by any person.
- **Intimate Partner Violence**
 - Intimate partner violence (IPV) includes physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, as well as sexual coercion and stalking by a current or former intimate partner. An intimate partner is a person with whom a person has or had a close personal or sexual relationship.



GFWC
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**GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS**

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- **Military Sexual Assault**
 - Military sexual assault is the use of force, threats, intimidation, or abuse of authority during intentional sexual contact. It also includes instances where the survivor is unable to consent. Survivors of military sexual assault include both men and women.
- **Teen Dating Violence**
 - Teen dating violence (TDV), also identified as intimate relationship violence or intimate partner violence among adolescents or adolescent relationship abuse, includes physical, psychological, or sexual abuse; harassment; or stalking of any person ages 12 to 18 in the context of a past or present romantic or consensual relationship. For more information about teen dating violence, visit <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/crimes/teen-dating-violence>
- **Violence Against Native American Women**
 - American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) women and two-spirit people in tribal communities are disproportionately affected by sexual and gender- based violence in the United States. Research and advocacy have brought attention to the unique nature of victimization in our AIAN communities.



GFWC Signature Program Icons & Logos are available in the Digital Library for download.



2026-2028 UNITY PROJECT

GFWC PLEDGE TO STAND WITH SURVIVORS

STAND UP. SPEAK UP. SHOW UP.

WHAT MEMBERS CAN DO:

1. **Download or print** the pledge. (found on the next page and in the Member Portal Digital Library)
2. **Write your name** on the pledge. (digitally or by hand)
3. **Take a photo** of yourself holding your signed pledge.
4. **Post it to your social media** (Facebook, Instagram, X, Threads, etc.) using the hashtags:
#GFWCforSurvivors and **#GFWCStandSpeakShowUp**
5. **Add your state or District of Columbia coalition hashtags** to connect locally.
For example: **#ICASA #ICADV** (Illinois)
(Each state or the District of Columbia can add their own domestic and sexual violence coalition tags.)
6. **Encourage others** – your club members, community leaders, and friends – to take the pledge, take their picture holding their signed pledge, posting it on their social media and sharing it on club and state socials.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Every post, signature, and share helps amplify our collective voice, showing survivors that GFWC members **see them, believe them, and stand beside them.**

By **uniting** through this pledge, we:

- Bring **national visibility** to GFWC's Signature Program on Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention.
- Spark **public conversation** about survivor support, healing, and community action.
- Demonstrate that GFWC is a network of women who **don't stay silent** in the face of violence.
- Encourage **partnerships** with state and local coalitions working toward a world free from fear and harm.





GFWC PLEDGE TO STAND WITH SURVIVORS

My name is _____

I pledge to be a voice for change and a light
for hope, when a survivor confides they have
experienced domestic or sexual violence.

I will Stand Up, Speak Up, and Show Up
for the silenced,
for the brave,
and for those still on their journey to healing.

**Together, we raise awareness, offer support,
and move closer to a world without violence.**



#GFWCFORSURVIVORS

#GFWCSTANDSPEAKSHOWUP

#WEAREGFWC

#GFWC

Date Signed: _____

FEATURED PROJECTS



DATING VIOLENCE PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

GFWC Women's Club of South County (RI) partnered with the Domestic Resource Center of South County to expand on an educational and informational program for sororities and fraternities on the campus of the University of Rhode Island. Funds from a grant from the 2022-2024 State President allowed this club to provide needed additional programs within the campus environment. The members held three different sessions with students to discuss healthy interpersonal relationships and how to avoid dating violence.



EMPOWERING THROUGH EDUCATION

GFWC Statesville Woman's Club (NC) launched a podcast series featuring a Victim Advocate from My Sister's House, a local shelter for women and children fleeing domestic and/or sexual violence or human trafficking. The episodes explore signs of domestic violence, myths about protective behaviors, and the shelter's approach to offering survivor-focused services with the goal of survivorship for their clients. The podcast brings awareness to the community of the importance of advocacy and support of the GFWC Signature Program.



SYLVIA'S CLOSET

GFWC Portland Woman's Club (OR) partnered with Providence Health Services of Portland to start a project with Sylvia's Closet, providing new clothes for domestic abuse victims, both female and male, when their clothing is taken by law enforcement for DNA testing in emergencies. Providence Hospital is creating a logo for the project and honoring the GFWC Portland Woman's Club. This effort will be part of a new special clinic for domestic abuse victims. It also resulted in a new club member.



COURT CANINE THERAPY FOR CHILDREN

GFWC Oklahoma had a speaker at their state meeting, a Licensed Court Reporter and Court Therapy Dog Handler. This special guest discussed the importance and impact of using court therapy dogs in court proceedings for child victims. The dogs were present too: Jerzy Girl and Joey. The District President and members distributed "Books of HOPE" in local courthouses for both children and adults to read while awaiting court proceedings as another level of advocacy.





CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

Campus sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient. More than 1 in 4 women attending college are survivors of campus sexual assault. Women are not the only survivors. About 7% of college men and 23% of LGBTQ+ students are also survivors. It is not just other students that present a risk; sometimes they are a member of the faculty or staff.

As a college student, the first step in prevention is believing it could happen to you and that it will most likely be by someone you know. The second step is thinking ahead of time how you can safeguard yourself. Decide on boundaries before going on a date, to a party, or other activity.

Colleges must take responsibility for the environment on campus. They should facilitate open discussions with students and employees about the issue and have policies in place for handling reports of sexual assault in a sensitive, compassionate, and professional manner.

Most assaults go unreported, with over 90% of victims on college campuses not reporting the incident. The highest risk period is the first few months of the first and second semesters. Nine out of ten victims know the person who assaulted them.

Survivors often do not file a report or seek help or counseling because they are too embarrassed or ashamed or believe they can handle it on their own. Having a supportive environment on campus and with friends can make filing a report easier to do. Staff and campus police need to be fully trained on how to handle reports as well as understanding survivor impact and behavior. Supportive services from a crisis advocate are invaluable in helping survivors navigate the reporting and subsequent legal processes.

Survivors of campus sexual assault may need immediate assistance to locate safe housing, obtain counseling, and, if necessary, file a civil restraining order.

If someone you know is assaulted, these are things you can do to help:

- Help get them to a safe location.
- Keep reminding them it was not their fault.
- Be a supportive listener.
- If you observed any part of the assault, take detailed notes about what you saw.
- Go with them to medical and other appointments.
- Continue to follow up with them and encourage them to seek counseling.



- Ensure that your campus has appropriate policies and procedures in place to address incidents of sexual assault and follows federal requirements under the Clery Campus Safety Act and Title IX, as well as applicable state and local laws.
- Ensure that resources like safe housing, advocates, counseling, and medical care are available to help survivors.
- Use social media to spread awareness and advocate for social change.
- Hold a bystander intervention session to teach bystanders how to intervene in situations that involve sexual violence.
- Get involved in national campaigns.
- Organize or participate in public awareness initiatives:
 - It's on Us – An initiative through the American Association of University Women that reframes sexual assault in a way that inspires everyone to see it as their responsibility to do something, big or small, to prevent it. (itsonus.org)
 - Take Back the Night – Take part in an after-dark march on a college campus and make a statement about women's right to be in public at night without the risk of sexual violence.
 - Work with a local college and share information about The Red Zone.

RESOURCES

National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) www.nsvrc.org

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

<https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/civil-rights-laws/title-ix-and-sex-discrimination>

Clery Center for Security on Campus www.clerycenter.org

Victim Rights Law Center www.victimrights.org

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) www.rainn.org

The Red Zone: Sexual Violence on College Campuses metoomvmt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/1.5.11_The-Red-Zone-Sexual-Violence-on-College-Campuses_INFOSHEET_V2.pdf





CHILD ABUSE

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

Child abuse includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. Children and even infants witnessing or experiencing abuse can display negative behavior years later. There are four common types of abuse and neglect:

- Physical abuse is the intentional use of physical force that can result in physical injury. Examples include hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or other shows of force against a child.
- Sexual abuse involves pressuring or forcing a child to engage in sexual acts. It includes behaviors such as fondling, penetration, and exposing a child to other sexual activities.
- Emotional abuse refers to behaviors that harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being. Examples include name-calling, shaming, rejection, withholding love, and threatening.
- Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. These needs include housing, food, clothing, education, and access to medical care.

Child abuse and neglect are common. At least 1 in 7 children have experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past year. Children living in poverty experience more abuse and neglect. Rates of child abuse and neglect are five times higher for children in families with low socioeconomic status compared to children in families with higher socioeconomic status.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month, also known as Child Abuse Prevention Month in America, is an annual observance in the United States dedicated to raising awareness and preventing child abuse. April has been designated Child Abuse Prevention Month in the United States since 1983.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years). For example:

- Substance use by a parent.
- Parent participating in criminal activity and in prison.
- Neglect by parent.
- Sexual abuse.
- Physical abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Living with a parent/caregiver who has a serious mental illness.
- Witnessing violence in the home or community.



ACEs can have lasting, negative effects on health, wellbeing, and opportunity. These experiences can increase the risks of injury, sexually transmitted infections, maternal and child health problems, teen pregnancy, involvement in sex trafficking, and a wide range of chronic diseases and leading causes of death such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and suicide.

Hotline numbers are a valuable resource for those who are mandated by law to report suspected abuse. Most hotlines staffed by professional crisis counselors are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These professionals can offer crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. All calls are confidential. Calls can come from children at risk for abuse, distressed parents seeking crisis intervention, and concerned individuals who suspect that child abuse may be occurring. Most states have a division of their health and human services department that people should call if abuse is suspected.

Children need support after suffering abuse. Talking to a professional therapist can help many children, and many abuse-related disorders can be successfully treated with medications. Reporting suspected abuse is critical to helping an abuse survivor get the help and support the child needs.

Child abuse and neglect are serious problems that can have lasting harmful effects on its survivors. The goal of preventing child abuse and neglect is to stop this violence from happening in the first place.

WHAT CAN GFWC DO?

- Provide support and supplies to families in need at emergency shelters.
- Advocate for changes in culture and communities to reduce the likelihood of child abuse.
- Accompany victims to court or to the hospital to provide support and assistance.
- Encourage club members to become Court Appointed Advocates (CASA) and/or Guardians ad Litem.
- Collect teddy bears to give to children at a child advocacy center, where children are interviewed and examined after an incident of abuse.
- Support local Child Protective Service agencies with kits for children entering foster care.
- Provide used suitcases and bags to Child Protective Service agencies to reduce the need for children to use garbage bags for their belongings.
- Support legislation that eradicates child abuse and/or makes laws tougher.

RESOURCES

CASA www.nationalcasagal.org

Childhelp USA/National Child Abuse Hotline www.childhelpusa.org; 1-800-422-4453

National Link Coalition www.nationallinkcoalition.org/how-do-i-report-suspected-abuse

Children's Defense Fund www.childrensdefense.org; 202-628-8787

Prevent Child Abuse America www.preventchildabuse.org

Healthy Families America www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org





ELDER ABUSE

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

Approximately 1 in 6 people 60 years or older experienced some sort of abuse during the past year.

This includes physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, or stalking.

Rates of elder abuse are high in institutions such as nursing homes and long-term care facilities, with 2 in 3 staff reporting that they have committed abuse in the past year. Research indicates that for every incident of abuse reported to the authorities, 23 incidents remain undiscovered and unreported.

People 85 and older are the fastest-growing segment of the population, with approximately 10,000 baby boomers turning 65 every day. As the population ages, so does the opportunity for abuse. Likely targets are adults who have no family or friends nearby and people with disabilities, memory problems, or dementia.

Older individuals face unique challenges when seeking assistance or services. In most cases, the survivor is in an ongoing relationship with the perpetrator. They may refrain from seeking help or calling the police due to shame or embarrassment because the abuse was committed by a spouse, relative, or caregiver. They may also be intimidated by threats of being placed in a nursing home. Signs may be missed by professionals because of a lack of training in detecting abuse. Professionals must be trained to be diligent about performing physical body checks. Abuse can happen to any older adult, but it often affects those who depend on others for help with everyday care, including bathing, dressing, and taking medicine.

An AARP report estimates that elders throughout the U.S. lose a minimum of \$28.3 billion annually due to elder financial abuse and exploitation. We need to support and educate our elderly population and their caregivers. With so many entities involved, there is growing recognition of the need for multidisciplinary collaboration. Depending on the nature of the abuse, additional expertise and assistance may be sought from healthcare providers, social service agencies, financial institutions, or civil attorneys.



WHAT CAN GFWC DO?

- Contact your local Senior Center to hold educational programs and seminars. Provide professional speakers and materials for those attending.
- Support and plan projects during Older Americans Month in May and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15.
- Create awareness during National Family Caregivers Month in November.
- Organize a “Letter to the Editor” writing campaign to raise awareness, not only of elder abuse but of the local resources available in your community on aging offices. Be sure to include contact information and hotline helpline information.
- Learn to identify the risk factors and warning signs of abuse. Offer to bring them to an adult protective services agency or to help them seek medical care.
- Support the investigation and prosecution of elder abuse cases by providing funds and/or advocating for funds for training and resources to federal, state, and local investigators and prosecutors.
- Develop a public awareness campaign, with clear and consistent messaging to raise awareness and understanding of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Organize training for survivor service providers, health care professionals, community organizations, faith-based advocates, and local agencies to better serve survivors of abuse in later life.
- Organize a “Respect Your Elders” essay or poster contest at your local school.
- Provide a respite break for a caregiver.

RESOURCES

A Guide For Preventing Elder Abuse, Assault, & Theft

www.seniorliving.org/research/preventing-elder-abuse

American Psychological Association www.apa.org/topics/aging-older-adults/elder-abuse

Elder Abuse - National Institute on Aging www.nia.nih.gov/health/elder-abuse

Elder Care Locator www.eldercare.acl.gov/home

National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) www.ncea.acl.gov/home

World Health Organization www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abuse-of-older-people





HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL PURPOSES

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

Sexual Human Trafficking is any sex act that is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age. Victims of sex trafficking can be women, men, children, and LGBTQIA+ (lesbian/gay men/bisexual/ transgender/queer/intersex and asexual) individuals. Vulnerable populations are frequently targeted by traffickers, including runaway and unhoused youth, children who age out of the foster system, as well as victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or social discrimination. Women and children are the most common victims. More recently, LGBTQIA+ identifying individuals, especially transgender individuals, are increasingly found to be victims of sexual exploitation across international borders. The average age of a trafficked child is 15 years old.

Many survivors become romantically involved with someone who then forces or manipulates them into prostitution. Sexual exploitation occurs in various settings, including (but not limited to) brothels, strip clubs, massage parlors, online ads, escort services, on streets, at truck stops, hotels, motels, or in private homes. Others are lured in by false promises of jobs, such as modeling or dancing. Some are forced to sell sex by family members. Individuals are trafficked domestically and across international borders. They may be involved in a trafficking situation for a few days or weeks, or may remain in the same trafficking situation for years.

Sex traffickers use threats, manipulation, lies, debt bondage, and other forms of coercion to compel adults and children to engage in commercial sex acts against their will. Under U.S. law, any minor under the age of 18 years induced into commercial sex is a victim of sex trafficking – whether the trafficker used force, fraud, or coercion. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) recognizes that traffickers use psychological and physical coercion as well as bondage. Coercion includes threats of serious harm to a person and any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to any person.



WHAT CAN GFWC DO?

- Learn the indicators of human trafficking and report suspicions to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (1-888-373-7888) or text Help or INFO to 233733. In an emergency call 911. Use state specific hotlines.
- Provide a concise list of indicators that someone may be a victim.
- Display the National Hotline number in public places.
- The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) is the first comprehensive federal law to address trafficking in persons. The law provides a three-pronged approach that includes prevention, protection, and prosecution.
- The Trafficking Survivors Relief Act is a newly passed bipartisan federal law aimed at helping survivors of human trafficking who were forced to commit certain crimes as a direct result of their exploitation. This legislation provides criminal record relief and other support, so survivors aren't perpetually penalized for actions they were coerced into committing.
- Connect survivors with qualified professionals. Many victims of sex trafficking benefit from mental health services. Providers can help victims in dealing with their trauma while helping them become survivors through mental health support, job training, affordable care, and access to services.
- Provide information about the trauma and recovery process, emphasizing empathy and nonjudgmental support.
- Encourage the use of respectful survivor-centered language – say “person experiencing trafficking” rather than “prostitute” or “victim.”
- Advocate with state legislatures to pass laws to prevent human trafficking and institute harsh punishment for traffickers. Visit the state capitol to raise awareness of GFWC's interest in the issue with the legislature.
- Collaborate with Hope for Justice, a GFWC Affiliate Organization, and use the training material included on their website.
- January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Participate in awareness campaigns in your community. Educate yourself about human trafficking.
- Advocate to stop legislation that decriminalizes pimping, brothel-keeping, and sex buying. Help unmask human trafficking networks and urge Congress to pass legislation that will help find traffickers and hold them accountable.
- Collaborate with organizations advocating against sex trafficking.
- Study the culture and reasons for human trafficking. Read articles and books on the subject and invite guest speakers.
- Partner with an advocacy group to bring education to school-age children alerting them to how traffickers work online to grow relationships and earn the trust of unsuspecting youth. Partner with schools to educate students about online safety and grooming tactics.

RESOURCES

US Department of Justice <https://www.justice.gov/humantrafficking>

Hope for Justice <https://hopeforjustice.org/en-us/>

Blue Campaign <https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign>

Polaris Project <https://www.polarisproject.org>





INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) includes physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, as well as sexual coercion and stalking by a current or former intimate partner. An intimate partner is a person with whom a person has or had a close personal or sexual relationship.

Domestic or Intimate Partner Violence is a silent epidemic and is a prevalent problem in today's society. IPV happens in all types of relationships, including dating couples, married couples, same-sex couples, former or ex-couples, and couples who live together but are not married. IPV happens more often among younger couples. According to the 2022 National Statistics, on average, nearly 24 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. This equates to more than 12 million women and men each year. One in 4 women and 1 in 9 men have experienced intimate partner physical violence, though women are considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of abuse, including sexual violence.

Safety is the most important concern. Those in immediate danger should call 911. Domestic violence often results in physical and emotional injuries; get medical care. It can also lead to other health problems, reproductive health challenges, mental health conditions such as depression and suicide. Women affected by IPV are also more likely to use drugs or alcohol to cope. After the physical injuries have been treated, a mental health professional should be utilized to help cope with emotional concerns. A counselor or therapist can help survivors manage emotions in healthy ways, build self-esteem, and develop coping skills.

Women experiencing Intimate Partner Violence should make a safety plan to leave, save the evidence, find out where to get help in the local community, talk to someone, look into a restraining order, and call a helpline for free, anonymous help.



In 2019, Purina and RedRover partnered to launch the Purple Leash Project to increase the number of pet-friendly domestic violence shelters nationwide and spread awareness about this vital program. Currently, less than 20 percent of domestic violence shelters accept pets. Through the Purple Leash Project, Purina is helping to create more pet-friendly shelters. They're committing not just funds, but also their hearts and hands, working on-site to renovate shelters so they can welcome pets. Purina team members are committing their time and energy to help break down the barriers, transforming shelters so survivors and pets can escape and stay together.



WHAT CAN GFWC DO?

- Support programs that:
 - Teach safe and healthy relationship skills to school-aged children.
 - Engage influential adults and peers.
 - Disrupt the developmental pathways toward partner violence.
 - Create protective environments.
 - Strengthen economic support for families.
 - Support survivors to increase safety and lessen harm.
 - Finance a project for your local domestic violence shelter through grant funding for non-profits.
- Assemble SHARP (Stalking, Harassment, and Rape Prevention) Kits, and donate them to a rape crisis center. Each kit contains a cell phone and charger, a small paper tablet and pen, a flashlight, a whistle, a datebook, and a canister of pepper spray in non-transparent cosmetic bags.
- Apply for Walmart's Community Grant program ([Walmart.org/how-we-give/program-guidelines/spark-good-local-grants-guidelines](https://www.walmart.org/how-we-give/program-guidelines/spark-good-local-grants-guidelines)) to finance a project for your local shelter or to bring awareness.
- Partner with local school departments and help to implement a school-based prevention program for middle and high school students designed to stop or prevent the initiation of dating violence, victimization, and perpetration.

RESOURCES

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) www.avp.org/ncavp or 212-714- 1141 for 24-hour assistance in English or Spanish

National Domestic Violence Hotline www.thehotline.org or call 1-800-799-7233

World Health Organization www.who.int

Purple Leash Project www.purina.com/purple-leash-project





MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

Military sexual assault is the use of force, threats, intimidation, or abuse of authority during intentional sexual contact. It also includes instances where the survivor is unable to consent. Survivors of military sexual assault include both men and women.

Military personnel are encouraged to use the unit or installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program (SARP), or speak with an MCIO (Military Criminal Investigative Organization) investigator. The Military victim will then be able to decide whether to make a restricted or unrestricted report. (DoDI 6495.02, Volume 1, "Sexual Assault Prevention and Response: Program Procedures," March 28, 2013, Incorporating Change 7 September 6, 2022 (whs.mil))

Military bases offer the services of a Family Advocacy Program (FAP). www.militaryonesource.mil/programs/family-advocacy-program/

FAP supports individuals and couples through counseling services to help them manage stress, improve communication, and develop healthier couple dynamics. The program also provides treatment for those impacted by domestic abuse and strives to ensure victims' safety.

DoD (Department of Defense) Safe Helpline www.safehelpline.org is the sole secure, confidential, and anonymous crisis support service specially designed for members of the Department of Defense community affected by sexual assault and is operated by the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN). The anonymity of the Safe Helpline provides Service members with a "first-step" option to get information, support, and resources on their path to recovery after sexual assault. There are six ways to get help anytime, anywhere: online, by telephone, through the Safe Helpline app, chat, local resource connections, and self-paced educational programs.

Veterans who were victims of Military Sexual Trauma (MST) have resources that can be accessed anonymously at www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome/resources.asp.

The information and resources can assist survivors in finding support, shelters, and advocacy services.



WHAT CAN GFWC DO?

- Work to modify laws that create barriers to reporting or are used in retaliation against survivors, increase support for survivors, and improve awareness of resources for current military members, their families, and veterans.
- Find your local affiliate and volunteer or donate to National Coalition of Domestic Violence (NCADV) ncadv.org/stay-connected/state-coalitions and/or National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) nnedv.org/content/state-u-s-territory-coalitions/.
- Spread the word about the DoD Safe Helpline. Free materials are available at shop.safehelpline.org/. Share on social media, at local veterans events, and/or host a coffee for Service members, family, and veterans using the free coffee cup sleeves.
- Contact local advocacy groups to learn what supplies and collections are needed in nearby shelters.
- Contact and speak to someone at the Family Advocacy Program to learn how your group could help clients at a local military installation.
- Volunteer at local homeless shelters and ask them to share available Military Sexual Trauma (MST) resources.

RESOURCES

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) www.ncadv.org

National Network to End Domestic Violence www.nnedv.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233; www.thehotline.org; www.WomensLaw.org

Protect Our Defenders Foundation www.protectourdefenders.com

DOD Safe Helpline www.safehelpline.org



TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

Teen Dating Violence (TDV) refers to intimate partner violence among adolescents and adolescent relationship abuse. Dating violence, like domestic violence, is about power and control. It includes physical, psychological, or sexual abuse; harassment; or stalking of any person ages 12 to 18 in the context of a past or present romantic or consensual relationship. Teen dating violence is preventable. Resources are available for teens, families, schools and communities. For more information about teen dating violence, visit nij.ojp.gov/topics/crimes/teen-dating-violence.

TDV can take place in person, online or through technology and can include the following types of behavior:

- Physical violence happens when a person hurts or tries to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, or using another type of physical force.
- Sexual violence involves forcing or attempting to force a partner to participate in a sexual act, sexual touching, or a non-physical sexual event (e.g., sexting) when the partner does not or cannot consent.
- Psychological aggression is the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to harm a partner mentally or emotionally and/or exert control over a partner.
- Stalking is a pattern of repeated, unwanted attention and contact by a current or former partner that causes fear or safety concerns for an individual victim or for someone close to the victim.

TDV is common. It affects millions of teens in the U.S. each year. It profoundly impacts lifelong health, opportunity, and well-being. Unhealthy relationships can start early and last a lifetime. Research data indicates that:

- 1 in 2 U.S. high school students experience physical and/or sexual violence in a dating relationship.
- 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 10 boys experience physical and/or sexual violence in their intimate relationships.
- 1 in 3 homicides of girls aged 11-18 are committed by an intimate partner.
- 26% of women and 15% of men who were victims of contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime first experienced these or other forms of violence by that partner before age 18.
- TDV is more prevalent in LGBTQ teen relationships than in heterosexual relationships. Transgender youth are especially at risk and report the highest rates of physical and psychological dating violence, cyber dating abuse, and sexual coercion.



Teens often think some behaviors, like teasing and name-calling, are a “normal” part of a relationship – but these behaviors can become abusive and develop into serious forms of violence. However, many teens do not report unhealthy behaviors because they are afraid to tell family and friends.

Supporting healthy relationships could reduce teen dating violence and its harmful, long-lasting effects on individuals, their families, and their communities. During pre-teen years it is critical for youth to begin learning skills to create and maintain healthy relationships, including skills like managing feelings and communicating in a healthy way. Research emphasizes the need for prevention efforts that address the unique needs of teens.

Safe Dates curriculum for TDV is a good resource. It covers the different types of abuse – verbal, physical, emotional, financial – and explains the differences. It facilitates discussions on stalking and cyber abuse.

TDV can have severe consequences short-term and long-term negative effects on a developing teen. For instance, youth who are victims of TDV are more likely to:

- Use insults, intimidation, or humiliation.
- Exhibit extreme jealousy, insecurity, or controlling behavior.
- Isolate themselves from family and friends.
- Demonstrate explosive temper or unusual moodiness.
- Constantly monitor social media activities and locations.
- Experience symptoms of depression and anxiety and think about suicide.
- Engage in unhealthy behaviors, like using tobacco, drugs, and alcohol.
- Exhibit antisocial behaviors, like lying, theft, bullying, or hitting.

Violence in an adolescent relationship sets the stage for problems in future relationships, including Intimate Partner Violence and sexual violence perpetration and/or victimization throughout life. Supporting the development of healthy, respectful, and nonviolent relationships can reduce TDV and prevent its harmful, long-lasting effects on individuals, their families, and the communities where they live. During the pre-teen and teen years, it is critical for young people to begin to learn the skills needed – such as effectively managing feelings and using healthy communication – to create and foster healthy relationships.

To help victims of TDV:

- Start conversations. Encourage them to talk with someone, a friend, family member, or other trusted adult.
- Listen without judgement.
- Let them know you support them. Help them keep a record or journal, documenting each instance. Encourage self-expression.
- Provide resources. Encourage them to seek medical attention or psychological support.



WHAT CAN GFWC DO?

- Promote community engagement through public awareness.
- Recognize the month of February as TDV month and sponsor a “Be the Light” campaign.
- Focus on prevention through education. Teach pre-teens and teens safe and healthy relationship skills.
- Engage influential adults and peers to assist with forums in school settings.
- Interrupt the developmental pathways toward partner violence by advocating with information and education.
- Support initiatives that create protective environments and publicize locations.
- Strengthen economic support for families by advocating for funding.
- Facilitate an information session for parents on teen dating violence at your school.
- Sponsor art classes for local high schools in which students make posters about dating abuse and domestic violence awareness and prevention. Encourage the use of photography, computer graphics, and artwork to make the posters unique. Work with your local library or community center to post finished artwork for the entire community to view.

RESOURCES

If you or someone you know is experiencing violence or abuse or is a survivor of teen dating violence:

TEXT HOME TO 741741 TO REACH A TRAINED CRISIS COUNSELOR THROUGH CRISIS TEXT LINE, A GLOBAL NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION. FREE, 24/7, CONFIDENTIAL.

The National Dating Abuse Helpline – A service of Love is Respect, this national, 24-hour resource is specifically designed for teens and young adults. **CALL: 1-866-331-9474** CHAT: www.loveisrespect.org/get-relationship-help/ TEXT: Text 'LOVEIS' to 22522.

The National Domestic Violence Hotline – The Hotline is a nonprofit organization that provides crisis intervention, information, and referral to victims of domestic violence, perpetrators, friends, and families. **1-800-799-SAFE (7233)** or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

National Runaway Safeline Hotline 1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929)

Love is Respect Hotline 1-866-331-9474

CDC has resources to help communities focus their prevention efforts on what works to address risk and protective factors for violence. The [Dating Matters® Toolkit](#) is a comprehensive prevention model that teaches 11–14 year-olds how to have healthy, safe relationships. Programs for youth include interactive lessons on understanding feelings, healthy communication, unhealthy and unsafe relationships, and other topics.

Freedom House www.freedomhouseillinois.org

Safe Place www.nationalsafeplace.org/dating-violence



VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN

HOW YOUR CLUB CAN ADVOCATE AND EDUCATE:

American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) peoples and two-spirit individuals in Indigenous communities face disproportionately high rates of sexual and gender-based violence in the United States. More than four in five (84.3 %) AIAN women have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime, including over half (56.1 %) who have experienced sexual violence. These victimization rates outpace those of non-Hispanic White women; for example, AIAN women are 1.2 times more likely to experience any lifetime violence.

The crisis is worsened by legal gaps, limited culturally appropriate services, and underreported cases. Lasting change requires greater awareness, stronger advocacy, and community-led, culturally informed solutions.

- Approximately half of Native American women have experienced sexual violence and approximately half have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner.
- Murder is the third-leading cause of death for AIAN women in the United States.
- AIAN female victims are more likely to need victims' services such as medical care and legal services, but more than a third can not access or receive those important services.
- AIAN victims are more likely to be victimized by non-Native perpetrators.

WHAT CAN GFWC DO?

- Inclusive messaging and advocacy will help bring attention to the unique and common characteristics of violence against all women.
- Bring awareness to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day on May 5 of each year. Plan a campaign to bring attention to missing and murdered AIAN people and help bring justice for victims.
- November is Native American Heritage Month. Plan a campaign to celebrate and honor Native American heritage and culture.
- Educate members and communities about domestic and sexual assault issues facing AIAN women. Research, share, and advocate for legislation and public policy like the Not Invisible Act of 2019, Savanna's Act, and the Violence Against Women Act.
- Volunteer with or donate to victim service organizations that serve AIAN victims. Help your community connect to the government and non-profit organizations doing research, sharing resources, seeking justice, and serving victims of violence.
- Collect gently used purses and tote bags and fill them with health and beauty aids, jewelry, children's items, and other toiletries. Present them to your local shelter.



RESOURCES

Indian Law Resource Center www.indianlaw.org

National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) www.niwrc.org

StrongHearts Native Helpline www.strongheartshelpline.org; 1-844-762-8483

Tribal Law and Policy Institute www.home.tlpi.org/violence-against-native-women-publication

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence nrcdv.org 1-800-537-2238

Domestic Violence Action Center www.domesticviolenceactioncenter.org



GFWC SUCCESS FOR SURVIVORS SCHOLARSHIP



As part of the GFWC Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention, the GFWC Success For Survivors Scholarship was created in 2011 to lend a helping hand to those impacted by domestic and sexual violence who are pursuing higher education. The scholarship aims to provide survivors with a means to achieve both financial and personal independence. Since its inception, GFWC has awarded more than \$187,600 in scholarship funds. Visit www.gfwc.org/scholarship/ to find more information about the scholarship, including applications and deadlines for submission.

Applications are posted in October and due February 15, annually for the following school year.

Please consider developing a survivor scholarship in your State or District of Columbia Federation! Work with your local Coalition to determine the need for such a scholarship.

Feel free to contact the 2026-2028 Signature Program Chairman, with any questions.



PROMOTIONAL RESOURCES FOR CLUBS

Find Promotional Handouts and graphics for the Success for Survivors Scholarship in the GFWC Digital Library.

GFWC
GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS
Signature Program
Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention

**DOWNLOAD THE
GFWC SUCCESS FOR SURVIVORS
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**

Applications accepted October 1, 2025, through
February 15, 2026, 11:59 pm ET.
Email Programs@GFWC.org with any questions.

GFWC
GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS
Signature Program
Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention

**GFWC SUCCESS FOR
SURVIVORS SCHOLARSHIP**
\$3,000 Scholarships for Intimate Partner Abuse Survivors

As part of the GFWC Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention, the GFWC Success For Survivors Scholarship was created in 2011 to lend a helping hand to those impacted by domestic and sexual violence who are pursuing higher education. The scholarship aims to provide survivors with a means to achieve both financial and personal independence.

Eligibility requirements:
Candidates must meet all of the following eligibility requirements to apply:

- Domestic or sexual violence survivor;
- Citizen or permanent legal resident of the United States;
- Enrolled or planning to enroll at an accredited public or private post-secondary or vocational institution;
- Recommended by a licensed or accredited domestic violence agency and/or counselor or social worker, willing to provide information on behalf of the applicant.

Submission requirements:

- A completed application (all fields are filled out; social security number is optional)
- Agency/counselor/social worker recommendation
- One to two letters of reference
- Submitted to Programs@GFWC.org by the February 15 deadline

Important dates:

- October 1, 2025
Scholarship Application Posted
- February 15, 2026
Application Deadline
- June-July 2026
Recipients Notified
- July 2026
Monetary Awards Sent to Educational Institution Upon Receipt of Enrollment Verification

Club involvement:

- Discuss the Signature Program and scholarship at club meetings
- Post the flyer in schools and shelters
- Share the application link on social media

A panel evaluates applications.

DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION NOW

Email scholarship questions to Programs@GFWC.org.

AWARDS

GFWC recognizes State/District of Columbia Federations for outstanding projects and clubs for creative projects in implementing effective Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention projects and Affiliate Organization projects as follows:

- **Certificate to one State/District of Columbia Federations in each membership category**
- **\$50 award to one club in the nation for project creativity**

Award winners will be determined by entries into the Award Program. Each State/District of Columbia Federations may submit one State/District of Columbia Federation Award Entry and one Club Creativity Award Entry for the Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention projects. **Entries should be submitted to the State/District of Columbia Federation Signature Program Chairman.** Forms are accessible to the State/District of Columbia Federation Presidents in the Member Portal.

Note: Clubs do not submit entries directly to GFWC or GFWC Chairmen.

Refer to the Deadlines for GFWC Awards and Contests sections of the Club Manual for more information.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions adopted by GFWC are the foundation of our organization. They guide our call to action and are the basis of all programming and advocacy. Current Resolutions for the **Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention** are listed here by number and title. Refer to the complete text in the GFWC Resolutions document, filed under "Governance" in the Digital Library on the Member Portal. Resolutions are an important and integral part of GFWC Programs.

110-010 Campus Sexual Assault

110-020 Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention

110-030 Elder Abuse Prevention

110-040 Military Sexual Assault

110-050 Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits

110-060 Sexual Harassment

