



In New York State, our future depends on
PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

What domestic violence prevention looks like, and how can you help.

NYSCADV
NEW YORK STATE COALITION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is a serious, widespread public health issue that impacts individuals, families, the workforce and communities. But it IS preventable.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE, and does happen to people of every age, race, gender, sexual orientation, income, and occupation.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONSISTS OF ABUSIVE AND COERCIVE BEHAVIORS that one person uses to establish and maintain power and control over another person in a relationship.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS NOT JUST PHYSICAL ABUSE, which may or may not be present in an abusive relationship. Abuse can also be sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, financial, or digital.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AFFECTS NOT ONLY VICTIMS, but also their children, family members, friends, coworkers, and neighbors. It happens where New Yorkers live, work, and play.

At the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, we believe that everyone has the right to feel safe in their relationship. No one deserves to be abused.



WHO IS AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

All of us. No one is immune. With **1 in 4** New Yorkers experiencing domestic violence in their lifetimes, we have all witnessed the suffering caused by domestic violence, or know someone who has.

Being #1 isn't always a good thing!

For three consecutive years, New York had the highest demand for domestic violence services in the country.^{1,2,3}

Think about 20 people you know. It's likely that of these people,

5 women and 3 men

will experience or have already experienced domestic violence by a partner.⁴

Abuse does not only impact adults—nearly

1 in 3 New Yorkers in high school

have experienced physical dating violence.⁵ In fact, national statistics show that most victims first experience dating violence between the ages of 11-24.⁶

**Violence in relationships starts early. It can begin to seem normal.
But it isn't.**

HOW DOES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IMPACT OUR FUTURE?

**Domestic violence is deadly to
New York's future.**

We have lost too many of our friends,
family, and neighbors at the hands of
violent abusers.

Even when it does not escalate to
homicide, domestic violence is
hurting our loved ones and
threatening our communities.



CHILDREN WHO WITNESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE suffer many adverse outcomes during their childhood that can extend into their adult years, including chronic disease, substance use and chemical dependency, dropping out of school, and employment and relationship challenges.

Although we know many adults who witnessed domestic violence as children who have gone on to have healthy relationships and accomplished lives, growing up in a home with domestic violence is still the single best predictor of a child becoming a perpetrator or victim of domestic violence.

TEENS WHO EXPERIENCE DATING VIOLENCE are at a higher risk for drinking, substance use and abuse, attempted suicide, disordered eating, being forced into sex, and bullying or cyberbullying.

ADULT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE can suffer serious negative impacts to their health and well-being, including chronic illness, substance use and dependency, lost wages, and employment challenges.

COMMUNITIES THAT EXPERIENCE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE see increases in crime, higher healthcare costs, reduced workforce productivity, and decreased economic success. Domestic violence threatens the safety of our schools, places of employment, and the fabric of our communities.

Just because you're not being hit doesn't mean it doesn't hurt.



WHY DO WE TOLERATE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Social norms.

SOCIAL NORMS ARE CULTURAL CUES, STANDARDS, AND RULES OF BEHAVIOR in a group or society. Too often, these norms influence—and in turn are reinforced by—attitudes, beliefs, and misconceptions that support violence in relationships.

Even though most people do not commit domestic violence or believe it is okay, we've all heard or thought things that uphold unhealthy social norms that contribute to the problem, such as:

“ *I should stay out of it.
It's none of my business.* ”

These kinds of attitudes keep domestic violence in the shadows and make it unlikely that bystanders will intervene. As long as we turn away from the problem, it will never go away. But if we each believe that it is our individual and collective responsibility to do something, we can stop the violence!

Change your thoughts, change our world.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?



Some people believe that domestic violence will always exist and that it's something that we just need to accept. But think about it: smoking in public places and even around children used to be the cultural norm. Now, it's hard to imagine tolerating something we know is unhealthy.

More than ever, people are becoming aware of and outraged by the harmful impacts of domestic violence. *This is progress!* Yet the problem still continues to plague our communities. **How can we stop the violence before it happens in the first place?**

Public health research has shown that if we use prevention strategies at multiple levels—from individual to communal to societal—we can create widespread social change.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES HAVE WORKED FOR OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES:

- » *Smoking is at the lowest rate since researchers began tracking this figure in 1965.*⁶
- » *Since 1980, the number of drunk driving deaths has been cut in half.*⁷
- » *Seatbelt use has risen dramatically—reducing the risk of traffic deaths and injury by half.*⁸

Why have these behaviors improved? We have changed the environment by conducting public awareness campaigns, improving our systems' responses, and passing laws. We have changed our social norms, saving countless lives. We can do the same with domestic violence.

Prevention is the key to a future free from violence.



WHY DO WE NEED BOTH INTERVENTION & PREVENTION?

A person experiencing domestic violence today needs help now.
Yet without prevention, today's children are at risk of becoming tomorrow's victims.

INTERVENTION *is a necessary response to domestic violence when it is already occurring.*

Whether it is a bystander calling the police, a court advocate helping a victim of domestic violence navigate the court process, or an agency providing shelter for a victim and their children, appropriate interventions are critical to saving lives and helping those impacted by abuse.

PREVENTION *addresses the root causes and conditions that make domestic violence possible.*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, domestic violence is preventable. Emerging public health strategies call for collaboration across sectors to address social, environmental, and structural determinants of health—because improving how we live, learn, work, and play can prevent domestic violence as well as enhance our overall health and wellness.

Our future depends on preventing domestic violence.

Let's start now!

What does domestic violence **PREVENTION** look like?

TERTIARY PREVENTION aims to lessen the long-term negative effects after domestic violence has occurred, e.g. police intervention, counseling for victims, and shelter.

SECONDARY PREVENTION aims to reduce the impact of domestic violence that has already begun, e.g. orders of protection, supervised visitation and support groups.

PRIMARY PREVENTION aims to stop domestic violence before it starts.

Let's take a closer look at primary prevention...

PRIMARY PREVENTION IS... **BUILDING COMMUNITY**



Connected communities experience less domestic violence.

In order to build community, we can:

- create opportunities for our neighbors to get to know and trust one another;
- increase access to quality affordable housing, education, employment, healthcare, healthy food, and safe spaces for play and recreation;
- ensure that our environments and relationships support our overall health and wellness.

PRIMARY PREVENTION IS... ESTABLISHING GENDER EQUITY



We must work to **end gender inequality**. Studies show that closing the gender pay gap is one way to reduce violence in women's lives. Supporting more women in politics and leadership roles is another.

We must **challenge confining gender roles**. Limiting people by their gender hurts everyone—we must embrace full human expression and allow each person to be their whole self.

We must **empower young people of all ages** to build leadership skills social, support systems, and connection to communities in order to promote gender equity.

PRIMARY PREVENTION IS. . . **PASSING LEGISLATION**

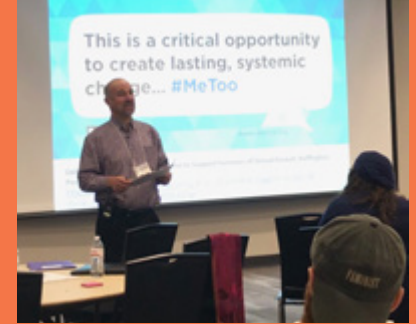


Legislative changes have the widest-reaching and longest-lasting impacts on our communities. When we pass laws to encourage healthy behaviors, discourage unhealthy behaviors, and improve the quality of life for all people, social norms begin to change.

Examples of potential legislation:

- Fund domestic violence primary prevention programs and initiatives in coordination with NYSCADV and local domestic violence programs.
- Healthy relationship behavior programming in all New York State schools and policies for responding appropriately when unhealthy relationship behaviors occur. This should be done in coordination with local domestic violence programs and NYSCADV.
- Establish dedicated funding streams to create and support the strongest statewide domestic violence coalition and network of domestic violence service providers in the country who will implement groundbreaking primary prevention initiatives across New York.

PRIMARY PREVENTION IS... CULTIVATING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



We should engage men and boys to create healthy expressions of manhood and increase peer support for men to speak out against violence and harmful gender norms.

We need to develop healthy relationship norms based on equality and respect, not power and control. We must do this in all areas of our lives—with our parents, children, neighbors, friends, and coworkers, as well as with our intimate partners.

We must build communication and conflict resolution skills with youth and adults—not only in school, but also through community programs and in our daily lives with family and friends. If we teach our children these skills at an early age, they will carry forth healthy behaviors into adulthood.

PRIMARY PREVENTION IS... **CHANGING THE CULTURE**



We can create the cultural change needed to end domestic violence when we:

- promote healthy and equitable behavior through public awareness campaigns;
- transform our organizational practices and policies to create safe and healthy workplaces;
- become more media literate, question our popular culture's unhealthy messages about gender, violence, race, class, sexuality and encourage others—especially young people—to do the same;
- get involved and be allies to other social justice movements with goals that increase health and safety in communities;
- support young people by creating opportunities for them to become community leaders.

HOW CAN *I* PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?



There are things I can do every day to help create a world free from domestic violence. For primary prevention to be effective, it must be done by ordinary people collectively making changes in their daily lives.

What can I do TODAY to prevent domestic violence TOMORROW?

- » I can be an upstander not a bystander—if I see something troubling, I will say something.
- » As a teacher, I can model respectful behavior and open communication.
- » As a parent, I can talk to my children about healthy relationships.
- » As an employer, I can create workplace policies that address domestic violence.
- » As a neighbor, I can get involved in my community and get to know the people around me.
- » As a faith leader, I can send messages that promote equity and healthy relationships.
- » As a person of faith, I can take part in an event that promotes equality and social justice.
- » As a legislator, I can be a champion for positive change to protect our future.

We have reached a turning point in the work to end domestic violence. We have come a long way in responding to the problem after it has occurred. Now, we must also focus on stopping domestic violence before it starts.

Through our collective efforts, we can create a future free from violence. But only if we start NOW and invest in domestic violence primary prevention TODAY.

Together, we can END domestic violence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & RESOURCES

Adapted and Produced by the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
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To learn more about domestic violence primary prevention in New York State, visit:
<https://www.nyscadv.org/what-we-do/toolkit/toolkit.html>

To learn more about national-level domestic violence primary prevention, visit:
[CDC.gov/ViolencePrevention/](https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/) | [PreventConnect.org](https://www.preventconnect.org/) | [PreventIPV.org](https://www.preventipv.org/) | [VetoViolence.CDC.gov/apps/pop](https://www.vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/pop)

End Notes:

- 1 National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV). 12th Annual Domestic Violence Counts (2018).
- 2 National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV). 11th Annual Domestic Violence Counts (2017).
- 3 National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV). 10th Annual Domestic Violence Counts (2016).
- 4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey* (2010).
- 5 Vagi, K.J., Olsen, E. O. M., Basile, K.C., & Vivolo-Kantor, A.M. (2015). Teen dating violence (physical and sexual) among US high school students: findings from the 2013 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 169 (5) 474-482
- 6 Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Youth Risks Behavior Surveillance* (2013).
- 7 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Fatality Analysis Reporting System* (2012).
- 8 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Seat Belt Use in 2015* (2016).

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The Meaning of the River

One day, a man was fishing by a river when he noticed a person in the water drowning. Without thinking he jumped into the river and rescued them. A short time later, he noticed another person drowning and saved them as well. Then another came, and another, and another. The man was getting tired and soon realized that he could not save everyone without help. As people responded to his calls for help, the man began organizing a team to join him along the banks of the river to help rescue all of the drowning people. As time went on and more people joined the rescue effort, several team members began to wonder where all the drowning people were coming from. A few of them travelled up the river to find out.

They discovered that a bridge had collapsed, causing some of the people who were attempting to cross the river to be swept away by the current. The rescue team came together with this knowledge and worked to gather the funds and to get the support of community leaders to fix the bridge so people could again cross the river safely.

The aim of primary prevention is to begin our efforts upstream – to stop folks from ending up in the river in the first place. Primary prevention addresses the root cause of any problem which will lead to fewer people needing to be rescued downstream.

ABOUT THE NEW YORK STATE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Established in 1978, the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) is designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on domestic violence for the State of New York. NYSCADV is responsible for supporting the development of policies, protocol, and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention and also provides education and technical assistance to the network of primary-purpose domestic violence service providers statewide.

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