

# Domestic Violence During and Post-COVID



**Global Conference presented by  
the GP Koirala Foundation**

**Saturday, June 27, 2020**

**Center for the Women of New York**



Thank you to our Global Conference Moderator

## Somnath Ghimire

Coordinator, North and South America



**GP Koirala Foundation**  
DEMOCRACY | PEACE | DEVELOPMENT

**Victoria Pilotti**

**President**

**Malini Shah**

**Director**

**Center for the Women of New York**



*Empowering Women to Achieve Full Equality Since 1987*

# About CWN Y



Since our founding in October of 1987, the Center has shown that women working together can be an effective force. We are a voluntary, non-profit organization, dependent on dues from our members and on the volunteer efforts of business, professional and community women and men in New York City.



We advocate strongly for women's full equality by partnering with like-minded organizations and elected officials. We participate in women's marches and organize symposia on topics like domestic violence and human trafficking. We help women in crisis through referrals to social services.



At the Center for the Women of New York, we believe education is a cornerstone of women's economic independence. To that end, we offer classes in conversational ESL, computer skills, and other topics, and an annual Career Conference to enable women to gain employment and rise in the workplace.



Whether we're marching for worthy causes, celebrating women's accomplishments in leadership, the arts, or sports, camaraderie is a hallmark of CWN Y. We've come a long way since the Second Wave of the Women's Movement in the latter half of the 20th century, and while there are many struggles ahead, we celebrate how far we've come.



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED STATES



# What is the difference between domestic violence and intimate partner violence?

According to By Ron Wallace, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at American Military University

## ● Domestic Violence:

- historically, was viewed as violence in a relationship focused on a crime of abuse involving two individuals in a heterosexual marriage
- the husband was typically the abuser and the wife was the victim.
- In the 1970s , in response to a campaign by women's rights groups to highlight the need to address abuse by husbands upon wives, the US government and non-profit agencies started providing emergency shelters and other advocacy services for women who were survivors of domestic violence.
- In 1994, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) strengthening laws by specifically identifying violence against women as a crime that needed more focused protection. <https://inpublicsafety.com/2015/10/domestic-violence-and-intimate-partner-violence-whats-the-difference/>



# What is the difference between domestic violence and intimate partner violence?

*According to Dr. Wallace:*

## Intimate Partner Violence:

- Around 2000 the term “intimate partner violence” moved us away from the old view that abusive violence only occurs in marital relationships where the husband was the abuser and the wife was the victim.
- Intimate partner violence was introduced in order to encompass a broader understanding of violence in relationships, allowing the acknowledgment of abuse that can exist in *any* type of personal intimate relationship, regardless of sexual orientation, marital status, or gender.

<https://inpublicsafety.com/2015/10/domestic-violence-and-intimate-partner-violence-whats-the-difference/>



# Medline Plus on Domestic Violence

- **Domestic violence may include different types of abuse, including:**
  - **Physical violence**
  - **Sexual violence**
  - **Emotional abuse**
  - **Economic abuse**
  - **Stalking**
- **Signs that someone is a victim of domestic violence:**
  - **Unexplained cuts or bruises, avoiding family and friends, making excuses for their partner's behavior, look uncomfortable or fearful around their partner**



# The United States Department of Justice on Domestic Violence

- National Center for Victims of Crime: 1-855-4-VICTIM (1-855-484-2846)
- “‘Domestic violence’ includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.”
- In emergency: call 911
- In non-emergency: call National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE or visit [www.TheHotline.org](http://www.TheHotline.org)





# CDC: COVID Measures Contribute to People Experiencing Abuse

- Violence affects people in all stages of life and many people who experience violence survive it but suffer from long-term physical, mental and emotional health problems
- COVID-19 measures necessary for slowing the spread may contribute to an increase in violence because of:
  - Social isolation or lack of social support
  - Financial, emotional, or physical stress
  - Lack of time alone or lack of physical and mental space
  - Lack of childcare
  - Loss of job or income
  - Depression or anxiety
  - Substance misuse
  - Reduced access to mental health or substance use services and supports

# Domestic Abuse and COVID-19



According to Professor Gillian M. Pinchevsky of University of Nevada, Las Vegas

- Even as lockdowns are being lifted and reopening plans are occurring, victims of domestic abuse may not be done suffering, as a second wave could prompt lockdowns again
- Victims of domestic abuse face many barriers to seeking help, and lockdowns make these barriers even more difficult
- Alcohol is a risk factor for domestic violence, and alcohol sales have increased during COVID-19 with job loss and economic instability
  - The recipe for domestic abuse = economic strain, alcohol, frustrations, overall psychological distress, and lack of opportunity for a victim to leave their home
- Victims are more likely to tell a friend or family members about their victimization than the police, so friends and family must have the knowledge to provide support and resources for them if need be



# **“Nevada AG Aaron Ford partners with Uber to give free rides to domestic violence victims”**

- **In Nevada, Uber is providing assistance to survivors of domestic and sexual violence -- the partnership with shelters aims to give free rides at local shelters throughout Nevada**
- **The Nevada Attorney General said that since they are seeing a greater incidence of domestic and sexual violence-related calls, he wanted to provide free rides to show their commitment to those communities**

# Domestic violence statistics remained 'relatively constant' during COVID-19 quarantine



- The Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern Pennsylvania reported hotline calls increased but shelter stays decreased during the quarantine in March and April; in May, hotline calls and shelters stays increased.
- Domestic violence is about power and control, and one of the ways that an abuser controls the victim is to isolate them from family and friends.
- With COVID-19, the victim of abuse is often too afraid to call and is unable to get away.
- Domestic violence victims who need to escape were forced to choose between staying at a shelter in a communal environment and potentially being exposed to the virus, and staying in a dangerous situation.

[https://www.heraldstandard.com/gcm/news/local\\_news/domestic-violence-statistics-remained-relatively-constant-during-covid-19-quarantine/article\\_51c8cfa4-aa62-11ea-8b09-6b1467190b6a.html](https://www.heraldstandard.com/gcm/news/local_news/domestic-violence-statistics-remained-relatively-constant-during-covid-19-quarantine/article_51c8cfa4-aa62-11ea-8b09-6b1467190b6a.html)



# National Domestic Violence Hotline

- **Available 24/7:**
  - **Call 1-800-799-7233 or log onto thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 1-866-331-9474**
- **Advice to victims: create a safety plan, practice self-care, and reach out for help.**
- **How COVID-19 could uniquely impact intimate partner violence survivors:**
  - **Abuse partners may: withhold necessary items such as cleaning products, share misinformation about the pandemic to control or frighten survivors, withhold insurance cards or prevent survivors from seeking medical attention**
  - **Travel restrictions may impact a survivor's escape or safety plan**
  - **An abusive partner may feel more justified and escalate their isolation tactics**



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN NEW YORK

# NYS OPDV Provides Resources to Beauty Professionals



October 2019, in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) has partnered with the New York State Department of State (DOS) to develop and distribute an informational video for appearance enhancement professionals. The video provides guidance and information for hair stylists, manicurists, barbers, and others who provide similar services, about how to talk to clients who may be victims of domestic violence. This campaign aims to empower these professionals who develop long-term, trusting relationships with their clients and are uniquely positioned to offer support and to share the New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline number: 800-942-6906. In addition to the video, written materials include the I Am ABLE card, which encourages bystanders to be Aware, to Believe, to Listen to and Empower victims, as well as a new business card that includes the Hotline number and information. These resources are available on the OPDV and DOS websites, and are part of OPDV's October/Domestic Violence Awareness Month toolkit for use throughout the year. They can be used by anyone who visits the website.

<https://www.dos.ny.gov/licensing/dvc/OPDV%20DOS%20Joint%20Statement%20for%20Video.pdf>

<https://opdv.ny.gov/>

Video for beauty professionals

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leK4qfR8FNo&feature=youtu.be>

# New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence



NYS Sexual and Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-942-6906

TEXT 844-997-2121

CHAT NYS OPDV Chat Service is:

- NOT a public chat room and completely confidential
- Secure and private
- Staffed by professionals who can help
- Available 7 days/week, 24 hours per day

<https://na0messaging.icarol.com/ConsumerRegistration.aspx?org=143954&pid=642&cc=en-US>

<https://opdv.ny.gov/>



# NYC Mayor's Office to End Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence



NYC Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-621-4673 (HOPE)

## Survivors should know:

- Shelters are open
- Evictions are temporarily suspended
- Family Justice Center buildings are temporarily closed but available by phone to provide guidance on immediate safety planning, shelter assistance, and community resources
- In-person meet and greets, tours, trainings, and workshops are temporarily suspended until further notice
- Monday-Friday, 9AM-5PM you can call your nearest FJC :
  - NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx Call 718-508-1220
  - NYC Family Justice Center, Brooklyn Call 718-250-5113
  - NYC Family Justice Center, Manhattan Call 212-602-2800
  - NYC Family Justice Center, Queens Call 718-575-4545
  - NYC Family Justice Center, Staten Island Call 718-697-4300

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/ocdv/index.page>

# The Mount Sinai Sexual Assault & Violence Intervention Program (SAVI)



For Intimate Partner Violence Survivors

Mount Sinai Hospital offers

- Free, confidential – no documentation required
- Call 212-423-2140 (answered live Monday – Friday during business hours)
- Survivor-centered, trauma-informed counseling, safety planning, advocacy based out of Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn



# Safe Horizon

**Call RAINN 24/7 hotline at 1-800-621-HOPE (4673) to speak with a hotline counselor**

- **Hotline counselors:**
  - **Shelter referrals – all locations of domestic violence shelters are confidential**
  - **Safety planning**
  - **Supportive counseling and support groups**
  - **Help building life skills**
  - **Housing assistance**
  - **Employment assistance**
  - **Legal consultations**
  - **Temporary childcare**
  - **Case management**
  - **Practical assistance**



# **3 Safety Tips for Domestic Violence Victims Quarantined During COVID-19**

- **Consider creating a safety plan/strategy you can use to minimize risks -- this can include calling hotlines to collaborate with an expert to formulate the plan**
- **Continue to stay in touch with your support network; you can also tell your support network that if they don't hear from you at a certain day or time, to send help**
- **Know there is help and don't be afraid to reach out to resources.**

**Send a text to the New York Police Department**



**“Need help, but can’t speak”**

**TEXT-to-911 now provides another option for domestic violence victims needing emergency assistance if they can’t call, providing a safe option for getting help during a potentially dangerous situation.**

[https://twitter.com/NYPDDV?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/NYPDDV?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)



# Domestic Violence during COVID Crisis

- On April 23, Gothamist reported that there had been 19 domestic violence murders this year, 4 more than last year through the same time. NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea called the increase incredibly troubling.
- “Social distancing doesn’t need to mean emotionally distant,” said Jennifer DeCarli, Assistant Commission for Family Justice Centers and Outreach.
- Survivors’ safety plans are different--they develop a code word or phrase when survivors are afraid to call 911 with an abuser near, and will use the code with family, friends or a caseworker by phone, email or text or group chats.
- “Love should never hurt.” Queens Chronicle, April 30, 2020



# Most domestic violence victims just weren't reporting abuse

- A majority of people killed in domestic violence incidents this year had no recorded history of issues with their abusive partner, making it difficult for the police to protect them.
- Under-reporting domestic violence is a big issue expressed by NYPD Deputy Chief Kathleen White. “We try and help those that have come to us and we try to prevent things, but there are instances where we just don’t know.”

New York Post, March 3, 2020

<https://nypost.com/2019/03/03/most-domestic-violence-perps-werent-abusive-in-the-past-new-nypd-unit-leader/>

# New NYPD Leader is Careful about Translations



Translation of domestic violence complaints is another serious issue.

- Back in 2014, Deisy Garcia and her two children, Danielle, 3, and Yoselyn, 1, were stabbed to death by Garcia's husband after police were called to her home several times. Deisy's incident reports to the police were in Spanish and were not translated in a timely fashion.
- Deisy basically said, "I fear for my life and my child's life, and he's going to kill us. I know he's going to kill us, and I need help."
- Deputy Chief White is making sure reports are translated quickly and accurately.

New York Post, March 3, 2020

<https://nypost.com/2019/03/03/most-domestic-violence-perps-werent-abusive-in-the-past-new-nypd-unit-leader/>



# NYPD: Domestic Violence Unit



- The New York Police Department domestic violence prevention officers, investigators and supervisors assist victims in precincts and Housing Bureaus citywide. Domestic violence prevention officers visit the homes of victims, make referrals to court, provide counseling services and shelter alternatives, facilitate obtaining orders or protection and help in personal planning.
- Each local precinct and police service area has a domestic violence office.
- In addition to enforcing the laws and working to ensure victims' safety, the NYPD Domestic Violence Unit performs domestic violence awareness outreach and has brochures in 6 different languages with strategies that can help combat or prevent domestic violence.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/services/law-enforcement/domestic-violence.page>

# NYPD: Crime Victim Assistance Program



- The CVAP initiative developed by NYPD and staffed by Safe Horizon places two Safe Horizon victim advocates in each of the 77 NYPD precincts and 9 Public Service Areas (serving NYC Housing Authority developments)
- One advocate specializes in working with victims of domestic violence and the other serves victims of all other crimes.
- The rationale for the program is that the sooner the NYPD provides a response that addresses many victims' needs and concerns, the more likely victims will feel safe, recover from trauma, and regain a sense of control in their lives.
- <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/services/victim-services/cvap.page>

# Malini Shah

## Director

**Center for the Women of New York**



*Empowering Women to Achieve Full Equality Since 1987*



**DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE  
WORLDWIDE**

# Women are using code words at pharmacies to escape domestic violence during lockdown



- A woman in France went to a pharmacy, one of the few public places still open after the lockdown to prevent the spread of the virus, to tell the pharmacist that her partner had abused her.
  - Soon after, the woman's spouse was arrested by the police.
  - France, inspired by Spain, then launched a safety initiative in pharmacies for domestic violence survivors where they can simply say the codeword "mask 19"
- CNN

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/02/europe/domestic-violence-coronavirus-lockdown-intl/index.html>



# “Lockdowns around the world bring rise in domestic violence”

- “90% of the causes of violence [in this period] are related to the Covid-19 epidemic.”
  - Brazil: “we think there has been a rise of 40% or 50%”
  - Italy: “calls to helplines had dropped sharply, but instead they were receiving desperate text messages and emails”
  - Spain: “the government has told women they will not be fined if they leave home to report abuse”
  - UK: “has called for special police powers to evict perpetrators from their homes for the duration of the lockdown”
  - Greece: “officials said they were stepping up a campaign to help women deal with problems clearly emerging from the issue of confinement”
- The Guardian

# **“6 months of coronavirus lockdown could mean 31 million more cases of domestic violence,” UN says**



- Action is needed during the COVID-19 crisis, during lockdowns and after, to give support to victims and prevent violence
- “We cannot forget women and girls during the pandemic. Let’s focus on them.”

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/domestic-violence-additional-31-million-cases-worldwide/>



# “A new COVID-19 Crisis: Domestic Abuse Rises Worldwide”

- **New term: “intimate terrorism” - a term many experts prefer for domestic violence**
- **Outside of physical violence, which may not always be present, there are also these tools of abuse:**
  - **isolation from friendly, family, and employment**
  - **constant surveillance**
  - **strict and detailed rules for behavior**
  - **restrictions on access to basic necessities such as food, clothing, and sanitary facilities**
- **Isolation shatters support networks**





# “Twitter launches dedicate search prompt to help victims of domestic violence in India”

- Twitter launched a search prompt that will redirect users that search keywords related to domestic violence to relevant information (resources that they can call/use if they are in trouble) by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development and the National Commission for Women in India
- The National Commission for Women witnessed a two-fold increase in the number of domestic violence complaints during the period of lockdown.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/technology/twitter-launches-dedicated-search-prompt-to-help-victims-of-domestic-violence-in-india/>

## Upcoming Events

- Book Club
- Computer classes
- Legal clinic
- Women Artist Exhibit
- Walking Group



## Current Services

- Caregivers Phone Support Group
- Conversational English as a Second Language (ESL) classes
- Referral Services
- Educational Webinars on Women's Issues



**Help CWNY continue to  
provide educational  
programs:**

**Or volunteer for us!**

<http://cwny.org/volunteer/>

<http://cwny.org/donations/>

<http://cwny.org/membership/>

**You can download this  
PowerPoint presentation  
at**

**<http://cwny.org/past-events/>**

