



PA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES • OCT. 30, 2020

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

PCADV & OCDEL Team Up for Domestic Violence Awareness Toolkit



SERVING FAMILIES WHO ARE EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) and the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) have teamed up to create [a domestic violence awareness toolkit](#) to educate family support workers and Family Supports staff on how domestic violence may impact the clients and families they serve while screening for intimate partner violence. The toolkit also aims to provide domestic violence programs with a deeper understanding of the OCDEL network and the services their programs provide within all communities across the Commonwealth.

Research shows that exposure to violence, especially during childhood, adolescence and young adulthood can significantly increase the likelihood of serious physical, emotional, and behavioral health problems. Children who live with domestic violence are also at increased risk to become direct victims of child abuse and are at an increased risk of becoming perpetrators themselves. Children who have been exposed to domestic violence often learn destructive lessons about the use of violence and power in relationships. They may also believe that it is acceptable to exert control or relieve stress by using

violence, or that violence is in some way linked to expressions of intimacy and affection. Children also associate experienced abusive tactics with their view of adulthood, and how adults behave.

Trauma can be exacerbated by environmental factors and relational behaviors. During COVID-19, health professionals are urging the public to use wear face masks to help mitigate the spread of the virus. A face mask can activate a fear response, though, according to the National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, & Mental Health.

The National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health (NCDVTMH) offers a [tip sheet](#) about face mask requirements using an accessible, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed approach, which can help in interactions with parents, caregivers, and children.

Partnerships between PCADV and OCEL's programs are fundamental to preventing, and appropriately intervening in, domestic violence. Collaborating at the local level is key to building capacity to fully support survivors. Cross education allows staff from both systems an opportunity to connect and understand the best ways to develop protocols, make warm referrals, and engage in professional development.

With October being Domestic Violence Awareness Month, both OCDEL and PCADV wanted to support survivors of domestic violence. Both organizations realize that communities are stronger together and coordinated agency collaboration to make resources widely available to better support survivors is a step closer to ending domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month serves as a reminder that domestic violence isn't a private matter. It affects the safety and well-being of whole families and communities and can quickly turn lethal. In 2019, 112 women, men, and children lost their lives from domestic violence. Additional statistics

about domestic violence fatalities can be found in [PCADV's 2019 Fatality Report](#).

If you or someone you know is in an abusive situation call the 24/7 National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, text "LOVEIS" to 22522, or chat online: thehotline.org. If you are in immediate danger, contact 911.



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Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, Pa 17105-2675

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