

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM (DVRT)

The Riverside Township Police Department, in collaboration with Providence House Domestic Violence Services of Catholic Charities, is currently recruiting volunteers for their Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT). Team members work in conjunction with the police to provide victim support, information, and referral at the time of a domestic violence crisis.

A few hours of your time can make a difference in someone's life.

Domestic Violence is a problem. Are you willing to be part of the solution?

Applicants must be:

- 18 years of age,
- Have access to transportation,
- Possess a valid driver's license,
- Be willing to serve a minimum of four 12-hour shifts per month, and
- Submit to background investigations, including fingerprinting.

A 40-hour mandatory intensive training course is required and will be provided to successful applicants. The course is held over a six-week period, during evening hours, and includes observations at Superior Court in Mount Holly. There is no fee for the course. An understanding of domestic violence issues is a plus, as is any bilingual capability.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Domestic Violence Response Team?

The Domestic Violence Response Team is a twenty-four hour a day, seven-day a week program created to assist victims of domestic abuse. Team members will be called upon by the local Police to assist victims at the police station by providing them with support and information. The goal of the program is to provide victims with the knowledge to make informed decisions based upon the options available to them.

Do I need specialized training?

Yes, Providence House will provide training to you at no charge. As a team member volunteer, you will initially receive forty hours of training, conducted over a six to eight week period. This training will give you an understanding of what domestic violence is all about and leave you prepared to respond and provide assistance to victims.

Are there special qualifications to become a member?

Applicants must possess minimal qualifications; no experience is necessary. The following is a list of the minimum standards:

- 18 years of age or older
- Resident or employed in Burlington County
- Valid New Jersey driver's license
- Available transportation
- No criminal history
- Good listening skills

How often will I be on-call?

With a full running staff, the response team will need volunteers to be on call four 12-hour shifts per month. During that time, you will be required to respond to the police station as needed. You will schedule your availability with the team leader.

Why should I become a volunteer?

By volunteering for the DVRT, you will.....

- Make a difference in the lives of others
- Help break the cycle of domestic violence in your community
- Have a very fulfilling and rewarding experience
- Establish working relationships with local police and local service providers
- Learn useful skills
- Be a positive role model
- Make your free time worthwhile

How do I become a volunteer?

Contact the Riverside Township Police Department 856-461-8820 or the DVRT Coordinator at Providence House of Catholic Charities 856-904-0599. If you are ready to fill out an application, you may download it from the main website page. You will submit the completed application to the police department at which time a background investigation will be done. If you are eligible to work as a partner-in-service with the police, you will be contacted for an interview. After the interview process you may be invited to participate in the training process.

Domestic Violence

(The information in this section was retrieved from the National Domestic Violence Hotline)

THE FACTS

In the United States

- **4 million American women experience a serious assault by a partner during an average 12-month period.** -Henise, L., Ellsberg, M. and Geottemoeller, M. Ending Violence Against Women, Population Reports, Series L, No. 11., December 1999
- **On the average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends every day.** -Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001. February 2003.
- **92% of women say that reducing domestic violence and sexual assault should be at the top of any formal efforts taken on behalf of women today.** -Liz Claiborne Inc., study on Teen dating abuse conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2005.
- **1 out of 3 women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused during her lifetime.** - Jay G. Silverman, PhD; Anita Raj, PhD; Lorelei A. Mucci, MPH; and Jeannie E. Hathaway, MD, MPH, "Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality," Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 286, No. 5, 2001.
- **1 in 5 female high school students reports being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner. Abused girls are significantly more likely to get involved in other risky behaviors. They are 4 to 6 times more likely to get pregnant and 8 to 9 times more likely to have tried to commit suicide.** - Bureau of Justice Statistics, Violence Against Women: Estimates from the Redesigned Survey, August 1995.
- **1 in 3 teens reports knowing a friend or peer who has been hit, punched, slapped, choked or physically hurt by his/her partner.** - Bureau of Justice Statistics, Crime Data Brief, Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001, February 2003.
- **Women of all races are equally vulnerable to violence by an intimate partner.** -US. Department of Justice, Violence? Related Injuries Treated in Hospital Emergency Departments, August 1997.
- **37% of all women who sought care in hospital emergency rooms for violence-related injuries were injured by a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend.** - US Department of Justice
- **Some estimates say almost 1 million incidents of violence occur against a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend per year.** -The Commonwealth Fund, Health Concerns Across a Woman's Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women's Health, May 1999.

- **For 30% of women who experience abuse, the first incident occurs during pregnancy.** - Helton et al 1987.
- **As many as 324,000 women each year experience intimate partner violence during their pregnancy.** - Gazmararian JA, Petersen R, Spitz AM, Goodwin MM, Saltzman LE, Marks JS. "Violence and reproductive health; current knowledge and future research directions." *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 2000; 4(2):79-84
- **Violence against women costs companies \$72.8 million annually due to lost productivity.** -Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States. 2003. Center for disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA/
- **74% of employed battered women were harrassed by their partner while they were at work.** - Family Violence Prevention Fund. 1998. *The Workplace Guide for Employer, Unions, and Advocates*, San Francisco, CA.
- **Ninety-four percent of the offenders in murder-suicides were male.** -Violence Policy Center (VPC), *American Roulette: Murder-Suicide in the United States*, April 2006
- **Seventy-four percent of all murder-suicides involved an intimate partner(spouse, common-law spouse, ex-spouse, or boyfriend/girlfriend). Of these, 96 percent were females killed by their intimate partners.** - Violence Policy Center (VPC), *American Roulette: Murder-Suicide in the United States*, April 2006
- **Most murder-suicides with three or more victims involved a "family annihilator" -- a subcategory of intimate partner murder-suicide.Family annihilators are murderers who kill not only their wives/girlfriends and children, but often other family members as well,before killing themselves.** -Violence Policy Center (VPC), *American Roulette: Murder-Suicide in the United States*, April 2006
- **Seventy-five percent of murder-suicides occurred in the home.** -Violence Policy Center (VPC), *American Roulette: Murder-Suicide in the United States*, April 2006

In New Jersey in 2006

- There were 73,749 domestic violence offenses reported by the police in 2006, a 3 percent decrease compared to the 75,651 reported in 2005.
- Murders increased 2 percent in 2006 (42) when compared to 2005 (41).
- Assaults accounted for 44 percent (32,450) and harassment accounted for 41 percent (30,532) of the reported offenses in 2006.
- Arrests were made in 31 percent (22,700) of the offenses reported for 2006, a decrease of less than one-half of one percent when compared to arrests made in 2005.
- The most frequent day of domestic violence occurrences was Sunday (13,504).
- For the twenty-fourth consecutive year, the most frequent hours of domestic violence incidents were between 8:00 p.m. and midnight, when 27 percent (19,886) of the offenses were reported.
- Children were involved or present during 33 percent of all domestic violence offenses occurring in 2006. Specifically, 5 percent (3,888) were involved and 28 percent (20,857) were present.
- Wives were the victims in 20 percent (15,104) and ex-wives were the victims in 3 percent (2,407) of the reported domestic violence offenses in 2006. Overall, females were victims in 77 percent (56,661) of all domestic violence offenses.
- The number of domestic violence complaints that had prior court orders issued against the offender decreased from 15,558 in 2005 to 15,481 in 2006. This is a decrease of less than one-half of one percent.
- Alcohol and/or drugs were involved in 28 percent (20,603) of the reported offenses occurring in 2006. Alcohol involvement alone accounted for 25 percent (18,164) of the total domestic violence offenses reported.
- Persons age 60 or over were victims in 3 percent (2,251) of all reported domestic violence offenses that occurred in 2006.
- Elderly were the victims in 12 percent (5) of the domestic violence murders (42).
- Domestic violence does not occur at a regular frequency, but when viewed as a ratio of its occurrence to a fixed time interval, one act of domestic violence would occur every 7 minutes and 7 seconds.
- Domestic violence offenses arising from a dating relationship accounted for 15 percent (10,865) of the state total.
- There were 3,102 total arrests involving domestic violence restraining orders reported by police in 2006. Of these, 1,818 were arrests for violations of a restraining order **only**, while 1,284 were arrests for violations of a restraining order **with** an offense arrest.

The New Jersey Prevention of Domestic Violence Act

- Provides victims of domestic violence with a choice of actions and legal remedies.
- Is designed to protect victims and their children from abusive and/or violent behavior by someone they know intimately.
- Provides an opportunity to file a civil or criminal complaint or both.

- States that a temporary restraining order (TROs) remain in effect until further action by the court.
- Can, through a TRO, forbid defendants to possess firearms or other weapons.
- States that in awarding temporary custody, "the court shall presume that the best interests of the children are served by an award of custody to the non-abusive parent".
- Provides that a victim can request a risk assessment if they believe a child will be harmed during visitation (and a decision on visitation postponed).
- Requires mandatory arrest provisions of an alleged abuser by the police if a victim exhibits signs of injury or exhibits physical pain or other impairments of their physical condition, or a weapon was involved, or if there is a restraining order in effect.

**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS BEING ABUSED;
BREAK THE CYCLE, END THE SILENCE!!!**

**MAKE A CONFIDENTIAL CALL FOR HELP TO THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM IN BURLINGTON
COUNTY AT
1-877-871-7551 OR
STATEWIDE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE AT
1-800-572-SAFE
(BILINGUAL, TTY-ACCESSIBLE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED)**