



# BEYOND BELIEF NETWORK

## Beyond Belief Network Guides: Observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month! Domestic Violence Awareness month originally was called the Day of Unity. In October 1981, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence created the Day of Unity in order to connect women's advocates across the nation who worked to end violence against women and children. Domestic Violence Awareness month, as it is known now, was first observed in October of 1987. This guide includes information about domestic violence, resources, and event ideas. Don't forget to submit a [report](#) about your service activity.

### Domestic violence prevalence

1. One in four women (25%) has experienced domestic violence in her lifetime ([The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; The National Institute of Justice, 2000](#)).
2. Intimate partner violence affects people regardless of income. However, people with lower annual income (below \$25K) are at a 3-times higher risk of intimate partner violence than people with higher annual income of over \$50K ([Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006](#)).

### Helping victims of domestic violence

1. Studies show that access to shelter services leads to a 60-70% reduction in incidence and severity of re-assault during the 3-12 months' follow up period compared to women who did not access shelter. Shelter services led to greater reduction in severe re-assault than did seeking court or law enforcement protection, or moving to a new location ([Campbell & Wolf](#)).
2. Shelter stays help educate women, provide an escape from dangerous situations, and other services. Most women report a reduction in violence from staying in shelters, and they and their children report greater well-being as a result ([Sullivan, 2012](#)).
3. Support groups for domestic violence survivors provide coping tools and social support. Participants report greater self-esteem and less distress ([Sullivan, 2012](#)).

### Event ideas

1. Have a supply drive for a local [shelter](#). You should check in with the shelter, but commonly needed items include:
  - a. Shampoo
  - b. Toothbrushes
  - c. Feminine hygiene products
  - d. Hairbrushes
  - e. Towels
  - f. Toothpaste
  - g. Deodorant
  - h. Shower gel
2. Volunteer at your local domestic [violence](#) shelter. These shelters often have an array of both short-term and long-term volunteer opportunities. Your group could prepare a meal, help sort donations, or assist with administrative tasks.

3. Assemble toiletry packs to donate to your local shelter. This event can be completed after the first suggested event, or as a separate event.
4. Host a movie screening where the entrance fee is a toiletry item needed by a local shelter.

#### Additional resources

1. Find a shelter near you at [www.womenshelters.org](http://www.womenshelters.org) (Click on your state, then search for your city and a list of shelters in the city will appear).
2. Men Can Stop Rape: [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org)
3. Joyful Heart Foundation: [www.joyfulheartfoundation.org](http://www.joyfulheartfoundation.org)
4. Family Violence Prevention Fund: [www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org)
5. National Network to End Domestic Violence: [www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org)
6. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence: [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)
7. National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE, or [www.TheHotline.org](http://www.TheHotline.org)
8. National Resource Center on Domestic Violence: <http://www.nrcdv.org>