



January 2016

Family Violence Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 2

Special points of interest:

- Every 9 seconds in the U.S. women are assaulted or beaten
- 1 in 3 women have been beaten, or sexually abused during her lifetime
- Domestic violence is the leading cause of death among women
- Up to 10 million children witness some form of violence in their homes
- People who witness violence in their homes as children are twice as likely to abuse their own partners than people of non-violent homes.

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Our Own Victims' Advocates Featured In Post & Courier



(from left to right) Victim Advocate Ashley Standafer, Victim Advocate Miriam Walker, Sgt. Kelly, and Victim Advocate Catrice Smalls

After the death of a loved one, families are left to grieve, and the holidays can be the most difficult time for them. The Charleston Police Department Family Violence Unit delivered Christmas flowers to the love ones of 17 homicide victims this past holiday season. The Victims' Advocates gave Poinsettias with a card that read:

You are in our thoughts as you find your way through this. We are praying for your healing, with the passage of time. We know you miss him/her; we send our understanding and consolation.

Know that the strain, the pain, will eventually ease. May your pleasant memories sustain and comfort you. You are in our thoughts.

By Joanna Fuchs

This gesture creates a positive relationship between the families and the police department which is built on empathy.

This is just the first of what we hope will turn into an annual event as it was well received by the families .





What is a Victim Advocate? and What Role Does She Play?

Victim advocates are professionals trained to support victims of crime. Advocates offer victims information, emotional support, and help finding resources and filling out forms, such as Orders of Protection. In addition, advocates attend court with victims.

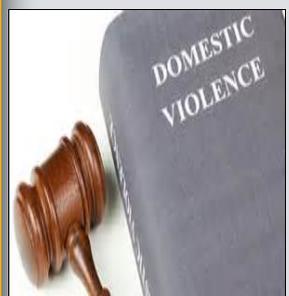
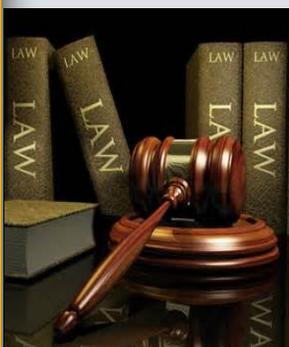
Advocates' responsibilities vary depending on their job description and where they work. Typically, the role of an advocate may include:

- Providing information on victimization;
- Providing information on crime prevention;
- Providing information on victims' legal rights and protections;
- Providing information on the criminal justice process;
- Providing emotional support to victims;
- Helping victims with safety planning;
- Helping victims with victim compensation applications;
- Helping victims submit comments to courts and parole boards;
- Intervening with creditors, landlords, and employers on behalf of victims;
- Helping victims find shelter and transportation;
- Providing referrals for other services for victims; Helping to arrange funerals; and Notifying victims of inmates' release or escape.

NEW LEGISLATION FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRIMES

Governor Nikki Haley signed the Domestic Violence reform bill, which was passed by the House and Senate after months of negotiations. The main points of the bill are as follows:

- Abusers go to jail based on both the number of times they are charged with Domestic Violence and the severity of the crime
- Gun rights are stripped from abusers, but lower-level offenders can get them restored
- Severe crimes carry a lifetime gun ban.
- The second most severe offense would carry a 10-year ban and lesser charges would include a three-year gun ban.
- To restore gun rights, the FBI would have to agree to remove abusers from the national gun database
- Prosecutors can push for stiffer sentences if crimes were committed before a minor or if the victim was strangled.
- Judges can issue permanent orders of protection .
- Judges can set bond based on danger to "individual" as well as community.
- Creates a Domestic Violence Advisory Committee to study domestic violence cases
- Calls for anti-violence education for elementary school students..
- 1st Degree DV (felony: 0-10 years)
- 2nd Degree DV (misdemeanor 0-3 years)
- 3rd Degree DV (misdemeanor 0-90 days)

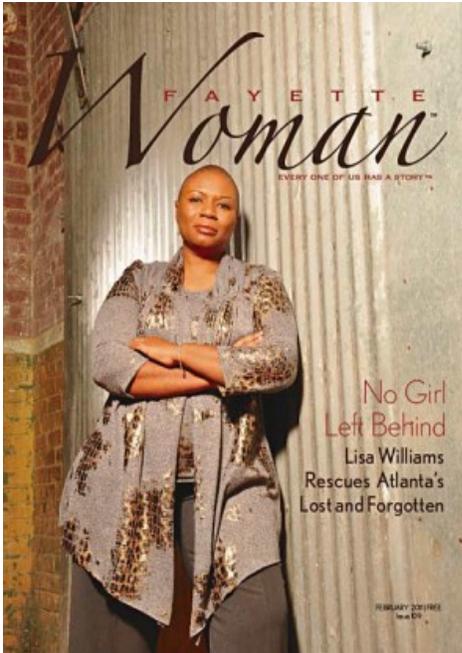


Modern Day Slavery in South Carolina

South Carolina is no stranger to the dangers of Human Trafficking. Victims include children and adults, U.S. citizens and foreign nationals. These victims are subjected to sex and/or labor trafficking.

Sex trafficking occurs in pimp-controlled street prostitution, massage parlors, and closed-network residential brothels. Increasingly, victims are advertised on popular internet sites.

Labor trafficking victims are typically found in migrant labor camps, and the hospitality / tourism industry. Victims are subjected to low or unpaid wages, threats of physical harm, rape, confinement, and/or psychological torture. According to our Attorney General Alan Wilson, “the selling of young human beings is not only found overseas, but within our own urban and rural communities”.



Mrs. Lisa Williams (pictured), is the Executive Director of *Living Waters for Girls*, based in Atlanta, Georgia. During a speaking engagement with a class of rising seniors at Burke High School, Mrs. Waters asked students to pay attention to events in their communities which might seem to be out of place, as these crimes can occur “right under our noses and are completely overlooked by neighbors, teachers, and students.”



Mrs. Williams’ presentation opened the eyes of many students in acknowledging that domestic human trafficking does indeed exist in our community. By the end of the day, these Burke High School students understood that they are our future leaders, and that it is everyone’s responsibility to be proactive in order to eradicate Modern Day Slavery.

“Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind” –

Albert Einstein

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VICTIM'S AND WITNESS'S BILL OF RIGHTS

If you are a victim of crime or a witness to crime, you have the right to:

- ⇒ Be treated with dignity and compassion
- ⇒ Be protected from intimidation and harm
- ⇒ Be informed concerning the criminal justice process
- ⇒ Be compensated (if eligible) and/ or receive restitution
- ⇒ Be able to preserve your property and employment
- ⇒ Receive due process in criminal court proceedings

Each day choose to live with an attitude that expects good things to happen to you

Pet Helpers to the Rescue

Victim Advocates normally have to think outside of the box when dealing with victims. Because every person is unique, so must be the services that are provided to the Victims.

Often Victim Advocates are taxed to relocate families from their homes for a period of time. There are times when a member of these families will include a four legged friend.

In the case of family dynamics, pets have proven to be an intricate part of the emotional wellbeing of all family members, that is why it is extremely important to have a plan in place when a family

is in crisis.

Most of the hotels that we utilize for relocation purposes do not allow pets means the Victim Advocates will be faced with a dilemma in regard to where do we place the pet. Pet Helpers has been extremely helpful, by offering to “foster” these pets until the families are stabilized.

Sometimes pets may not be current on all of their vaccinations. In one particular incident, Pet Helpers placed the pet into a very nice kennel, was seen by a Veterinarian where he received the necessary vaccinations, was treated for fleas and given a complete physical examination. Pet Helpers proved to be a life saver in our time of

need, and their assistance with this particular pet has led to what we hope is a lifelong partnership with Pet Helpers. We, at the Family Violence Unit appreciate the willingness of Pet Helpers to work with our victims and their furry friends.

