

# BOTTOMLINE

ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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A CORPORATE VOICE



## ABC Action News Documents the Power of Giving:

**How companies are joining the movement to help local domestic violence centers**

Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL - It's tragic and, at the same time, comical. Every year, without fail, someone will ask me if I'm a survivor of domestic violence. I began my career in broadcast news almost 30 years ago and was caught completely off guard when the awkward domestic violence question started coming up in the fall of 2008. It would happen to me during public appearances at civic clubs, charity events, and visits at local businesses. More times than I care to remember, someone who'd inevitably ask - almost in a whisper - "Are you a survivor of domestic violence?" These well-meaning strangers assumed I MUST be! Why else, they reasoned, would I care so much about this issue?

The truth is, I'm one of the lucky ones. I have not experienced domestic violence growing up or in my marriage. My passion began quite by accident. A project at work opened my eyes to things I couldn't "un" see! The ABC Action News "Taking Action Against Domestic Violence" campaign unveiled a reality that haunted me. At first, the statistics from the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence seemed more fiction than fact. And then, it happened. I met a lawyer, a flight attendant, a military veteran, a banker, a pastor's wife, a college freshman and a retiree --- all of them victims of domestic violence. They were hiding in plain sight, and they came from all walks of life. The phrase "domestic violence does not discriminate" was starting me right in the face, and as the mother of two young girls I could not look away.

Nine years later, our Taking Action Against Domestic Violence campaign continues in the Tampa Bay area. Not just a job anymore, it's a cause our employees believe in on a professional and personal level. We as a company, and as a body of men and women, believe it's a cause we should ALL engage in. Survivors can't be the only ones involved in awareness or supporting the work of domestic violence centers in shelters and schools. Generations of domestic violence and the



*"Domestic violence is not a private matter, it's not a family matter, it is a safety matter. The violence, and its effects can and DO spill over into the workplace." Lissette Campos*

abuse of technology has given way to an estimated 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will be victims of physical abuse in their lifetime. Researchers say more than 50% of teens know someone who has been physically, sexually or verbally abusive to the boyfriend or girlfriend they are dating. (Source: NCADV).

You may not realize just how many times, in one day, you cross paths with a victim or an abuser. They are the friend, coworker, teacher and the school bus driver you smile at every day. Why should you care? The answer fills our newscasts. When a victim's "private family matter" implodes, that thing you thought was none



### Fast Facts About Domestic Violence

- In one study, 71% of human resources and security personnel reported incidents of domestic violence on company property.
- In Florida, domestic violence consistently accounts for approximately 20% of all homicides in the state.
- Domestic violence costs U.S. business nearly \$6 billion annually in aggregate costs, including in excess of \$4.1 billion in direct medical and mental health services.
- 40% of Senior Corporate Executives were personally aware of a survivor/victim of domestic violence in their or another work place.
- A phone survey of 1,200 full-time employees found that 44% of full-time employed adults personally experienced domestic violence’s effect in their workplaces, and 21% identified themselves as a survivor/victim.

of your business can explode in public, hurting you or someone you love.

The April 10, 2017 school shooting in San Bernardino, California is one of the more recent, high profile examples. Soon after she left him, investigators say 53-year-old Cedric Anderson walked into Karen Smith’s classroom, he didn’t just kill her. He shot two boys in her special needs class before turning the gun on himself. Eight-year-old Johnathan Martinez died later at the hospital.

In his short life, the boy born with a rare disease had survived serious heart and kidney problems, hypertension and developmental delays... only to die at the hands of his teacher’s husband.

That heartbreaking story and the many more that don’t make it on the national news have inspired local businesses to get involved and we have had the honor of spotlighting them over the years. They have taught us that they may not be able to fix this epidemic but they can certainly do something to

help. We’ve met dentists, surgeons and gynecologists donating their services to victims and their children. We’ve met mental health counselors and attorneys who set aside time on their schedules to help victims pro-bono. We’ve met housewives who troll garage sales for furniture and housewares to donate to transitional housing apartments, outreach centers and emergency shelters run by local certified domestic violence centers. One group of ladies in St. Petersburg had furnished half a dozen apartments with “garage sale treasures” by the time we met.

Our cameras have captured residents making a big difference even in small ways. The “drop in the bucket” made by a group of office co-workers stunned advocates at the certified local domestic violence center. The employees started collecting canned food at the office in April and by the time the school year ended, they had enough food to stock the food pantry of the domestic violence center all summer long! At a time when domestic violence shelters’ grocery bills triple, without the benefit of school breakfast, lunch and snacks, this “drop in the bucket” was a big deal! Add to that the plumbers, carpenters and painters we’ve met donating their services on a regular basis or on occasion. It is money domestic violence centers were able to re-direct to life saving programs.

*continued on page 4*

**The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence and local certified domestic violence centers can assist with providing training and assistance to community partners and organizations. For additional information email: [bottomlineondv@fcadv.org](mailto:bottomlineondv@fcadv.org).**

## Florida Clerks and Controllers Providing Hope

By: Florida Clerks and Controllers Association

With more than 107,000 domestic violence offenses reported to law enforcement in Florida last year, a survivor's first contact with the justice system is often at their local Clerks' offices when they are filing a restraining order or temporary injunction against the abuser.

As Clerks, it is our duty to serve as advocates and to approach all domestic violence situations with the seriousness and urgency survivors deserve. We actively work with our local sheriff's offices, certified domestic violence centers, and related organizations to assist survivors and ensure justice and safety for them and their families during frightening and uncertain time.

Florida's Court Clerks & Comptrollers are committed to providing caring and knowledgeable assistance throughout the entire process of filing reports and connecting survivors with advocate programs all while upholding the highest possible levels of confidentiality and discretion.

Striving to provide the best possible services to our communities, we continue to identify preventative opportunities instead of the reactive measures often anticipated. For instance, we have made upgrades to Florida's Comprehensive Case Information System (CCIS), initially designed by clerks as a centralized court record database, to now provide enhanced search and tracking capabilities on complex cases involving stalking, domestic violence, and protection orders. This means that members of law enforcement and the public safety community have access to definitive statewide data on which they can identify potential threats and make timely, potentially life-saving decisions.

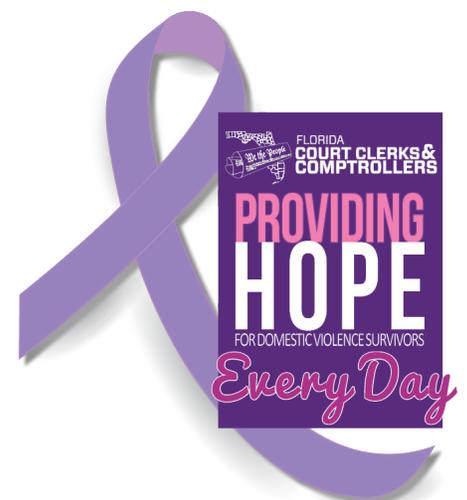
As Clerks, we are hopeful that enhancements such as the delivery of real-time data to the more than 36,000 state government and public safety registered users of CCIS translates into fewer domestic violence survivors entering through our doors.

Because we see the impact of domestic violence face to face far too often, every October Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers statewide observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month and along with our dedicated staff members, challenge ourselves to raise even greater awareness and funds benefitting survivors in our local communities. Throughout the state you can see courthouses illuminated

in purple hues in the evening, supply drives collecting donations for local shelters and a broad range of other special events drawing attention to the issue.

In addition to these visible signs of support, many Clerks also offer individuals summoned for jury duty an opportunity to support the cause throughout the year by donating the money they earn through their civil service as jurors. Through all of these efforts, FCCC has collected well over \$75,000 in the last two years and strives to increase those numbers further to ensure survivors and their families receive the services and protections they need.

In each and every county in our state, Florida's Court Clerks are committed to providing hope to survivors of domestic violence every day. To learn more about Florida Court Clerks & Comptrollers efforts visit [FLClerks.com](http://FLClerks.com).



The Florida Domestic Violence Hotline is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week at 1-800-500-1119 and is staffed with trained advocates available to assist domestic violence survivors, their family and friends, as well as community partners. Hotline advocates provide support, advocacy, outreach and information and referral services.

When broadcasters and public figures wear pink for breast cancer awareness month, our employees wear purple! Nationwide, purple is the color used by advocates to symbolize domestic violence awareness. This simple act sparks conversations in our community that lead to a greater awareness of the warning signs of abuse, the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline, and local programs to help. Speaking of the hotline, at ABC Action News we keep small cards in the break-room and the bathrooms with the 1-800-500-1119 number. We share the cards

anytime, anywhere - from the playground to the grocery store. When the cards run out, we print up more. No questions asked.

Companies, large and small, have no excuse to look away. Domestic violence and dating abuse affects your workforce, profit margin, workplace safety and your healthcare costs. You and your co-workers can make a difference right where you are - no complex directives or costly plans required. Donate services. Volunteer hours. Participate in a fundraiser. Support your local domestic violence center in any way you can. Don't know how? Contact your local certified domestic violence center. Experts overseeing programs from the emergency shelter to job training and prevention programs at schools and colleges will help you find something that is right for you. Take the first step. Get informed. Get involved. The tragedy you help prevent may be closer than you realized.

*Lisette Campos is the Director of Community Affairs for WFTS TV ABC Action News. For more information on the "Taking Action Against Domestic Violence"*

campaign, visit <http://www.abcactionnews.com/taking-action/taadv>.

*71% of human resources and security personnel reported incidents of domestic violence on company property. The cost of domestic violence is high in terms of lost days of work, lost productivity, poor job performance and increased health care costs. It's estimated that intimate partner violence costs U.S. businesses between 5 and 6 billion dollars every year; of that, an estimated 4.1 billion dollars are health care costs directly related to abuse.*

FCADV serves as the professional association for Florida's 42 certified domestic violence centers and is the primary representative of survivors and their children in the public policy arena. The Coalition works to end violence by providing leadership, advocacy, education, training, technical assistance, public policy development, public awareness and support to certified domestic violence centers in Florida.

Sponsored by FCADV and the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families.

## Florida's Certified Domestic Violence Centers

Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Inc.  
Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse, Inc.  
Another Way, Inc.  
CASA-Community Action Stops Abuse  
Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies, Inc.  
Citrus County Abuse Shelter Association  
Dawn Center of Hernando County  
Domestic Abuse Council, Inc.  
Domestic Abuse Shelter, Inc.

Family Life Center  
Favor House of Northwest Florida, Inc.  
Harbor House, Inc.  
Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties, Inc.  
Help Now of Osceola County, Inc.  
Hope Family Services, Inc.  
Hubbard House, Inc.  
Lee Conlee House  
Martha's House, Inc.  
Miami-Dade Advocates for Victims  
Micah's Place

Ocala Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Center  
Peace River Domestic Violence Center  
Peaceful Paths  
Quigley House, Inc.  
Refuge House, Inc.  
Safehouse of Seminole County  
Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center  
SafeSpace, Inc.  
Safety Shelter of St. John's County (Betty Griffin House)

Salvation Army Brevard County Domestic Violence Program  
Salvation Army Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Program of Panama City  
Salvation Army Domestic Violence Program of West Pasco County  
Serene Harbor, Inc.  
Shelter for Abused Women & Children, Inc.  
Shelter House, Inc.  
Sunrise of Pasco County, Inc.

The Haven of R.C.S.  
The Spring of Tampa Bay, Inc.  
Victim Response, Inc. (The Lodge)  
Vivid Visions  
Women in Distress of Broward County  
YWCA of Palm Beach County (Harmony House Program)



# Remember: Help Is Here!

Florida Domestic Violence Hotline • 1-800-500-1119 • 24 hours a day/7 days a week



**FCADV**  
Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence