

You are receiving this email because you have previously supported South Suburban Family Shelter and our work to end domestic violence. If you would like to unsubscribe you may do so at the bottom. We hope you stay and stand with us to see a world free from violence.



From the Desk of your Friendly Neighborhood Executive Director



March has already shown us a peek of spring and I can't wait. I hope you all were able to enjoy the great weather over the weekend.

March is Women's History Month, and today is International Women's Day! The

theme this year is #breakthebias. We here at Anew know all too well that gender bias continues to be pervasive. We see it in all aspects of our clients lives-- from parenting to economics, to treatment in the legal system, as you will read more about later in this newsletter. Although we have come a long way in lifting up women and girls and speaking to our value, there is still much work to be done. Women continue to be paid less than men for the same work. Women and girls continue to experience violence and abuse at alarming high rates, starting, on average, at the age of **nine!** That's right, nine years old. Women continue to carry the disproportionate work loads when it comes to parenting, housekeeping, and the emotional care of friends and family.

This bias impacts men as well. The biases against women are reflected in expectations of men. For example, having strong emotional reactions is a stereotype placed on women. So when men and boys show emotion, they are deemed to have stepped out of the "man box", and are sometimes even shamed. This shame can run deep and keep men and boys from expressing their full range of emotions. We see this in our **Partner Abuse Intervention Program**, where participants are only able to express feelings of anger. It is hard for them talk about feeling sad, or any other emotion our society has labeled as belonging to women.

When women and girls are truly valued and respected, it helps ALL OF US. We all deserve to reach our full potential and to feel free to express our full selves. As we move through Women's History Month, I invite you to #breakthebias and help us work toward a world where we all feel free.

In Peace,
Jennifer

Biases in the Legal System

A blog by Chanté Adams, Court Advocate



Historically, domestic violence was not considered a societal concern. Domestic violence was deemed a private familial issue that would resolve itself once emotions were managed; families would reconcile and return to peaceful behaviors, thus not needing legal intervention. Consequently, a legal response to domestic violence was scarcely considered. In the event an arrest was made upon responding to a domestic violence dispute, the offense would reflect something along the lines of "disorderly

conduct” instead of domestic battery.

However, laws have since shifted, and domestic violence is identified among the most dangerous calls for law enforcement to receive. Domestic violence impacts much of society! Even so, due to decades of biases and rejection, survivors of domestic violence endure a sense of hopelessness when seeking legal relief as a means to secure safety. Why? Because historical attitudes by police and the justice system continue to play out when survivors REACH OUT!

Imagine being a victim of domestic violence, attempting to flee your abuser and filing a Protective Order, just to be asked by a judge, “Why should I grant this order, knowing you have dropped several protective orders in the past, and have previously refused to proceed with criminal charges?” Or imagine having called the police several times as a victim in the midst of a domestic violence dispute, just to be told, “One more call and you’ll be arrested” or “No bruises, no arrest.” Unfortunately, it is a thing that happens quite a bit! Most importantly, it is a “THING” because of those adopted historical ideations that such issues within a family will resolve, hence the mindset that the victim will forgive their abuser. Therefore, no legal relief is necessary.

A positive legal response to a domestic violence charge can be difficult to achieve; thus, the system has become known as an intimidating platform for many survivors. Additionally, some judges complicate domestic violence matters even further. Too often judges appear to have predispositions, especially involving pro se civil litigants (those who argue on one's own behalf in a legal proceeding), making victims unwilling to return for legal assistance because they feel doomed to fail. We as Court Advocates know that domestic violence is a cycle that is difficult to be freed of, but authoritarians have a tendency to exude and even express attitudes that "These women are stupid for taking their abuser back." Also, many judges boast a demeanor that screams “misogynistic” and it’s not always male judges, believe it or not! The unfortunate thing about this dynamic is that in order to change this perspective, the legal spectrum must be held accountable, just as abusers are to learn accountability. In contrast, male victims and survivors very seldom seek legal intervention because of similar historical prejudices labeling them as “abusers only”, and therefore, they couldn’t possibly be victims of domestic violence.



In response to the disconnect between domestic violence survivors and legal authorities, Domestic Violence Court Advocates are a helpful resource for victims

navigating the system. We act as more than Domestic Violence Court Advocates--we are the central point for crisis and concern for victims in search of legal relief-- and guess what?? We listen and share those concerns! Additionally, Domestic Violence Court Advocates are educated and certified professionals who not only want the best outcome for the victim, but also want victims to be able to rely on a working system. On behalf of many Domestic Violence Court Advocates, we are not asking that rulings are made in our favor; instead, we are advocating for personal biases to be eradicated as it pertains to domestic violence and for authorities to intervene accordingly. In a nutshell, we are advocating for legal justice as it pertains to Domestic Violence, for victims to be seen, heard, and understood!

Last but definitely not least, an integral part in reviving the outlook on a system that is so broken, is for all working parts to be seen as a unified front when working together to end the cycle of domestic abuse. This looks like judges making fair rulings without prejudices, advocates being looked at as a valuable resource within the justice system, victims and survivors of domestic violence believing that hope is possible and not feeling intimidated by a system that is setup to enforce laws of protection, and perpetrators being held accountable. When all of this happens, the likelihood of domestic abuse may ultimately decrease, and the road to a world without violence is that much closer.

Spread the word, we're hiring!



New Full-Time Positions for Hire!

- **Safe From the Start (SFS) Project Coordinator**
- **Bilingual Children's Counselor**
- **Partner Abuse Intervention Program (PAIP) Assistant**
- **Court Advocate**
- **Bilingual Hotline and Shelter Advocate**

**To learn more about what each job entails, visit
<https://anewdv.org/job-opportunities/>**

There are several positions available to start your Anew Career. Find information on

them all [HERE](#), and apply today!

Full time positions are eligible for medical, dental, vision, short-term disability, long-term disability, flexible spending account and our 403(b) Plan. In addition, this position is eligible to participate in our Aflac plans and receive paid time off (PTO) and 14 holidays per year.

If you are interested in applying for any of these positions, please email your resume to careers@anewdv.org.

Online Speaker Request Form is LIVE

Anew's Community Education Team offers both in-person and virtual, age-appropriate programs for all age groups from kindergarteners to adults. If you would like a speaker to present at your school, club, sorority/fraterniy, or business, **click the image below** to fill out our request form today!



Anew: Building Beyond Violence and Abuse values raising awareness of domestic violence, and knows our supporters and partners are invested in fostering a safe community where all can thrive, nurture their well-being, and share their gifts and talents. Toward this end, Anew maintains a Speakers Bureau, offering public speakers for your professional, educational, community-based, faith-based, and other groups.

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