



Today's Advocate

DVSAC Monthly Newsletter

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 13

DECEMBER 2008

Renewed Hope & Time for Change

President-Elect Barack Obama has touched us all with his inspirational words of change. This historical moment was memorialized by the joyous tears from men, women and children of all races. At this moment of economic turmoil and chaos we should all do our best to follow his example.

It's the beginning of another year and time to reassess goals. We should be thankful for the peace that surrounds us and for healthy relationships. Let us put down the weapons of anger, destruction, revenge, hatred and violence. Share an embrace, laughter, joy, peace and love.



*This is an eternal wish from the
VI Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Council*

“There is no holiday from good parenting!”

When this year started out no one ever imagined the mammoth challenges we would be facing.

Our way of life had been rudely interrupted by a failing economy which diminished the hopes and dreams of mothers and fathers in our communities. It is no surprise that we are witnessing more stress and depression. The holidays tend to bring uncertainties that hinder our optimism. Parents have a tougher time coping with the wants and desires of their families. The reality is that there is no holiday from good parenting.

Traveling, visiting family and getting presents can all increase your child's stress levels. Trying to maintain your child's routines including sleep schedules and nap times, can help you and your child enjoy the holidays and reduce stress. Parents try not to overload during the season. People frequently respond to stress by allowing themselves to indulge in unhealthy habits like eating excess or drinking heavily. Perhaps, the season would be more enjoyable if self-control is applied during these festivities. Households across the country may find their worries taking a toll on family harmony. This is probably the best time to gather as a family to communicate your expectations.

It is Carnival time. If a child becomes separated from you, be sure to have some form of identification on them. Do not leave children home alone under any circumstances. If your child cannot be with you, make sure they are left with a responsible adult. All persons who are responsible for children should report any instances of child abuse to the Department of Human Services.

Parents must recognize some of the risk-taking behaviors that teens enter into. Promote appropriate dress, speech and behavior. Negative behaviors include drinking, smoking, unsafe sex, drug use, disorderly conduct, stealing and gang activity. When you see warning signs, don't deny them. Get help for your child as quickly as possible. Talk with your children; being honest with your teenager about your experiences as a teen may help. Let them know that mistakes are not fatal and encourage them to make more informed choices by evaluating risks and anticipating consequences. Don't be afraid to question your teenager about their friends and activities.

Make your holiday safe and memorable. The best part of the holiday season is the anticipation for next year with the same enthusiasm and joy. Be good to yourself and your family!



Thank You Volunteers and Supporters for your donation of time or resources which aided us in our efforts.

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Dates to Remember

February 3, 2009: VI Firearms Task Force Meeting at 10:00 AM at the USAO on STX and STT

February 4, 2009: Faith-Based committee Meeting at Noon at DVSAC & Legal Services of the IV

March 16, 2009: Criminal Justice Committee Meeting at 12:30 PM at DVSAC & Legal Services of the VI

Training Calendar

Conference Title	Date	City/State	Description	Contact
Establishing Expertise as an Ethical Expert Witness	January 12-13, 2009	Austin, TX	Training designed for professionals who are interested in being considered as expert witnesses in court cases involving domestic violence.	For details, contact: http://www.ncdsv.org/expertwitness_dv.html
To Share or Not to Share: Tech & Confidentiality Tools for Innovative	January 13-15, 2009	Miami, FL	Explores technology and confidentiality	To register go to http://tinyurl.com/5qm8ej
Arizona Sexual Assault Network (AzSAN)	January 14-15, 2009	Phoenix, AZ	2009 Intimate Partner Violence: Stalking, sexual Assault, and Domestic Violence	For details, call: Elizabeth Houde at 480-831-1986

Happy Holidays!

This newsletter is funded by a 2008-2009 US DOJ Grants to State Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official policies of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women.