

December Newsletter

DV Doesn't Take a Holiday

Domestic violence spikes during the holidays, right? Or does it? The research about this is actually inconclusive, although the perception persists that

holidays are a prime time for domestic violence. According to data from the National Domestic Violence Hotline, the number of calls to their hotline actually **decreases** during the period from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. Although other studies might differ in their results, the important take-away from this data is that regardless of whether hotline calls increase or decrease, we know that the holidays can be a difficult time for domestic abuse survivors.

When thinking about the reasons why hotline calls might decrease

during the holidays, we often hear the same themes: The survivor wants to try to keep things normal for the sake of their children, increased holiday spending causes them to rely on their partner's income, societal pressures encourage families to be together to share in traditions, etc.

As lovely as the holidays can be, we know that factors such as crowded homes, extended-family tensions, financial pressures, unrealistic expectations, and increased alcohol consumption are all stressors that may contribute to a more difficult time for survivors. While it is true that none of these factors cause domestic violence, the added stress can exacerbate the tendencies to exert power and control over another individual. So although survivors might not reach out to hotlines as often during the holidays, we know that domestic violence does not take a break during this time.

As seen in the chart above, there often is an increase in hotline calls once the holidays are over; this may be true because the survivor feels more free to get help once the holiday pressure is off, or because they have gone back to work and are able to be away from their abuser in order to make a call. Survivors also may have experienced more abuse over the holidays due to increased time around their abuser and as a result of the holiday pressures, which helps them realize that they need help with their situation. Family and friends of survivors might also reach out during this time, since they have spent more time around their loved one and may have picked up on the signs of abuse.

No matter when the calls for assistance come in, our advocates are here to help in whatever way we can. We know that domestic violence doesn't take a holiday!

Special Dates

- Nov. 30, Dec 1, Dec 2—Christmas parades.
- Dec 3 —Holiday Fun —6 pm
- Dec. 5 — Volunteer hours are due

Current Needs

- Paper towels
- Walmart and Sheetz gift cards
- Tall kitchen and **ESPECIALLY 33 gal trash bags**
- Gallon and quart zip-loc storage bags

Table A: Average Calls vs. Thanksgiving Holidays—Number of Calls to the NDVH, 2007-2016

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Week	3829	4090	4189	5257	5110	5075	4725	5271	5859	5801
Thanksgiving Week	3285	3487	3546	4741	4080	4060	4214	4483	4718	4730
The Week After	3759	3831	4102	5432	5244	5207	4769	5257	5390	5527
Average Day	547	584	598	751	730	725	675	753	837	829
Thanksgiving Day	290	332	341	376	344	340	438	460	411	486

Table B: Average Calls vs. Christmas and New Year's Holidays—Number of Calls to NDVH, 2007-2016

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average 17 day period	9846	10512	10764	13518	13140	13050	12150	12801	14229	14093
Dec 15 to Jan 1	8540	10094	8367	12259	9958	9788	10991	12565	12508	13092
Average 13 day period	7658	8176	8372	10514	10220	10150	9450	9789	10881	10777
Jan 2 to Jan 15	8415	9413	7511	10702	9161	9001	9644	11136	10351	10871
Average Day	547	584	598	751	730	725	675	753	837	829
Christmas Eve	370	452	304	470	420	421	503	584	530	531
Christmas Day	270	394	258	374	359	355	381	421	450	560
New Year's Eve	523	669	422	569	398	395	546	579	616	634
New Year's Day	428	508	341	604	429	499	570	591	611	650

Survivor Story

Robin Givens

It seems like a long time ago that we first heard of the story of actress Robin Givens and Mike Tyson. It was actually a long time ago — in the late '80's — when Givens told of the volatility and abuse she experienced by Tyson, the former heavyweight boxing champion. The couple was married for a brief eight months before Givens filed for divorce, following numerous incidents of physical violence, damaging rampages, and threats to kill her.



The couple was interviewed in 1988 by Barbara Walters on *20/20* before their divorce; at that point there had been much speculation and many rumors about their relationship. During this interview Givens alluded to Tyson's abusive tendencies, and said that she thought he was "manic-depressive". When asked about not standing by her man if he had an illness, Givens' response was "When you love someone who can also do you harm, it's confusing." Although this interview was short on details about the abuse, it was groundbreaking in that it opened the door for further conversations about domestic violence, especially among celebrities.

Appearing on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in 2004, Givens was able for the first time to talk more openly about the abuse she experienced and the difficulty of leaving someone that she was still in love with. She said that she felt that she needed to protect him, and wanted to "love all of his hurts away". Like many survivors, she spoke of his promises to change and her hope that he would get the help he needed to control his rages; her decision to leave Tyson came after she realized the impact their relationship was having on her family and on her emotional health.

During that interview they also addressed the accusations that the press leveled against her, accusing her of being a gold-digger who only married Tyson for his money. At one time labeled "The Most Hated Woman in America", many people believed that the divorce was Givens' fault, and that she did not deserve the lucrative divorce settlement that she sought. She was the recipient of threats and vitriol from people who did not believe her accusations against Tyson. Those accusations have had a lasting impact on the way that some people view Givens, even today.

Serving as the spokesperson for the National Domestic Violence Hotline for a period of time, and working for many years as an advocate for survivors, Givens has been billed as having been "ground zero" for the #MeToo movement. She spoke out about domestic violence at a time when few were willing to do so, and continues to do so today.

Throughout these years she has seen so many positive changes in the empowerment of women, and believes that the widespread use of social media has made a huge difference in bringing survivors' stories to light. When the video of Ray Rice beating up his fiancé was released, Givens considers that a watershed moment; it may be difficult to imagine a man hitting his loved one, but seeing it on video makes it so much more real. She believes that the increasing use of cameras in our everyday lives will allow survivors' stories to tell themselves.

Although attitudes toward domestic violence have come a long way since the 1980's, it has been a very gradual change, at least until recently. Givens is passionate about the need to involve men in the fight against domestic violence, and believes that they need to step up and speak out against violence in order to eradicate it.

We thank Robin Givens for being such a passionate advocate for survivors of domestic violence everywhere.

Recap of events

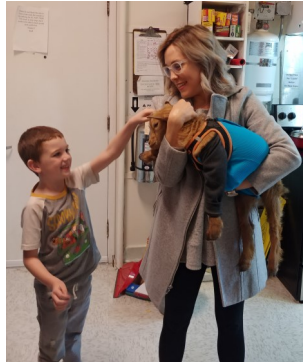
Volunteer Training Graduates

We are so happy to announce that we have three more graduates of our volunteer training program! Christine Mann and Stephanie Zayhowski have completed Level 2, which involves 32 hours of training; Sarah Feathers has completed 18 hours of training which qualifies her for Level 1 positions, and she is on her way to Level 2 if she wants to continue the training at a later date. A great big thank you to all these ladies for their dedication to Response! We look forward to working with them in the future!

Fall Fun

Fall is a time for fun—and we did have fun around the shelter! Our staff participated in a costume contest for a prize of free time off; the competition was so stiff that we declared a 5-way tie. Look at all that creativity! We had a Spice Girl, the Operation game, a crazy cat lady, an adorable nerd, and a bleeding heart liberal! It was good to relax a little!

We also had a fall activity evening for the clients on Oct 30, with a visit from Sprinkles the goat and some pumpkin painting fun. Thanks to Ardie for sharing her adorable baby goat and to all who helped make a fun event!



Upcoming Events

Holiday Fun

Please join us on Monday, Dec 3 at 6:00 pm for holiday festivities! We are inviting volunteers, clients, and board members to join us as we decorate the Christmas trees and the rest of the shelter. It's a big building, and a big job, but many hands make light work. Plus, we'll have lots of fun! Decorating will be followed by light refreshments provided by Response, and our annual cookie exchange. So bring a few dozen of your favorite cookies and a container to take cookies home, and prepare to have an enjoyable evening! RSVP to Lynn by Nov 30, please. See you there!

