



WWW.COPEDV.ORG

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Our Vision: A community knowledgeable about domestic violence and abuse and fully engaged and committed to its eradication.

Our Mission: To help people affected by domestic violence and other forms of abuse in Otero and Lincoln Counties, New Mexico.

We do this by:

- Providing a comprehensive array of direct services, including shelter, counseling, legal services and advocacy.
- Engaging others in effectively addressing these issues in our community.
- Promoting safe and healthy relationships through awareness and prevention.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Tuesday, October 14, 7:30 pm: A candlelight vigil to honor victims of domestic violence will be held at the Gazebo in Alameda Park, next to White Sands Boulevard, Alamogordo. Join with COPE and our community to remember victims of domestic violence and to pledge your support to end domestic violence. See our Clothesline Display of artistic shirts designed by victims of domestic violence and their children, as well as our moving display of Silent Witnesses. Tasty treats will also be provided!

Thursday, October 30, 2:00 pm to 4 pm: 4th Annual Community Heroes awards will be presented to honor select community members throughout New Mexico for their contributions and support of domestic violence work. The Community Hero Award, sponsored by the New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence, commemorates the actions community leaders and businesses have made to support and advance domestic violence advocacy in their communities. Join COPE and other domestic violence agencies in New Mexico for the reception and awards ceremony to be held at Bethel Baptist Church, 1316 Scenic Drive, Alamogordo.

Saturday, December 6, 7:00 pm, A Big Band and Bluegrass Christmas Benefit for COPE: The Flickinger Center House Band, featuring vocalist Donnie Burt, and two Bluegrass groups are performing a Christmas concert with proceeds from this concert given to COPE. Suggested donation is \$5.00 at the door. It's sure to be a joyous concert to ring in the Christmas Season! See you there!



Many of you responded to the article on the front page of our last newsletter which told our readers how much we appreciate the donations you give to COPE for our clients. In response, Barbara Minto prepared many of these special toiletry bags, as well as several sets of shampoo and conditioner bottles wrapped in bath towels. Thank you Barbara and thanks again to all of you who help in some many ways.

Thank you!



DO YOU HAVE AN HOUR OR TWO FOR A CHILD?



COPE is in the process of establishing a volunteer program to care for children. We are looking for volunteers who are willing to spend a few hours of quality time with children at the shelter while their parent is participating in counseling or to give their parent a break from the stress of caring for a child in a shelter environment.

Our staff will provide training to volunteers about how our shelter operates and on how children may be impacted by the trauma they have experienced. Volunteers do not need to have any special skills—just a willingness to read a story, help with homework or play a game with a child or group of children.



All volunteers will be required to undergo a background check, done by NM Children, Youth and Families Department. If you are interested, or for more information please contact us at 909 South Florida, Alamogordo, or call 575-434-3622.

A Special Thank You...

Recently, the Alamogordo Daily News reported on the sentencing of a man who violated a protective order 17 times. According to the paper, the man pled no contest to violating the protective order and was sentenced to six years in prison followed by five years of probation. I applaud all officials involved in this case for holding this man accountable for his actions.

In my fifteen years working at COPE I have rarely heard of anyone receiving such a strong sentence. In fact, victims of domestic violence in Otero and Lincoln Counties often express frustration to us that Orders of Protection are violated by their offenders and they are not enforced.

When a victim of domestic violence fears for her/his safety, she/he may petition for an Order of Protection in district court. The protection order hearing is a civil matter where the victim may ask the court for certain remedies, for example, to have the offender stay a certain distance away from the victim, not contact the victim by phone, arrange for child custody and support on a temporary basis.

COPE has victim advocates and an attorney available to help victims of domestic violence through the process of seeking and obtaining an Order of Protection. Completing the paperwork to request an Order of Protection can be a daunting task. Victims are asked to de-

scribe the abuse, and writing out their story all by themselves can bring back vivid, scary memories of the abuse. Our victim advocates and attorney can provide support and help them to consider the facts to include in the petition. Some victims are so numbed to the abuse that they don't even think some of the violence is important to relate in the petition.

We have been told by victims that offenders do many things to maintain control over them even after an Order of Protection is granted by the court. Victims have told us about threats and intimidation from the offender that do not stop even though they have a protective order that specifically prohibits contact by the offender to the victim. Children are sometimes not returned after visitation, in blatant violation of the protective order and our system is slow to help get those children back.

And people ask us regularly why a victim would stay in a violent relationship. Offenders often show disregard for protection orders. They think they are above the law and that no one will really hold them accountable for continuing to control, intimidate and abuse their victims.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone involved in bringing this man to justice. Keep up the good work! Let victims know they can count on our community to keep them and their children safe.

Kay Gomolak, Executive Director
COPE

SHELTER NEEDS

- Any type girls and boys clothing size 10- teens
- Teenage girl underwear
- Any 3rd 4th 5th grade boy socks
- Diapers size 4t 5t 6t
- Womens body lotion
- Makeup
- Hairspray
- Deodorants



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NATIONAL SURVEY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

In 2013 there were 1,905 local domestic violence programs identified in the United States and territories. The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) annually asks domestic violence programs throughout the nation to participate in a survey for a 24-hour period of time. Last year 87% of domestic violence programs (including COPE) provided data. This census, conducted on September 17, 2013, revealed the following information:

Domestic violence hotlines are a lifeline for victims in danger. Trained advocates provide support, information, safety planning and resources. In the 24-hour survey period, local and state hotlines answered 20,267 calls and the National Domestic Violence Hotline answered 550 calls, averaging more than 14 hotline calls every minute. COPE has a 24-hour crisis line staffed by trained advocates. COPE's crisis line number is 575-437-COPE (2673), toll free number is 1-866-350-COPE (2673).

In total, 66,581 persons received assistance throughout the nation from domestic violence programs on that day. 36,348 domestic violence victims (19,431 children and 16,917 adults) found refuge in emergency shelters or transitional housing provided by local domestic violence programs. 30,233 adults and children received non-residential assistance and services, including counseling, legal advocacy and children's support groups.

On the survey day, 23,389 individuals in communities across the United States attended 1,413 training sessions provided by local domestic violence programs, gaining much needed information on domestic violence prevention and early intervention.

Victims made more than 9,000 requests for services on that day, including emergency shelter, transitional housing and non-residential services that could not be provided because programs did not have the resources to

provide these services. The most frequently requested non-residential services that could not be provided were housing advocacy, legal representation and financial assistance. These needs are concerns for victims locally too.

COPE is not always able to meet the needs of every domestic violence victim in our service area, but we have made great strides to achieve this goal. To accommodate rising housing and safety needs COPE opened a larger, more secure shelter for victims of domestic violence and their children in 2007. Survivors and their children may reside in the shelter for up to 90 days. Just this year, COPE has partnered with First Presbyterian Church to open the first transitional home for survivors of domestic violence and their children in Alamogordo. Still, survivors continue to report difficulties in locating affordable housing.

Victims of domestic violence in Otero and Lincoln Counties may receive legal representation to obtain an Order of Protection from COPE's attorney. They may be represented by the attorney for other civil matters, such as divorce, child custody, debt resolution or housing issues. Although we are unable to meet all the legal needs of our clients, we have made significant strides in helping people achieve positive legal outcomes that help to assure their safety and well-being.

Donations from local persons and organizations help COPE to support not only the services provided at COPE but also some specific financial needs of our clients, such as emergency transportation, funds for obtaining birth certificates which are needed to obtain public housing, rental assistance, food, clothing, prescriptions and school supplies.

We are grateful for the support of our community who helps us to meet the needs of local survivors of domestic violence and their children!

The next time you're in a room with 6 people, think about this:

- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men experience violence from their partners in their lifetimes.
- 1 in 3 teens experience sexual or physical abuse or threats from a boyfriend or girlfriend in one year.
- 1 in 5 women are survivors of rape.
- 1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men have experienced some form of sexual victimization in their lives.
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men were sexually abused before the age of 18.

These are not numbers. They're our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, children, co-workers and friends. They're the person you confide in most at work, the guy you play basketball with, the people in your book club, your poker buddy, your teenager's best friend – or your teen, herself. The silence and shame must end for good.

This information was reprinted from the NOMORE campaign.



COPE would like to thank everyone that supported our Celebration of Spirit Concerts both in Alamogordo and Ruidoso. We had a wonderful time and hope to have this event again next year!

BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Studies suggest that up to 10 million children witness some form of domestic or relationship violence annually nationwide. Children witnessing violence are deeply impacted by trauma. Experiencing trauma actually changes brain functions and establishes faulty thinking. At school, children who have experienced trauma may express themselves in unhealthy ways, i.e., bullying, acting out, withdrawal. These behaviors negatively affect everyone in the classroom. All children need to learn how to connect positively with others.

COPE is pleased to unveil a new program, "Building Positive Relationships," a multi-session educational series for children and youth in local schools to help students learn skills to build positive relationships. This program will teach students skills to handle themselves in relationships effectively and ethically. Students will learn to calm themselves when angry, make friends, resolve conflicts respectfully, and make fair, safe choices. This program will encourage positive commitments and enhance personal responsibility, integrity, self-regulation, and develop a healthy work ethic.

The goal of this program is to teach 500 students from 8 to 10 participating schools in Otero and Lincoln Counties to build healthy relationships with others. COPE's Community Educator, Perry Lawson, will facilitate these comprehensive age appropriate programs which are available for school groups from pre-K through 12th grade.

COPE is able to provide these programs to local schools free of charge thanks to grants from the R.D. and Joan Dale Hubbard Foundation and the Union Pacific Foundation. For more information about these programs please contact Perry at 575-442-6306 or Perry.Lawson@copedv.org.



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