



State of New York
Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

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Governor

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GOING PURPLE: HOW TO “SHINE THE LIGHT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE”

This October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month in New York State. Last year was the inaugural effort to “Shine the Light on Domestic Violence” by turning the State purple. Landmarks such as Niagara Falls, bridges, statues, and buildings were illuminated purple for a day, a week or a month. Organizations held special awareness days heralded by staff in purple attire. This year, the goal is to have *purple participation in every county in the State*. We invite you to join the effort in one or more of the following ways:

Shine Purple Lights

You can light up a building, a bridge, a statue, a waterfall... any object¹ that is illuminated white can be turned purple, often at little or no cost. Contact the person who manages the facility. Persuade them to help raise awareness and potentially save lives by the simple act of shining a purple light. They are the experts on how their building is illuminated, but so you're familiar with some of the more common ways this works, see the following:

1. **Gels on floodlights:** Most buildings have floodlights. To change from a white light to any color, a piece of colored gel (a special type of clear plastic used in theatrical productions) is placed in a holder in front of the light. Gels come in standard sizes; they also come in sheets, which are cut to fit. Gels are inexpensive and can be found at theater supply stores. If you need the location of a store near you, drop a note to: opdvpublicinfo@opdv.state.ny.us
2. **LEDs:** Some buildings, like the Empire State Building, have gone to LED technology. It's significantly more energy-efficient and the colors can be changed by computer.
3. **Structure-specific lights:** Some structures have their own lighting system. For example, the Mid-Hudson Bridge has “necklace lights” (the ones that follow the suspension cables) that can be made any color.
4. **Light bulbs:** Small businesses and homeowners can replace a standard light bulb with a purple bulb. 25W purple “party bulbs” can be purchased online or in some retail party stores. You can also use “blacklight” bulbs. They're easy to find where you buy Halloween decorations or in a novelty store at the mall. These bulbs cast very low light. If you use them in the entryway of a home or office, be sure that safety isn't compromised. People can also put them in a lamp in their front window.

You can explain the meaning of the purple lights by downloading the accompanying free “Purple October” flyer and making copies available. (If you need a copy e-mailed to you, contact opdvpublicinfo@opdv.state.ny.us.)

¹ Buildings made of dark brick will likely not work well. The purple lights don't show up.

Wear Purple

Host a Domestic Violence Awareness Day, and encourage staff to wear purple clothing. Some examples include hospital staff wearing purple scrubs, painting a single fingernail purple – be creative! If it generates interest and conversation, you are raising awareness of the issue.

Create a Purple Space

As part of your Awareness Day (or Week or Month), set up a display table in the lobby of your building. Put out brochures, flyers, purple ribbons, balloons.

Proclaim the Month

Governor David A. Paterson will officially proclaim October to be Domestic Violence Awareness Month in New York State, but you can ask your local officials to proclaim the month in your town or city. Provide them with language for the proclamation, then organize a publicity event for local media to attend. (Sample language:

http://www.opdv.state.ny.us/public_awareness/press/2008_proclamation.html)

Post a Web Banner

Update your website to include information about Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Post a web banner on your home page. OPDV will have an Awareness banner available in September for free download.

Contact the Media

Write an opinion piece or a letter to the editor. If you organize an event, send a press release to local media. Call them to let them know an event is happening. They may just show up with cameras!

Pin a Purple Ribbon

Make and distribute purple ribbons. Get a roll of thin purple ribbon from a craft store. Cut into 3” strips, cutting ends on an angle. Loop the ribbon into the well-known awareness shape and pin from behind using a straight pin. You can dab hot glue between the pieces of ribbon for a more permanent hold.



Paint it Purple

Window paint for cars is available in purple. Use it on vehicles or storefronts.

BE CREATIVE. Some of the best ideas will come from within your organization. Encourage staff to think outside the box! Here are some creative approaches taken in 2008:

- Purchase College has a famous Henry Moore sculpture in front of their main building. They lit the sculpture purple and sent out a press release to local media.
- The Seneca Falls Chamber of Commerce “painted the town purple”! Local businesses and high school students brushed purple chalk dust into the sidewalk cracks and handed out flyers on domestic violence to passersby.
- Awareness Day events at state agencies included representatives from the local domestic violence service provider, as well as human resources and Employee Assistance Program staff. Poster boards and markers were displayed for people to sign their name, committing to

Speak out against violence against women. Agencies made and displayed posters with local statistics and resources.

- One agency held a raffle with proceeds going to a local program that helps victims of domestic violence. Consider organizing an internal competition between different offices or bureaus with prizes going to the people most purple. Post photos on your website.

Here are other ways you can help victims of domestic violence during October and throughout the year — and spread the message that violence will not be tolerated:

Donate Cell Phones

- Verizon Wireless HopeLine <http://aboutus.vzw.com/communityservice/hopeLine.html>

Donate Clothing and Supplies

- Donate professional attire to Dress for Success in Albany, Brookhaven, Nassau County and New York City <http://www.dressforsuccess.org>.
- Volunteer to help out at Baby Buggy <http://www.babybuggy.org/>, which provides donated clothing to babies and young children in New York City.
- Donate non-perishable food items, baby products, maternity clothes and toiletries to the Family Justice Centers throughout the State:
 - Brooklyn and Queens (www.nyc.gov/html/ocdv/html/fjc/fjc.shtml)
 - Orange County (<http://safehomesorangecounty.org/FJC.aspx>)
 - Erie County (contact them to see what they can use: <http://www.fjcsafe.org/>)
- Call your local domestic violence service provider to see if they accept donations www.ocfs.state.ny.us/domesticviolence/providerslist.aspx

Donate Your Time and Services

- Volunteer with your local domestic violence program – see the listing at www.ocfs.state.ny.us/domesticviolence/providerslist.aspx to locate the one nearest you.
- Volunteer for a variety of opportunities throughout NYC with New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault www.nycagainstrape.org/volun_resources.html
- Volunteer with The Family Justice Center of Erie County, Inc. <http://www.fjcsafe.org/volunteer.htm>
- Participate in an internship with the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) <http://www.nyscadv.org/internvolunteer.htm>

Raise Awareness About Domestic Violence in Your Community

- Distribute materials. Volunteer to take domestic violence public education materials (pamphlets, bookmarks, palm cards) to share with:
 - patrons at your local library
 - patients at your doctor's office
 - customers at your hair salon
 - colleagues at work and
 - members of clubs and service groups where you belong.

Public education materials can be ordered free of charge from our office at www.opdv.state.ny.us