

The Domestic Violence Project

The primary mission of the Domestic Violence Project (DVP) is to ensure victims of domestic violence and their children survive the aftermath of the violence they have endured. We each have a right to live a life without violence and to seek safety and comfort within the confines of our own homes. Victims of domestic violence and their children are stripped of these fundamental rights. In order for a victim to regain control of her life, she must be given the opportunity to have that life. This is our objective. We are dedicated to providing the necessary support structures which will enhance a victim's chance to become empowered. It is with this thought in mind that our dedicated staff of attorneys, social workers and interns provide advocacy with a host of intersecting agencies, direct legal representation in family court, counseling services, advocacy and monthly education and outreach activities within the community. Our program's mission demands our implementation of a fully integrated and holistic approach in addressing a victim's needs and concerns.

What We Do

We provide immediate legal and clinical assessments. This includes, but is not limited to, direct legal representation, crisis counseling, referrals and advocacy. Our clients do not present with solely one issue. In fact, it is customary that the decision to leave is fraught with danger and uncertainty. Our model of in-house collaboration between the legal and clinical disciplines allow us to address all of these needs. By addressing all of the client's needs, we further ensure that her safety and that of her children's is met. When a client feels supported, she is able to move forward and transition to a life without violence.

**Each year
1,500,000 women
and 835,000 men
in the United States
are victims of
intimate partner violence.**

(National Institute of Justice, 2000.
Extent, Nature and Consequences
of Intimate Partner Violence,
United States Department of Justice)

For Assistance Call:

Hotline

718-875-5062

Phone

718-875-9400

Fax

718-875-5081

email

dvp@urbanjustice.org

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"I was surprised that DVP took my case because nothing ever seemed to go my way. I had spoken with several other agencies, told my story over and over again, but no one would help me. When I met with my lawyer, I found it easy to talk to her. She seemed to understand me, as if she could identify with me. They referred me to their social worker and between the two of them, I finally feel confident that things will be resolved. I feel like I'm in control again because I have people on my side who listen. I'm finally on my way to getting my life back."

- DVP Client

Our ability to serve is dependent upon our ability to listen to the life-stories they share. They are the storytellers and we are their voice.

**In fiscal year
2000
the NYC
Domestic
Violence
Hotline
received
more than
99,000 calls,
averaging over
8,000 calls
a month.**

Domestic violence is insidious; it suffocates slowly and incapacitates a person by destroying their self-esteem. It is often life-threatening. It can take the form of isolation, economic, psychological, verbal and physical abuse. It is in the form of constant threats: Threats of deportation. Threats of losing your children. Threats of retaliation. It slowly but definitively asserts its control and destroys the human spirit.

The Domestic Violence Project is dedicated to providing comprehensive services that support and enhance a victim's chance for personal freedom. Our dedicated staff of attorneys and social workers actively collaborate on every case in order to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach.

We believe that this team approach enhances our ability to assist the client and invites the client to actively participate in her own advocacy.

Our team of attorneys and social workers:

- Fully assess each case from both a legal and clinical standpoint.
- Provide crisis counseling and referrals for long-term counseling.
- Provide legal advocacy with a host of agencies including but not limited to NYPD, Prosecutors, ACS and other outside attorneys.
- Provide direct legal representation on family court matters including family offense petitions and custody / visitation matters.
- Provide assistance with name changes, social security changes, housing and public assistance.
- Facilitate empowerment group-addressing the concerns and anxieties inherent in litigation.
- Educate community-at-large-on domestic violence and the courts.
- Interface with agencies in order to provide more seamless referrals and assistance.

In identifying the needs of victims, experience has shown that advocacy and education with law enforcement officials is many times the cornerstone to legal success. By forging a cooperative relationship with the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, we have successfully been able to educate and advocate, on behalf of our clients, with the individual prosecutors assigned to the criminal cases. Our success has resulted in greater relief, safety and peace of mind for our clients and their children.

"Our collaboration with the Urban Justice Center has allowed us to expand the limitations of a very small prosecutorial toolbox into a formidable array of options that we can provide to the victims onsite. While criminal prosecutions may not be the preferred option for many victims, civil legal assistance can often pave the way to greater safety, security and stability. Prosecutors, thanks to Urban Justice, have been able to make referrals in a thoroughly seamless fashion."

*- Assistant District Attorney Wanda Lucibello,
Chief of Special Victims of the Brooklyn
District Attorney's Office.*



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