



## Media Kit

### Guidance for Members of the Media

Telling stories about IPV provides a twofold opportunity: to be a healing experience for survivors and to promote public health and safety by increasing awareness and understanding of IPV.

#### Stories as Healing Experiences

Sharing one's story can be a profoundly healing experience for survivors of IPV. By sharing their story, survivors are reclaiming power and control over their lives from the person who abused them. In addition, the process of putting traumatic events into sequence helps survivors process their trauma, contributing to healing by helping them form a coherent narrative from fragmented trauma memories. When a journalist interviews a survivor and becomes part of that narrative-forming process, they become part of that survivor's healing journey for better or worse. Members of the media can ensure their interviews and interactions with survivors are healing rather than harmful by affording survivors greater agency in the reporting process. To learn how to offer survivors agency in the reporting process, see [Echo's Elements of Trauma-Informed Journalism](#), written by trauma specialist and Echo executive director Louise Godbold in partnership with journalist, author, and trauma researcher Tamara Cherry.

#### Stories as Opportunities to Increase Public Health and Safety

##### *From the National Network to End Domestic Violence's Media Guide*

Sharing stories of violence and abuse can help reduce stigmatization and silence, let survivors know they are not alone, and inspire policymakers and community leaders to create change. It is crucial, however, that writers and media use storytelling, story-collecting strategies, imagery, and headlines that are trauma-informed and do not cause harm. Sensationalizing trauma or perpetuating victim-blaming narratives does harm to survivors and their families. For guidance on trauma-informed reporting around IPV, please see this [Media Guide](#) from the National Network to End Domestic Violence. Note that as language shifts and best practices are updated, the most important aspect of telling the stories of IPV is to listen to and honor the narratives of survivors.

#### The Well-Being of Reporters Covering Trauma

It is important to recognize the impact that covering trauma can have on the well-being of journalists. This Poynter article provides a self-care guide and resources for journalists: [How journalists can take care of themselves while covering trauma](#).

### Intimate Partner Violence: Key Terms and Context

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a pattern of violent, coercive behavior used by one partner in an intimate relationship to exert power and control over another partner in the relationship.

Abusive partners are motivated by the desire for power and control and often enact a range of abusive behaviors with the intention of making it difficult or impossible for a survivor to flee. Abusive behaviors can include but are not limited to physical abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, weaponization of social stigma, financial abuse, tech-facilitated abuse, stalking and intimidation, sexual and reproductive coercion, and sabotage of career and education. Health conditions that may be associated with IPV include injury, chronic pain, cardiovascular disease, digestive disorders, depression, and post-traumatic stress. Further, this complex range of abuse tactics can lead to job instability, poor credit, homelessness, isolation, and other circumstances that make it difficult or impossible for a survivor to flee an abusive partner and still meet their basic needs.

Partners may be current or former spouses, live-in partners, romantic/dating partners, or parents of a shared child. Women are most often and most severely impacted by IPV, but anyone can experience or be impacted by IPV regardless of gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, social status, economic status, or geographic location.

Abuse can begin at any point in a relationship and escalate slowly, quickly, or not at all. Sometimes, one violent action is enough for an abusive partner to establish and maintain power and control in the relationship without escalating their abuse further. An abusive partner may seem like an ideal partner in the early stages of a relationship, and they may never appear abusive to anyone outside of the abusive relationship. Every relationship is different and IPV does not always look the same. What most abusive relationships share in common is the abusive partner's pattern of coercive behavior aimed at exerting power and control over their significant other.

"Why don't they just leave?" some ask. Leaving any relationship can be difficult, but it can be even more difficult when someone is trying to prevent their partner from leaving. The purpose of violence and abuse is to maintain power and control. In many cases, abusive partners restrict survivors' access to resources and support as well as undermine their self-determination. With little or no support and limited resources, survivors' options are limited. Before they leave, they must think about their physical safety, their financial security, where they might find secure housing, and the safety and welfare of children and pets, among other things. In addition, experiencing abuse does not necessarily negate the feelings of love and care a survivor may have for their partner. Many survivors want the relationship to continue, just without the abuse and violence. Survivors are best equipped to determine when and how to leave a relationship as well as what resources and support systems will help them maintain their safety. At any point in time during an abusive relationship, [advocates are available](#) to support survivors and help them plan for their safety.

Abusive partners are people who cause harm. ZeroV avoids using the term "abuser" because it denies the humanity of people who cause harm and perpetuates stigma, leaving little room for the idea that people can grow and change when held accountable and provided with support. People are more than the harm they cause. ZeroV believes that taking a restorative and transformative approach to holding abusive partners accountable is essential to eliminating IPV.

“Domestic violence” and “intimate partner violence” can be used interchangeably to describe a pattern of abusive behavior and coercive control that can happen in a dating, marital, or live-in (or ex-) intimate partner relationship. “Intimate partner violence” often feels more inclusive because it more explicitly recognizes that people in any type of romantic relationship can experience abuse by a partner—regardless of age, gender identity, sexuality, or “formal” relationship status.

## **How Everyone Can Support Survivors and Help End Intimate Partner Violence**

### 1. Deepen your understanding of domestic violence.

Before you can address a problem, you have to be able to identify it. Because domestic violence is complex and takes many forms, it can be easy to miss and dismiss if you don’t know what to look for. Learning what domestic violence is will help you recognize when it is happening so that you can take appropriate action to address it. You can start learning more about what DV looks like at [zerov.org/resources](https://zerov.org/resources).

### 2. Build your skill set for support.

Supporting survivors doesn't mean you have to be an expert on domestic violence or know what to do when a survivor discloses their experience to you; it just means offering survivors safety to share their story. Offering safety looks like listening to survivors without judgment, validating their feelings, and respecting their boundaries. Your role isn't to tell them what to do but to walk alongside them and help them navigate their options. Learn more about how you can support survivors from the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#), and practice these skills in your everyday interactions to prepare yourself for conversations that help survivors stay safe. To take your skills to the next level, attend a [Green Dot](#) class, which teaches tactics and strategies for intervening in situations of power-based personal violence, including sexual violence, intimate partner violence, child abuse, elder abuse, bullying, and stalking.

### 3. Engage with your local domestic violence program.

The ZeroV coalition includes [fifteen state-designated domestic violence programs](#). Find your local domestic violence program and see how you can support its work, which could look like organizing a donation drive for needed supplies, volunteering for a fundraising event, filling an open position on the board, or making calls to your Congress members and legislators to advocate for continued funding for domestic violence programs.

## **About ZeroV**

ZeroV is the federally designated state domestic violence coalition for Kentucky, dedicated to creating safe lives and thriving futures for survivors of IPV and their children. We are grounded in the belief that IPV is interconnected with all other forms of violence, and we will only fully eliminate IPV when we change the cultural and social norms that allow and sanction it.

ZeroV believes a world safe for survivors is safe for everybody and that the responsibility of creating this world rests with each of us. As a Kentucky united against violence, our work will persist until the violence in our state is ZERO.

### ZeroV Mission

To abolish the social conditions and systems that spark, enable, and amplify intimate partner violence and to create communities where all Kentuckians can live and thrive in safety and peace.

### ZeroV Vision

All individuals, families, and communities have what they need to live in safety and thrive.

### ZeroV's Work at a Glance

- Provide survivors with housing and supportive services through our nationally acclaimed statewide housing program.
- Advocate for survivors of IPV through our legislative and policy work.
- Administer the Batterer Intervention Program, an education-based program serving abusive partners who have been court-ordered to participate.
- Partner with and provide training and technical assistance to government agencies, nonprofits, and private organizations to make meaningful and lasting change focused on the intersecting needs of survivors.
- Represent and support our 15 member programs that provide state-mandated services to survivors.

### ZeroV Leadership

- Tisha Pletcher (she/her), Chief Executive Officer
- Meg Savage (she/her), Chief Legal Officer
- Andrea Miller (she/her), Chief Housing Officer
- Amy Conley (she/her), Chief Financial Officer

### ZeroV Coalition Member Programs

ZeroV is the Cabinet for Health and Family Services designee to provide statutorily mandated victim services to survivors of IPV in all 120 counties of the Commonwealth. These services are provided by the coalition's network of 15 member programs, with one program located in each Area Development District.

*Services provided* include 24-hour crisis hotlines; emergency shelter; support accessing food and clothing; legal/court advocacy; transportation and accompaniment to relevant appointments; case management and safety planning; support groups and individual or group counseling; children's groups and access to education for school-age children parenting classes; adult- and youth-targeted community awareness and education; referrals to substance use programs; housing assistance, financial education, budgeting, and help in reaching economic security; referrals accepted and made to other community resources.

*ZeroV member programs* include Merryman House; Sanctuary, Inc.; Barren River Area Safe Space, Inc. (BRASS); Bethany House Abuse Shelter, Inc.; Cumberland Valley Domestic Violence Services; LKLP Safehouse; Turning Point Domestic Violence Services; Safe Harbor; DOVES of Gateway; The Ion Center for Violence Prevention Buffalo Trace; The Ion Center for Violence Prevention Northern Kentucky;

GreenHouse17; The Center for Women & Families; SpringHaven, Inc.; and Owensboro Area Shelter & Information Services (OASIS). See the member program map at the bottom of the document.

## Quick Stats and Highlights

- ZeroV's nationally acclaimed housing program helps survivors find housing in communities across the state. The program also maintains 83 tax-credit housing units in Hazard, Louisville, Paducah, Murray, Lexington, and Morehead.
- Across the state in fiscal year 2025, ZeroV member programs
  - answered 23,000 domestic violence hotline calls.
  - provided domestic violence services to more than 12,600 adult survivors and 1,400 children.
  - reached 20,725 people and survivors through community, public awareness, outreach, and training activities.
  - reached 18,192 children and individuals with youth-targeted education.
- Unfortunately, 1,814 requests for shelter went unmet in Fiscal Year 2025 due to program shelter capacity and staffing – a 44% increase from Fiscal Year 2023.
- According to the [2024 Kentucky Domestic Violence Data Report](#), more than 29,000 petitions for domestic violence and interpersonal orders of protection were filed by Kentuckians seeking safety in calendar year 2024.

## ZeroV Contact Information

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*Last Updated: 2/16/2026*