



what matters.™

Dispensing Hope and Dispelling Myths

Did you know domestic violence only happens between married adult couples? Did you know boyfriends and girlfriends sometimes push each other around when they get angry, but it rarely results in anyone getting seriously hurt? Did you also know that relationship abuse happens most often among minorities? *Did you know all of these statements are myths?*

Here are the facts. As many as one-third of all high school and college-age young people experience violence in an intimate or dating relationship. Physical abuse is as common among high school and college-age couples as it is among married couples. Domestic violence is the number one cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 to 44 in the United States. Women of all races are equally likely to be abused by a partner.

After 40 years of marriage and a long history of domestic abuse, Donna made plans to escape. This required tremendous courage for a woman her age. She had anonymously received information about domestic violence on an information card created by the “Thrivers Group” at the Family Violence Prevention Center of Greene County, a United Way Partner Agency. The card validated in her mind that what she had been struggling with was truly abuse. With the help of the agency, Donna was able to find a safe place to live while she created a strategy for establishing her independence. Despite being told she could never make it on her own Donna’s independence continues to grow. She had never been included in the financial responsibility of the household. Today, she has created a budget that supports her independent, safe household; and she lives within that budget successfully. Donna found the courage to admit there was a problem, the strength to take action and with the help of the Family Violence Prevention Center the hope that life can be better.

Last year the center sheltered more than 200 adults and children. They provided ‘Violence Free’ and ‘Life Skills’ education training to almost 4,000 junior and senior high school students. Through the DIVERT program, they assisted close to 3,000 individuals identified when a police officer was called to a residence for a disturbance; four out of five people contacted for follow up reported that there had been no new incidences of violence since their initial contact with DIVERT.

Thanks to the generosity of United Way contributors, United Way funding helps the Family Violence Prevention Center dispense hope and dispel myths.