NEW DUAL ARREST LAW TO HELP VICTIMS

HARTFORD -- Recently Gov. Dannel P. Malloy signed a new state law that all but ends having victims of domestic violence arrested with their abusers because they fight back during an assault.

The new law requires police to determine which person, following a domestic violence call, is the “dominant aggressor” or who basically initiated the abuse.

Interval House advocates and staff were instrumental in getting the new law on the books after it languished in state committees for years.

Interval House’s President/CEO Mary-Jane Foster lobbied to get the bill passed this year. And for several years, Interval House program directors, Penni Micca and Jen Lopez served on state panels and committees to get it implemented.

“This new law will truly help us continue to save and change lives by assuring victims are not victimized again by the system they reach out to for help,” Foster said. “Too many times our clients dial 911 and find themselves arrested along with the abuser. Domestic violence calls are always difficult for police and determination of dominant aggressor can be challenging. But given the significant hardship victims experience post-arrest, it’s imperative we not off-load this decision on the courts.”

For years, Connecticut’s domestic violence victims have been at risk of dual arrests. In Connecticut, the dual arrest rate is about 18 percent in domestic violence incidents. The national average is about two percent.

Jen Lopez, Interval House’s Advocacy Program Director said it was unclear why the dual arrest was so high in Connecticut when compared to the rest of the country. But she said the new law should have an immediate impact on that statistic.

“For the past 30 years I have heard and witnessed the consequences that an arrest can have on victims,” said Lopez, Interval House’s Advocacy Program Director.

“I often interview victims shortly after the arrest and what I witnessed was shock, disbelief and fear. Also, shame, because they are embarrassed to be seen in court, although many have done nothing to justify the arrest.”

(Continued.)

WINDSOR FEDERAL SAVINGS SETS RECORD

When Interval House’s In-Kind Donation Coordinator Donna Szarwak saw the dozens of bags and boxes filled with Safe House Wish-List items coming through the door recently, she was stunned.

“We’ve never, ever, gotten so many wish-list items donated at once. It was wonderful,” she said.

The items were collected in April by Windsor Federal Savings, a popular community bank in Interval House’s catchment area. The bank collected items - toiletries, diapers, clothing and other products - at all seven branch locations and even advertised on local billboards.

“It came at the perfect time,” Szarwak said. “Our shelves were bare, literally.”

(Continued.)

Notable Quote...

Domestic violence can be so easy for people to ignore, as it often happens without any witnesses and it is sometimes easier not to get involved. Yet, by publicly speaking out against domestic violence, together we can challenge attitudes towards violence in the home and show that domestic violence is a crime and not merely unacceptable.

— Honor Blackman, Actress.

SAVE THE DATE

October 17, 2018
Breakfast With Champions

www.intervalhousect.org
THIS YEAR’S GALA GRANDER THAN EVER!

Thank you to all that made our 2018 Step Out, Step Up Gala so great!


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Interval House 24/7 Hotline: 860-527-0550
Dual Arrests Focus of New Law Continued...

The negative consequences of dual arrest can be extensive and long-lasting for a victim of violence and abuse. Consequences include:

- Increase danger/violence as victims are less likely to call the police in the future and abusers exploit this
- Increased financial or economic abuse as the costs to hire a lawyer, miss work and pay for childcare for court appearances is daunting for many caught up in dual arrests
- Increased trauma for children as seeing the parental victim arrested with the aggressor can lead to distrust of law enforcement
- Potential negative affects to ongoing immigration and legal issues as an arrest can trigger major obstacles by having a criminal record, and
- Hinder prosecution of abusers as victims seldom cooperate in court as he/she is also facing charges.

Penni Micca is co-located at the Manchester Police Department. She has helped thousands of victims in her more than 25 years as an Interval House advocate. She said it’s not uncommon for a batterer to cause himself injury just before the police arrive.

“Victims who have been arrested have lost their jobs and custody of their children,” Micca said. “This new law will give victims of domestic violence confidence to call the police without worrying that their call will only put them further in harm’s way.”

We teach thousands of people each year about the dynamics of domestic violence and healthy relationships through our community education program. If you would like to have a presentation done at your business, club, church, school or organization call: 860-645-4034 ext. 301.

WISH LIST DONATIONS VITAL TO SAFE HOUSE & CLIENTS

For more than 41 years, Interval House has relied on the generous support of the community since opening our doors and plugging in the hotline. One form of giving is particularly invaluable, our in-kind donations. We shelter more than 200 women and children each year at our 20-bed safe house, and that would not be possible if not for the donation of items on our Wish List.

If you would like to donate items from the Safe House Wish List below, please contact Donna Szarwak Interval House’s in-kind coordinator at: 860-246-9149, Ext. 358.

Wish List Items:

- Gift Cards: Grocery, Stop & Shop, Shop Rite, Price Rite, Costco, Sam’s Club, etc.
- Gift Cards: Walgreens, CVS, Wal-Mart, Target, American Express, Visa, Master etc.
- Gift Cards: Gas Stations
- Bus Passes
- Shop Vacuum: wet/dry
- Pajamas: seasonal fabrics, all sizes for women & children
- Slippers/Flip flops – all sizes (women & children)
- Underwear – (women & children)
- New/unused blankets & twin sheets
- New/unused towels
- Umbrellas: carry/folding style
- Cleaning Products: bleach, pine-sol, Lysol, etc.
- Cleaning Supplies: mops, brooms, cleaning brushes, sponges, toilet plungers
- Detergent: dish washing (automatic & regular)
- Detergent: for washing machines/clothing
- Liquid hand soap
- Lysol spray and wipes, or any other brand
- Paper towels: toilet tissue, Kleenex
- Paper goods: dishes, cups, napkins, plastic flatware
- Plastic garbage bags: tall, large & 55+ sizes.
Interval House has partnered with the Travelers Championship Birdies for Charity program. At TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Interval House helps thousands of women and children trapped in the insidious cycle of domestic violence and abuse. You donation through this great initiative will provide much-needed shelter and safety planning for our many clients and their children.

Simply visit our donation website by clicking on the Birdies for Charity logo. The Birdies for Charity initiative ends June 24, so any donation you make will help us to continue to save lives.