

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 19, 2019

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*****PRESS ADVISORY***PRESS ADVISORY*****

**INTERVAL HOUSE AND HARTFORD
POLICE ENHANCE PARTNERSHIP TO END
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

What: Interval House & Hartford Police Press Conference

When: Wednesday, November 20, 2019 – 11:30am

Where: Hartford Police Headquarters, 253 High Street

HARTFORD -- On Wednesday, Interval House and the Hartford Police Department will unveil new and enhanced efforts to reduce the numbers of domestic violence cases in the city, and provide life-saving help to those being abused.

For the first time ever, Interval House will embed a full-time advocate at Hartford Police headquarters to work directly with victims of domestic violence and law enforcement.

The new advocate will be tasked with reaching out to victims identified through the statewide Lethality Assessment Program, or LAP-- a special on-scene screening process police use during domestic violence calls.

“This new program will allow us to reach victims that may not trigger the original LAP screening process,” said Mary-Jane Foster, President and CEO of Interval House.

“Having an advocate embedded in police headquarters will enable us to work intimately with law enforcement, ensuring we reach more victims before it’s too late.”

Interim Police Chief Jason C. Thody said the new program will have an immediate and positive effect in combating domestic violence in the city.

“Domestic violence is an especially devastating issue that poses a unique set of challenges for law enforcement,” Thody said. “Offenses often occur behind closed

doors and victims and offenders, by definition, have a close relationship. This makes it hard for law enforcement to intervene and leaves victims extremely vulnerable. We can't fight this issue on our own. Partnerships like the one we have with Interval House are needed to help prevent repeated violence and provide victims with a support structure outside of the environment that is causing the harm. That is the goal of this partnership.”

In 2012, several Connecticut cities and towns began a pilot LAP to better serve high-risk victims of domestic violence during 911 calls for help. By 2017, all of the state's cities and towns had employed LAP during domestic violence police calls.

Modeled after a Maryland project that began in 2005, the Connecticut LAP program is a specialized intervention process that uses several specific screening questions. Trained police on the scene of a domestic violence call assess a victim's risk for serious injury or even death by using the questions, and can then immediately connect victims to a local domestic violence advocate for support and safety planning.

In October, Interval House announced a similar collaboration with East Hartford and now also has an advocate embedded at that police department.

Since 1997, Interval House has had an advocate stationed at Manchester Police headquarters heading the Domestic Violence Outreach Team. The Interval House and Manchester Police outreach program was one of the first in the region and has been cited as a model program that helps save lives.

About Interval House

Since 1977, Interval House has provided services to more than 250,000 people in its 24 city/town service area. It operates a 25-bed safe house, and offers support groups, safety planning counseling, advocacy programs in the courts, a children's program and community education. All services are free and confidential.

To reach Interval House for help, call the 24-hour hotline at 860-527-0550.

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