



## Signature Program – Eight Focus Areas

### Intimate Partner Violence

Darlene Adams, Advisor – [darleneadams@bellsouth.net](mailto:darleneadams@bellsouth.net)

As some crimes have dropped during the pandemic, domestic violence is rising. As a result, some counties have had an increase as high as 43%, with an overall average of 25-35%. According to social workers, cities that are showing a decline in arrests can be far from reassuring as the abuse is quietly escalating behind closed doors. Social workers said domestic violence shelters are seeing a sharp increase in phone calls. (Source: [futurewithoutviolence.org](http://futurewithoutviolence.org)) The prevalence of domestic violence in the United States; (1) One in four U.S. Women experience violence by a partner at some point in her life. (2) On average, more than three women a day are murdered.

There are Consequences of Violence. Women who have experienced domestic violence are more likely to have the following: Have a stroke (80%), Have heart disease (70%); Have asthma (60%); Drink heavily (70%)

Projects your Club can do at your upcoming Fall meetings include “Break the Silence”.

Members creatively video doing something “noisy” and tag others and challenge them. The post would include the reason for the challenge - bring awareness to Intimate Partner Abuse and the hashtag - #GFWC #BreaktheSilence.

Next, put the GFWC “Break the Silence” template on your profile pic during Domestic Violence Awareness month in October.

Resource: National Domestic Violence Hotline – 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

### Child Abuse

Tina Smith; Advisor – [tismith12@comcast.net](mailto:tismith12@comcast.net)

Child abuse is an important public health problem that includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role (such as clergy, a coach, a teacher) that results in harm, the potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. It is our responsibility to increase awareness regarding this problem which will then help prevent it. As club women, let's all work together in April, Child Abuse Prevention Month.

How can your club help? Mentor a child and/or their family. For ideas on how to help, contact your local Prevent Child Abuse America Chapter, [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org)

Or how about Girl's Inc, Girl Scouts, your local library. All have programs that need adult mentors. Who better to do that than GFWC members!!

### Teen Dating

Trisha Schafer, Advisor – [trishamae2520@gmail.com](mailto:trishamae2520@gmail.com)

Did you know that there are 4 types of Teen Dating Violence (1) Physical Violence (2) Sexual Violence (3) Psychological Aggression (4) Stalking. This violence can take place in person or electronically. The statistics are overwhelming: Nearly 1 in 11 females and 1 in 15 males high school students report having experienced physical dating violence in the last year. About 1 in 9 females and 1 in 36 male high school students report having experienced sexual dating violence in the last year. 26% of women and 15% of men who were victims of contact sexual violence,

physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their life first experienced these or other forms of violence by that partner before the age of 18. Clubs – print out the “Conversation for Parents” flyer and hand it out at all your activities. See our exciting Challenge Project.

### **Campus Sexual Assault**

Pam Briggs, Advisor – pmbriggs@msn.com

The last thing anyone thinks about when they head off to college is that they may become a victim of campus sexual assault by another student or even a faculty or staff member. Addressing this issue means more than just supporting survivors. It involves educating students on issues like consent and personal safety; empowering all students and faculty to become active bystanders willing to step forward and intervene; working with campus administrators to ensure policies are in place for handling reports of sexual assault in a sensitive, compassionate and professional manner; and make sure adequate support services are available for survivors.

Campus Sexual Assault is highlighted with the wearing of a teal ribbon during April as part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This is a perfect opportunity to work with colleges in your state to sponsor and support prevention and awareness programs.

### **Elder Abuse**

Karen Kaler, Advisor – karenkaler0505@gmail.com

Staggering statistics – in 2018, 52 million people in the US were over the age of 65. Nearly 1 in 10 of these people suffer from elder abuse every year. Elder abuse takes many forms, including physical injuries, financial exploitation, emotional abuse, neglect, and even sexual assault. Seniors lose 2.6 billion a year due to financial abuse. Elder abuse often goes unreported. Family services statistics show that only 1 out of every 24 elder abuse cases were reported to authorities.

June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. Suggested projects include working with local nursing homes to educate our seniors on this growing concern or create pamphlets to distribute that can give seniors resources to use for financial decisions and physical abuse concerns.

### **Violence Against Native American Women**

Jan Allen, Advisor – jaa8532@gmail.com

November is a time for all of us to celebrate American Indian Heritage Month. Designated by Congress in 1992, American Indian Heritage Month is recognized annually by federal agencies, nonprofits, and other organizations to honor Native American culture and heritage.

National Indian Country Clearinghouse on Sexual Assault (NICCSA) – list of Tribal Women’s Shelters.

In the United States, violence against indigenous women has reached unprecedented levels on tribal lands and in Alaska Native villages. More than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence and more than 1 in 2 have experienced sexual violence. Alaska Native women continue to suffer the highest rate of forcible sexual assault and have reported rates of domestic violence up to 10 times higher than in the rest of the United States. Though available data is limited, the number of missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska Native women and the lack of a diligent and adequate federal response is extremely

alarming to indigenous women, tribal governments, and communities. On some reservations, indigenous women are murdered at more than ten times than In the United States, violence against indigenous women has reached unprecedented levels on the tribal national average. We as clubwomen can (1) Raise awareness to gain strong federal action to end violence against Native women and children; (2) Provide legal advice to Native women's organizations and Indian nations on ways to restore tribal criminal authority and to preserve tribal civil authority, and (3) Volunteer at Indian and Alaska Native nations and Native women's organizations to increase their capacity to prevent violence and to hold perpetrators of violence accountable.

### **Military Sexual Abuse**

Carla Pyle, Advisor – [jeffcarlapyle@msn.com](mailto:jeffcarlapyle@msn.com)

The US military is one of the largest organizations in the world so it is no surprise that the number of reported cases of Sexual Abuse is tremendous, and increasing. Two organizations specifically deal with sexual abuse within the military, one is the Family Advocacy Program and the other is the [Department of Defense \(“DoD”\) Safe Helpline](#) (877-995-5247), which offers 24/7 crisis support service for members of the DoD (military) community affected by sexual assault. Dealing with military abuse issues, but outside of the Military is the Protect Our Defenders Foundation: [protectourdefenders.com](http://protectourdefenders.com) [info@protectourdefenders.com](mailto:info@protectourdefenders.com) 950 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314

Clubwomen - make this a priority:

- Contact local military installations and speak to someone at the Family Advocacy Program to find out what ways your group could help their clients. Support local resources such as safe houses, advocates, counseling services, and medical care for the survivors.
- Start a book club on a nearby military base or local library to read and discuss Domestic Violence issues.
- Volunteer for local agencies that support the survivors of military abuse.
- Donate to the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) or the National Coalition of Domestic Violence (NCADV)
- Train locally to work the local hotline
- Contact advocacy groups in your area and find out what supplies and collections are needed in local shelters

### **Human Trafficking**

Lucinda Martinez, Advisor – [askmsmartinez@hotmail.com](mailto:askmsmartinez@hotmail.com)

Teal – Color for sexual assault. January – National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. January 11 National Human Trafficking Day

Human sex trafficking is driven by the demand for commercial sex and comprised of (a) by people who buy boys, women, and girls for sex (b) a culture that tolerates or promotes sexual exploitation. Venues of sexual exploitation drive the demand for commercial sex and contribute to normalization. Events and major conferences regardless of the city tend to have a 20% or more uptick in human trafficking during the event.

Rehab's Daughters do mission trips to major events (Pro Bowl, Super Bowl, etc)

Volunteer or Start a Rehab's Daughters Chapter 224-333-0911 or [samW@rehapsdaughters.org](mailto:samW@rehapsdaughters.org)  
Colors of Hope offering Equine Restoration Program, San Antonio, TX, [info@color-of-hope.org](mailto:info@color-of-hope.org)

Here is what your club can do - First Night Bags for sex trafficking victims. Small fabric bags that contain hygiene products, blanket, sleep attire socks, and slip-on shoes. Set up a contact number for someone who can bring to local law enforcement when called.

### **Honorary Chair**

The Honorary Chair for the Signature Program is the Jennifer McGee, CEO, and Founder of the Starfish Project. Jenny is based out of China. She goes into brothels and rescues young women. She teaches them a skill - how to make the Starfish Project's beautiful jewelry. Jenny will be writing articles for the Clubwoman and hopefully speaking at one of our conventions.

### **Success for Survivors Scholarships**

Since 2011, GFWC has been offering scholarships for survivors of intimate partner violence. Applicants must be enrolling in a college, university, community college, or technical school. The application has been updated and can be found in the club manual with the information on the Signature Program. The deadline for the application is February 7. Please reach out to your local shelters, counseling centers, etc.

### **Signature Program Challenge Project – Teen Dating Awareness**

This administration, GFWC is uniting grassroots clubs in challenge projects to be completed throughout the Nation. This will help in building our GFWC branding of grassroots volunteering. The Signature program challenge is in two parts

We will put together four, 25-minute podcasts on Teen Dating Awareness. The target audience is young people between the ages of 12 and 17.

Topics will include:

- “We’re just talking” What’s OK and What’s not OK
- “Are you seeing someone?” Behavior on a date.
- “Let’s Hear It for the Boys” They have concerns too.
- “When to ask for help?”
- “Human Trafficking – What to look out for”

The Podcast discussions will engage young people, our Junioresettes, and technical experts. We anticipate having the first Podcast ready in April 2021.

In the meantime, we put together a Teen Dating Awareness rack card “Conversations that Matter” that your club can print out and hand out at your events, meetings, and working with young people.

### **For your planning purposes:**

- January – Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month
- January 11 – Human Trafficking Day
- November - celebrate American Indian Heritage Month
- June is Elder Abuse Awareness
- April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month – wear Teal.
- Look for Teen Dating Awareness Podcasts in April.
- April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month