



NEW FAMILY VIOLENCE UNIT IN DA'S OFFICE

First Judicial District Attorney Scott Storey announced in October that he created a Family Violence Unit in the District Attorney's Office. "October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and a great opportunity to renew our commitment to breaking the cycle of violence," said DA Storey, "Domestic violence shatters families and impacts the entire community. It is the most under-reported crime in the country."

- A woman is battered every nine seconds in the US.
- One in four women will be the victim of violence by an intimate partner in her lifetime.
- In Colorado almost half of all murders are committed by an intimate partner. The victims are disproportionately female.

"We have made great strides in our approach to domestic violence in the last decade, but there is still much to do," says DA Storey, "These cases are very difficult to prosecute because victims are often reluctant to follow through. The most common reasons are that they are afraid or have a misplaced sense of loyalty to the abuser."

"Earlier intervention and assisting in providing services in place for victims can help us prosecute our felony domestic violence cases," Storey said, "Keeping victims safe while holding offenders accountable is our first priority. Working with law enforcement and community service providers we can reduce the escalating pattern of abuse in our community."

The DA's Family Violence Unit consists of a prosecutor, a paralegal and a resource coordinator. "Our goal is to enhance intervention, prosecution and community connections in domestic violence cases," Storey said, "We can do a better job of responding to the needs of victims and providing them the support they need to move forward in their lives. This unit will also help us identify any gaps in prosecution and close them."

Funded for two years by the Department of Criminal Justice, the District Attorney's Family Violence Unit will develop a standardized protocol for handling felony domestic violence cases. The team will track valuable statistical data, develop training materials for prosecutors and law enforcement agencies, and identify resources for victims.

For more information:

Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence <http://www.ccadv.org/dvam.htm>

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence <http://www.ncadv.org/>

Victim Outreach Information, Golden <http://www.victimoutreach.org/>

Women in Crisis, Wheat Ridge http://www.thefamilytree.org/about_us/programs/women_crisis.html

Teen Dating Abuse Helpline 866-331-9474 www.loveisrespect.org

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