

Proclamation

Greater Fall River Area Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2020

Whereas, we stand at the crossroads of two pandemics, the COVID-19 health crisis and deep-rooted racial injustice, that illuminate a longer history of institutional failures and growing inequality, and highlight the ways that power and control fracture individuals and communities; and

Whereas, domestic violence is understood to be a problem that begins with the desire for power and control over another human being, and individual survivors of domestic violence are more vulnerable to the collective abuses of power that support systems of oppression; and

Whereas, on average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States, which represents more than 10 million victims of domestic violence annually; and

Whereas, in Massachusetts, 31.7% of women and 19.2% of men report experiencing rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime, and up to 50% of transgender people experience intimate partner violence; and

Whereas, 45.1% of Black women and 40.1% of Black men have experienced physical violence, sexual violence and/or stalking from an intimate partner; and 43.8% of lesbian women, 61.1% of bisexual women, 26% of gay men, and 37.3% of bisexual men have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lives, and 55.5% of Native women experience physical intimate partner violence in their lifetimes; and

Whereas, domestic violence most egregiously impacts the vulnerable and marginalized people in our community including Black, Indigenous and people of color, immigrants, the elderly, the economically disenfranchised, LGBTQ folks, women, and children, and those with mental or physical disabilities; and

Whereas, many survivors choose not to report to the police, the courts, or domestic violence agencies, for fear of being harmed or re-traumatized by the systems that are meant to support them; and

Whereas, we recognize that a coordinated community effort can prevent and abate the pattern of domestic violence; and that all our citizens deserve to live in a city that is dedicated to their well-being and safety;

NOW THEREFORE we, as members of the Greater Fall River Domestic Violence Coalition, commit to dismantling systems of oppression that continue to make domestic violence possible and commit to upholding an ethic of care and accountability that recognizes the unique vulnerabilities and agency of survivors; and

NOW THEREFORE we, as members of the Greater Fall River Domestic Violence Coalition, commit to believing ALL survivors and here affirm a specific intention to believe and affirm ALL survivors who experience additional forms of oppression that put them at exponential risk; and

NOW THEREFORE we, as members of the Greater Fall River Domestic Violence Coalition, commit to improving the systems that provide assistance for all survivors, and recognize the importance of our collective action in achieving this change.

NOW THEREFORE we the member organizations of the **Greater Fall River Domestic Violence Coalition**, do hereby proclaim **October 2020** as:

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Reaffirming our collective commitment to Ending Domestic Violence. Signed:

Statistics obtained from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) and The Williams Institute
<https://ncadv.org/STATISTICS>
https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2497/massachusetts_2019.pdf
https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2497/dv_in_the_black_community.pdf
<https://ncadv.org/blog/posts/domestic-violence-and-the-lgbtq-community>
<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/ipv-sex-abuse-lgbt-people/>