

No need to suffer abuse, shelters ready to help

Posted: July 26, 2008

Recent headlines have caused us to stop and mourn the tragic and preventable deaths of two innocent victims of domestic violence; and the young life that is changed forever by her mother's murder.

Victims of domestic violence are often deceived by abusers who tell them they are stupid and crazy, and who isolate them from friends and family. It takes courage to leave an abusive partner who has threatened violence against you and your children. Statistics show the most dangerous time for a victim of domestic violence is the first 72 hours after leaving an abuser. Yet, staying is not the solution.

Warm, caring staff at excellent domestic violence programs in Indianapolis serve thousands of women and children every year, offering help, healing and hope. Our networks provide safe shelter, counseling, case management, support groups, and life-skills training so women don't feel pressured (by emotional or financial needs) to return to abusive partners.

Domestic violence is a predictable pattern of tension building, abuse and a honeymoon phase. It will not improve over time, despite the promises that abusers make. We are urging anyone suffering from domestic violence to take the first step and call the Domestic Violence Network hub at (317) 926-4357.

Domestic violence-related deaths are preventable. Emergency shelters and transitional programs offer safety and support victims need to break the cycle of violence, forever. Do not wait another day to get help.

Lianne Somerville

*Executive director and the staff and board of directors, Coburn Place Safe Haven
Indianapolis*