

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Action Guide

As a long-time leader in advancing the rights of women and girls, **Legal Momentum** is deeply committed to ending violence against women and gender-based threats to equality and empowerment. DVAM is a crucial month for spreading our message and encouraging collective action.

With the arrival of the 2018 election season, staying informed about policies and organizations like **Legal Momentum** that can support survivors and help prevent gender-based violence is more important than ever. This pamphlet highlights why the fight against domestic violence is so important and how *you* can take part in it.

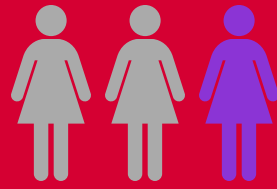
DVAM 2018 has come to a close, but your continued support is crucial to our mission to prevent violence and protect survivors.



Why DVAM?

1 in 3 women

have been victims of some form of physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime



On average, almost 20 people per minute

are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States

On a typical day, more than

20,000 phone calls

are placed to domestic violence hotlines nationwide



The prevalence of domestic violence in the U.S. and around the world provides a clear call to action.

Domestic violence affects *all people* no matter their economic status, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, or other identities.

Physical violence is often perpetrated within larger systems of power and control. The consequences of domestic violence are not just physical, but also psychological and economic.



Victimization by an intimate partner is correlated with

higher rates of depression and suicidal behavior

Only 34%

of victims of intimate partner violence **receive medical care for their injuries**



Victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of

8,000,000 days of paid work each year,

the equivalent of **32,000** full-time jobs

The History and Impact of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

VAWA was initially enacted in 1994 following the continued efforts of **Legal Momentum** and other women's rights organizations to promote justice for, and protect the safety and autonomy of, victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Over three subsequent reauthorizations, **VAWA** has been implemented to enhance services for victims, recognize various forms of sexual and domestic violence as crimes, and strengthen legal protections for victims and survivors.

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) was established in 1995 to administer VAWA. Since then, it has awarded more than **\$6 billion** to communities nationwide.

VAWA has had a tremendous impact in expanding victims' access to the legal protections and social services they need, but OVW reports assert that there is still much progress to be made. For example: many services are not universally accessible, do not account for intersections among domestic violence and other trauma, and may address the effects of domestic violence without effectively eliminating its root causes.

VAWA was last reauthorized in 2013 and is scheduled to expire **this year**. **Legal Momentum** urges Congress to reauthorize VAWA with enhancements that will better serve the needs of victims and survivors

Legislative Action

Ending domestic and gender-based violence requires awareness campaigns and a change in public discourse, but also calls for institutional support. We need to prioritize definitive policy goals that will protect and support survivors and promote equality and opportunity for all women.

Reauthorize VAWA

We need Congress to reauthorize VAWA with necessary enhancements to serve the needs of victims and survivors. Ending violence against women is not a partisan issue. Since its initial enactment, VAWA has always been bipartisan. It should be bipartisan now too.

Allocate funding for programs & services for survivors

We need to strengthen existing laws that provide funding for wraparound services and programs that protect the health and safety of survivors and victims of domestic violence. Access and funding for resources like emergency shelters, counseling, crisis hotlines, and more must be expanded.

Enact workplace protections

Barriers to women's economic equality and empowerment are inextricably tied to various forms of gender-based violence and discrimination. We need to create an integrated solution with meaningful protections, accommodations, and services that will reconfigure the workplace as a place of equal opportunity for all women.



Moving forward

1

Support

Show your support for the organizations and coalitions joining in the fight to end domestic violence during DVAM and beyond. Stay up-to-date on their projects and progress, and help them continue their work by donating. Your support will help **Legal Momentum** continue striving to secure equality and opportunity for all women. Donate [here](#).

2

Advocate

Speak out against violence and speak up for survivors. Openly acknowledge the intersectionality of the identities and issues that affect gender-based violence and discrimination.

Share the work these organizations are doing, participate in public campaigns, and start conversations to raise awareness. By using your own voice to help others be heard, you can help us change public discourse to become more survivor-centered.

3

VOTE!

Election Day is **November 6**. Exercise your civic duty!

One of the best ways to enact a culture shift around domestic violence is to elect officials who reflect your position on these issues into office. Do research on your candidates to ensure they support key legislation and speak openly about domestic and gender-based violence in trauma-informed, survivor-supportive ways.

Your vote matters.

October is over, but our work as allies and advocates never ends. Whether you show your support by donating, educating yourself and others, or staying civically engaged, we need you to take action. For more educational materials, news, and campaigns, check out **Legal Momentum** online at <https://legalmomentum.org/>, on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/legalmomentum>, and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LegalMomentum/>.