



## Why should faith communities take action on the issue of domestic violence?

- \* Most religions clearly support non-violence, love, and compassion in intimate relationships and in the world. And yet domestic violence continues to be a huge social problem that will affect approximately 1 in 4 women and 1 in 13 men during their lives. Faith communities can stand against this injustice with moral authority and scriptural support.
- \* Domestic violence cuts across lines of educational attainment, economic status, religion, race, and culture. Although it may be hard to accept, it is extremely likely in any faith community that some members are experiencing or have experienced violence in their relationships. Victims are often silenced by shame and fear. By breaking the silence about domestic violence, faith communities can create a safer space for victims to come forward and get help.
- \* Misconceptions about domestic violence are rampant, and faith communities are not immune. Often education is needed so that when victims of domestic violence turn to their faith leaders or fellow members of their faith community for help, they will receive the support they need to be safe.
- \* Faith communities are in a unique position to hold batterers accountable for their behavior and to encourage positive change.
- \* Faith communities can and do provide tremendous financial and volunteer support to Domestic Violence Programs. These gifts are invaluable, and point the way to even deeper partnerships in which mutual exchange of knowledge and resources can create safer homes and safer communities.
- \* Domestic violence will not end until enough people stand up and say that it is unacceptable. Faith communities change minds and lives everyday. They have the power to educate people about the false messages our society sends, the messages that say it is okay to control and dominate a person you claim to love. Faith communities can help create a world in which all relationships are healthy, respectful, and safe.

*"The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people." Ashanti Proverb · Ghana*

