Now You Know Roundtable' Honors Stalking Awareness Month

Metropolitan Police Department Victim Services Branch
Family Liaison Specialists Unit

101 M Street, SW
Washington, DC 20004

‘Now You Know Roundtable’ Honors Stalking Awareness Month

January 2022 marks the eighteenth annual National Stalking Awareness Month (NSAM), an annual call to action to recognize and respond to the criminal justice system. Stalking is real and it can happen to anyone. Our speakers were Dana Michelle Fleitman, Associate Advisor, Stalking Prevention, Awareness, and Resource Center (SPARC) of AEquitas, and Senior Sergeant Alberta Holden,Paternity Warrant, Civil Protection Order and Domestic Violence Units, Investigative Services Bureau, Criminal Investigation Division, Metropolitan Police Department.

The topics covered included:

» Honoring Stalking Awareness month
» Stalking – what it is and what to do
» What to expect when you call the police

Takeaways for our audience included:

» Remember, it's criminal, traumatic and dangerous.
» Please report and if you don’t know/aren’t sure it’s stalking, call the police anyway.

—Sharon Daugherty

Empower!

GIVING VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES A VOICE

A Publication of the Metropolitan Police Department’s Victim Services Branch

Message from Tyria Fields

Ensuring your voices are heard, the Victim Services Branch continues to empower survivors throughout the criminal justice system. Specifically, the Metropolitan Police Department remains committed to helping to bring resolve to concerns of our communities in 2021 and beyond. As we make our way into a new year and a pandemic we are sending well wishes and peace to all families impacted by violence in the District of Columbia. It is our hope that our regards are received graciously. Take care.

Tyria Fields

Upcoming Events and Activities

Ongoing

The Mental Health Equity Forum
Thursday, January 13, 5:30 pm

It’s free and process. We are inviting everyone to learn that asking for help means you’re strong. That’s how you take back your power. You’ll hear from experts who have devoted their lives to helping people thrive. Find, keep & nurture a healthy mind.

Sponsoring Organization: United Planning Organization (UPO)
REGISTER: www.upo.org/equityforum

Foster Parent Information Sessions
Virtual Information Sessions: Every second Saturday 10:00–12:30 pm; every last Thursday 6:00–9:00 pm
Children never outgrow their need for love and support. Help Children remain safely in their community. You can’t imagine the reward!

Sponsoring Organization: Child and Family Services Agency
REGISTER: www.FosterDCKids.org or call us at (202) 679-LOVE (5683)

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Family-to-Family Education Program
Every Thursday, 7:00 pm–9:00 pm
This is a free course for family members of those with serious mental illness. Attendees will learn about different mental illnesses and their causes, the various types of depression, problem solving, self-care, and fighting stigma. The class is led by trained family members who have experience.

Sponsoring Organization: National Family Support Technical Assistance Center
CONTACT: info@nfstac.org or www.nfstac.org

PSA 702 Outreach Committee
Second Sunday of Every Month, 3 pm
The Police Service Area 702 Outreach Committee meets the second Tuesday of every month at 2:00 pm by Zoom (with the exception of the month of August).

Sponsoring Organization: PSA 702 Outreach Committee
CONTACT: Brenda Richardson (202) 678-1978 brendarichardson724@gmail.com
Virtual Support Groups: What are Some Benefits?

Resources

For more information regarding the virtual support group, contact Dr. Renetta D. Weaver, LICSW, LCSW-C at (240) 416-9650 or visit https://renettaweaver.com/contact

A ccording to Dr. Weaver, therapy cannot change the past and it cannot change what happened. But it can change what is happening inside of you and it can allow you to grieve. After 10 years of facilitating groups, Dr. Weaver has seen evidence that hurting people really can heal in the community. On Sundays afternoon, she facilitates a support group for those who are affected by gun violence. The group consists of education about managing grief and trauma with various discussion topics and activities.

Several members shared how the group is helping them navigate their grief journey:

Participant 1

“This group has been helpful because it helps me to express myself; to relax; to hear others share exactly how I am feeling: I don’t plan anything before 2 pm because I need this group. My mind doesn’t have those racing thoughts when I’m in group."

Participant 2

“I need this group after the type of week I had. I don’t know if I would have survived as long as I have survived without this group. It’s not the same talking to family and friends. I needed people to just listen to the things I say in here, I don’t know if I could’ve said it to anyone else even in another group. There’s a lot of trust here.”

Participant 3

“I like this group because whether I listen or talk, I feel like everyone gets it. I feel safe here and I like coming here.”

January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Resources

For more information on this topic visit: 

- www.state.gov/what-is-trafficking-in-persons
- https://polarisproject.org

In 2010, President Barack Obama designated January as the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. The month is dedicated to raising awareness about trafficking and educating people to recognize the crime and report it. Human traffickers exploit and profit at the expense of an adult or a minor by forcing them to engage in forced labor or commercial sex. According to the U.S. Department of State, sex traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to compel a person to engage in commercial sex. Major events such as the Super Bowl are times when victims of sex trafficking are most at risk. Traffickers look for victims at popular hangout spots such as malls and schools vicinity. The National Human Trafficking Hotline receives most of its calls on Super Bowl weekend perhaps because the hotline is better advertised during the event. Since human and sex trafficking victims are not always hidden or kept away from the public, a community we must educate ourselves to look for the warning signs. Some of the signs to look for are:

» Appearing malnourished
» Avoiding eye contact,
» Lack of identification documents
» Checking into hotels/motels with older males
» Underage works
» Unable to visit public places alone or speak for themselves

—Megan Riley

—Carla Okonkwo

—Debra R. Cooper.

—Raymond Rich

—Vanessa M. Rich

—Megan Riley

—Debra R. Cooper.

—Megan Riley

—Vanessa M. Rich

—Megan Riley

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—Megan Riley

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