

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Steve Halvonik 717-545-6400 ext. 120

PCADV Offers Tips to Keep Families Safer From Domestic Violence During Holidays

Suggestions will be promoted via #YuleBeSafer social media campaign

HARRISBURG, Pa., Dec.2, 2014 – Domestic violence doesn't take a holiday. In fact, for thousands of Pennsylvania families, the increased time an abuser and victim spend together may increase the potential for domestic violence.

To help families remain safer during the holiday season, 60 community programs serving domestic violence victims in all 67 counties have teamed up with Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence to compile a list of safety tips. They will be promoted through a social media campaign featuring the hashtags #YuleBeSafer and #PeaceAtHome. We encourage the public and media to use social media to promote these tips as a way of helping to protect Pennsylvania families threatened by domestic violence.

PCADV says #YuleBeSafer if you...

1. Develop a signal. Turn porch or holiday lights on/off to alert neighbors that you are in danger.
2. Establish a password. Use a word like "eggnog" to let others know that you are unsafe or cannot talk privately.
3. Start new traditions. Consider changing the location or doing something different for family get-togethers and parties.
4. Hide your whereabouts. Use a Post Office Box or no return address when mailing holiday cards.

5. Identify a helper. Choose a family member, close friend or neighbor who can provide support and intervention if necessary.
6. Minimize. Use the increased family time as a way to minimize alone time with an abuser.
7. Save. Use discount coupons for holiday shopping and keep the savings for emergencies.
8. Protect your health. Keep all medical and counseling appointments during the holiday season.
9. Be unpredictable. Avoid shopping at your usual places if you're afraid your abuser might find you there.
10. Avoid surprises. Don't park in isolated or unlighted areas, and don't walk alone to your car.
11. Stay connected. Carry a cell phone at all times to call 911.
12. Don't be shy. Talk to an advocate at the local domestic violence program for more holiday safety ideas.

About PCADV

Founded in 1976, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence is the oldest statewide domestic violence coalition in the nation. Each year it provides free and confidential services to nearly 100,000 victims of domestic violence, through a network of 60 community-based programs serving all 67 counties in the commonwealth. PCADV also promotes public awareness of domestic violence-related issues through its PA SAYS NO MORE campaign, which it operates in partnership with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. For more information, visit www.pcadv.org or www.pasaysnomore.com; or follow PCADV on Twitter @pcadvorg and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pennsylvania-Coalition-Against-Domestic-Violence/479697025386367>.

###