

HOW IMAMS AND LEADERS CAN HELP....

SPEAK OUT: Speak out about domestic violence and sexual assault in your Khutbah's. As an Imam or community leader, you can have a powerful impact on people's attitude and beliefs.

EDUCATE COMMUNITY MEMBERS: Provide ways for members of your houses of worship to learn as much as they can about domestic and sexual violence. Routinely include information in monthly newsletters, on bulletin boards, and in marriage preparation classes. Sponsor educational seminars on abuse in your house of worship.

ADDRESS INTERNAL ISSUES: Encourage continued efforts by your house of worship and Islamic Centers to address allegations of abuse by Muslim and Non-Muslim leaders to insure that religious leaders remain a safe resource for victims and their children.

INTERVENE: If you suspect violence is occurring in a family, help the victim plan for safety and encourage accountability of the abuser. Let each know of the community resources available. Do not attempt couples counseling unless you have been trained or have a trained professional in domestic violence, and only after the safety of the victim has been ensured.

SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING: Encourage and support training and education for Imams and community leaders. Start training courses at your local house of worships to increase awareness about sexual and domestic violence.

USE ZAKAT TO HELP: Earmark a percentage of Zakat funds to specifically help victims of domestic violence.

PREPARE TO BE A RESOURCE: Research Quran, Sunnah and Fight to better understand and respond to abuse from an Islamic perspective. Receive training from professionals in the fields of sexual and domestic violence.

BECOME A SAFE PLACE: Make your house of worship a safe place where victims of domestic violence can come for help. Display brochures and posters which include telephone numbers of the domestic violence and sexual assault programs in your area.

OFFER SPACE: Offer meeting space for educational seminars or weekly support groups, or serve as a supervised visitation site when parents need to safely visit their children.

PARTNER WITH EXISTING RESOURCES: Include your local domestic violence or sexual assault program in donations and community service projects. Adopt a shelter for which your mosque provides material support, or provide similar support to families as they rebuild their lives following a shelter stay.