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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hurricane Rita Compounds the Obstacles Faced by Louisiana Domestic Violence Survivors who Survived Hurricane Katrina

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES IN LOUISIANA ARE THREATENED MORE.

With old bruises healing, stitches obviously needing to be removed from her face above her left eye, a domestic violence survivor talks with a Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence staff person: *I don't know what to do. I am tired and scared. I left my home and went to the Superdome with my husband and children. He beat me up there and I got medical help. My children and I left and went to a shelter and began rebuilding our lives, but now we are being moved again because Rita is coming. My children are tired and life needs to get back to normal, but as long as we are together we can survive anything.*

LOUISIANA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HURRICANE RELIEF FUND STILL NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT.

LOUISIANA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS NOW EXTENDING THE HURRICANE KATRINA RELIEF FUND TO INCLUDE THE HURRICANE RITA RELIEF TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF THOSE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS FROM THE NEWLY AFFECTED PARISHES.

Hurricane Rita creates new challenges for Louisiana's domestic violence programs and domestic violence victims, says Merni Carter, Executive Director of the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence. We were just beginning to move through the survival and shock phase and beginning the recovery and planning phase of rebuilding our domestic violence services, but now Hurricane Rita has taken a toll on six of our remaining 15 domestic violence programs that were still operating.

On Friday, six of Louisiana's 15 operational domestic violence programs had to be evacuated and domestic violence victims and their families relocated to the remaining nine domestic violence programs that are currently open and providing services.

As of Monday morning, we are still unsure of the exact damage our domestic violence programs have suffered, but we are sure that the outreach offices in Cameron and Vermilion Parish are destroyed. To date, waiting to hear about the Calcasieu Women's Shelter in Lake Charles, but know from reports that that city is to remain closed for a month.

Louisiana Domestic Violence Victim's Hurricane Relief Fund

The Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence (LCADV), a private 501c3, not-for-profit organization incorporated in 1982, is **establishing a Louisiana Domestic Violence Victim's Hurricane Relief Fund** to assist victims of domestic violence and child victimization who are displaced and affected by Hurricane Katrina.

LCADV is accepting donations that are specifically earmarked to assist battered survivors and their children who have been directly affected/displaced by the hurricane. The donations will be used to assist battered victims from the following parishes in Louisiana: Orleans, Jefferson, St. Tammany, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines.

Rita Relief Assistance will also go to assist battered women and children from Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, and Vermilion Parishes at this time. This may change if more parishes are in need. It is still too early to know the exact extent of the devastation.

The donations will be used for the following purposes:

1. Relocation of domestic violence victims.
2. Purchasing of basic needs, i.e., baby formula, diapers, food, clothing, etc., that could not be met elsewhere.
3. Deposits on houses, electric bills,
4. Car repair, gas, public transportation
5. Medical/prescription needs,
6. Other basic, life sustaining needs

All donations go directly to victims of domestic violence affected by this hurricane and will not be used for any administrative or other purposes.

LCADV is setting up a temporary website to receive donations through a secure online service – VeriSign. The website should be up by September 2, 2005 at 12:01 AM.

The website is www.lcadvhrf.org. Also learn more about LCADV by logging onto www.lcadv.org.

Other ways to make donations:

The Louisiana Domestic Violence Hurricane Relief Fund Account is setup with AmSouth Bank which is located in the following states: Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee. If you live in one of these states you could make a donation at the local AmSouth Bank Branch to the LCADV Domestic Violence Hurricane Relief Fund Account number: 0020085338. Donations from other states can be made through wire transfer to this account.

If you would like to make a donation using MasterCard or Visa, you may contact the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence office at 225-752-1296 with your credit card information. Donations may also be electronically deposited into our account by faxing a voided check with the amount of the donation to (225)751-8927. LCADV will setup an electronic deposit and you will receive confirmation of your donation with the tax-deductible receipt.

Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence (LCADV)

LCADV, a private not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization, is a statewide network of battered women's programs, other organizations, and individuals who share the goal of ending violence against women and children in Louisiana. The Coalition coordinates a statewide network of 20 community-based domestic violence programs. In addition to coordinating life-saving services throughout the state of Louisiana, *LCADV* focuses on public policy development, training and technical assistance, increasing public awareness and education as related to domestic violence and child victimization. *LCADV* operates the Louisiana Domestic Violence Hotline.

