

# **Corporate, Entertainment and Social Justice Leaders Announce Unprecedented National Platform to End Domestic Violence**

*Denise Brown Among Celebrities Raising Their Voices Against Domestic Violence*

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 1, 2007 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ – Leaders from across the country are convening to change the face of domestic violence in America.

Based on outcomes of the historic Decade for Change Summit, the National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH) today announced preliminary action steps designed to end domestic violence in America by 2017.

“Despite significant efforts over the past decade to address the problem of domestic violence in our country, 33 million American women continue to experience abuse every year,” said Sheryl Cates, NDVH Chief Executive Officer. “These action steps are designed as a challenge to unite as a nation to end domestic violence. It is time to awaken the hope that we, as a society, can work together to bring the promise of safety and hope to every home in America.”

The Decade for Change Blueprint will outline strategies and recommendations that will set new precedents for prevention and significantly reduce domestic violence in America. Overarching themes include:

1. **CHANGE PUBLIC PERCEPTION:** The treatment of domestic violence must change from silent acceptance to complete intolerance. By 2017, a measurable shift in public perceptions/opinion about domestic violence will be demonstrated by utilizing nationally recognized polling, research expertise and public awareness.
2. **EARLY INTERVENTION/EDUCATION:** Proactive steps must be taken to end the cycle of intergenerational violence starting with our children. By 2017, a national domestic violence education model will be created and incorporated as part of standard curriculum for middle and high school students.
3. **IT’S EVERYBODY’S BUSINESS:** The key to eradicating domestic violence is to create a united effort among key societal sectors to establish industry-specific strategies and tactics that address the problem. One example would be for the business community to establish domestic violence prevention as a core element of corporate social responsibility. By 2017, at least half of America’s Fortune 500 companies will have instituted core corporate domestic violence programs as “standards of practice.”

Denise Brown, CEO of the Nicole Brown Foundation, is a vocal advocate in the plight against domestic violence and a participant in the Decade for Change Summit. “It’s time we all band together and strive for one common goal to stop domestic violence. I am proud to be part of this Summit,” said Brown.

The Decade for Change Summit has been working since October 2006 to develop a 10-year blueprint for change to significantly reduce domestic violence in America. More than 100 summit panelists representing the public and private sectors, faith communities, domestic violence services, youth, state and federal officials, media, education, and medical/mental health professionals have taken part in a series of three Summit meetings over the last several months, with the last session scheduled in Los Angeles on February 1 and 2. Participants in this groundbreaking leadership conference include:

- ❖ Meredith Wagner, Vice President of Public Affairs, Lifetime Television
- ❖ Angela Cobb, Program Manager, The Allstate Foundation Domestic Violence Program
- ❖ Laysha Ward, Vice President, Community Relations, Target
- ❖ Patrick Gaston, President, Verizon Foundation

“Just like domestic violence transcends gender and economic boundaries, the Summit ‘Call to Action’ bridges government and business boundaries and looks to all segments of our society to make a difference,” said Angela Cobb.

“The Allstate Foundation is committed to this issue and challenges not only other leaders in our industry, but all of corporate America to make a difference.”

The final Summit Blueprint for Change, which will elaborate on a Bill of Rights and include metrics for measuring success, will be presented to the White House, Congress, domestic violence advocates, leadership in key industry sectors and the public in October (National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.)

“This is a wake-up call – for individuals and families, corporate America and our government – to forge a public/private partnership to break the silence,” echoed Sheryl Cates, NDVH Chief Executive Officer. “As a society, we can and need to do more. The Summit Call to Action is an opportunity to unify our collective wisdom to create a society of safety and hope for the next generation.”

**About the NDVH** – The National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH) is a project of the Texas Council on Family Violence in Austin, Texas. NDVH provides empowerment-based crisis intervention, information and referral to victims of domestic violence and their friends and families. The Hotline serves as the only center in the nation with access to over 5,200 shelters and domestic violence programs across the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. NDVH operates 24 hours each day, 365 days every year, in over 140 different languages, with a TTY line available for the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing. All calls to NDVH are anonymous.

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