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National Network to End Domestic Violence **Unveils New Snapshot of Victim Services in the U.S.**

Economic Downturn Exacerbating Domestic Violence

Washington, D.C. – The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) today marked International Women’s Day by releasing a report that provides a snapshot of domestic violence services in the U.S. In one 24-hour period, more than 65,000 victims of domestic violence and their children received life-saving services from local domestic violence programs. Domestic violence experts answered more than 23,000 emergency hotline calls. In one day alone, 9,280 requests for services went unmet, largely due to lack of funding.

“The economy is exacerbating domestic violence,” said Sue Else, NNEDV’s President. “I urge communities to come together to stop the violence once and for all. Domestic violence affects all of us, and all of us must be part of the solution.”

Although the economy does not cause domestic violence, factors associated with a sour economy can increase the severity and frequency of abuse. At the same time, safety options and resources for survivors can be more limited.

“Especially on International Women’s Day, it is a testament to the selfless women who serve domestic violence survivors that so many victims reached out for services,” said Else. “Despite the economic downturn, it is truly amazing that victim advocates with ever-tightening budgets helped so many people in one day alone.”

Each year, NNEDV conducts a 24-hour survey of domestic violence programs across the country. The latest survey day was September 15, 2009, a day that saw two women miscarry as a result of domestic violence and seven babies were born in domestic violence shelters.

“Year after year, we see staggering numbers of victims and their children who experience traumatic abuse and find support from local domestic violence shelters and programs,” said Cindy Southworth, NNEDV’s Vice President of Development & Innovation. “We hope this survey will help people better understand domestic violence and inspire them to take action.”

“I am in awe of the grassroots victim advocates who served more than 65,000 victims in one day alone, but I’m saddened that more than 9,000 times the same day, limited resources forced these tireless advocates to say, ‘I’m sorry we can’t provide what you’re asking for, but we’ll do whatever we can to help,’” said Else. “We have come a long way, but these numbers remind us that we still have a long way to go.”

In 2009 – the project’s fourth year – 1,648 local domestic violence programs, or 83 percent, submitted their 24-hour counts for September 15. The full report is available online at <http://www.nnedv.org/census>.

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NNEDV, a 501(c)(3) organization, is a leading voice for domestic violence victims and their allies. Its members include the 56 state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence. It works closely with them to understand the needs of domestic violence victims and advocacy programs. NNEDV has been a premiere national organization advancing the movement against domestic violence for the past 15 years, after leading efforts among domestic violence advocates and survivors in urging Congress to pass the landmark Violence Against Women Act of 1994. To learn more about NNEDV, please visit www.nnedv.org.