



## Avon Program for Women & Justice at O'Connor House

The Avon Program for Women and Justice at O'Connor House ("Avon Program") was initiated through an Avon Foundation grant as part of the **SPEAK OUT AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN**. We encourage collaboration among policymakers, service providers, victims and the community to stop violence against women. We convene the community to catalyze effective solutions that will empower domestic violence victims and improve the systems that assist them. By leveraging leadership and resources, we build knowledge of this epidemic and capacity to increase awareness of it, with the goal of stopping domestic violence from occurring.

Domestic violence is pervasive and deadly. It is present in every culture, class, education and income level, ethnicity, sexual orientation and age. Nearly 49,000 victims called police in 2009. Every 15 seconds a woman is physically abused by her boyfriend or husband. Every 3 days an Arizonan loses his or her life as a result of domestic violence.

Abusive relationships have far-reaching consequences for victims and their children, including physical injury and emotional distress, depression, anxiety, suicide, and substance abuse. ***Domestic violence carries serious economic impacts for victims and their families. It is estimated that costs to employers exceed \$5.8 billion per year.***

The O'Connor House was founded in the name of former US Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor to be a center where *civil talk leads to civic action*. Justice O'Connor chose domestic violence to be the first issue addressed. Justice O'Connor believes that, to solve complex problems, stakeholders must be convened to discuss views openly and develop consensus as to the concrete steps that will advance solutions to empower victims and hold perpetrators accountable. In that spirit, the Avon Program convened the Domestic Violence Advisory Committee, Co-chaired by Kim Sterling and Lucia Howard to provide leadership on the following:

### The Avon Program convenes the community to:

#### ***Catalyze effective solutions to empower domestic violence victims and improve the systems that assist them***

- Increase legal services and advocacy for victims of domestic violence.
- Improve and streamline the protective order process including access to data across jurisdictions.
- Explore alternative solutions to domestic violence to augment the criminal justice system.

#### ***Leverage leadership and resources to enhance knowledge and build capacity***

- Maximize public and private funding to increase the capacity to combat domestic violence.
- Support cross-disciplinary training of professionals who assist victims of domestic violence.
- Marshall opinion leaders and the media to make eliminating domestic violence a priority among policymakers.

#### ***Raise awareness about the myths and facts regarding domestic violence to prevent it from occurring***

- Implement a **SPEAK OUT AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** Poster Campaign with a goal of reaching 1 million people.
- Initiate a national journalism award to highlight excellent reporting in the media.
- Build a web site to inform the community about the Avon Program.

*For further information contact:*

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