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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Women's Center Observes Domestic Violence Awareness Month

National Week of Action is celebrated by the City of Waukesha Mayor and Parks & Recreation Department to highlight resources for those affected by domestic violence

WAUKESHA, Wis. – During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Mayor's office and the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department will display purple lights to raise awareness for National Week of Action, bringing attention to an issue that affects nearly 1 in 4 individuals in Waukesha County. The Women's Center is facilitating additional activities and a social media campaign to remember homicide victims, honor survivors, and raise awareness of The Women's Center's programs.

Running from Sunday, October 16th through Saturday, October 22nd, Domestic Violence Awareness Month's National Week of Action will kick off on October 17th at 7 pm in Cutler Park, Waukesha, with a press conference featuring comments from Mayor Shawn Reilly and District Attorney Susan Opper about the effects of domestic violence. The Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department will illuminate the Neumann Lighted Water Dome at Youmans Park and the Les Paul Pavilion at Cutler Park with purple lights for the week.

"On average, 20 people per minute are victimized by an intimate partner, which includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse," The Women's Center's Executive Director Angela Mancuso said. "As a community, we must act collectively to help prevent domestic abuse before it starts and provide support to the women, men and children traumatized by this senseless crime," adds Mancuso.

The Women's Center's encourages the community to become involved through various activities, including:

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10/16: *Share a Statistic Sunday* asks participants to post domestic violence statistics provided by The Women's Center to their Facebook timeline or Twitter account;

10/17: *Educate Monday* encourages people learn about the issue and the work of The Women's Center at the kick-off event with Mayor Reilly;

10/18: *Get Involved Tuesday* encourages volunteer involvement with the agency;

10/19: *Advocate Wednesday* encourages participants to change their profile picture for the day to the agency's Domestic Violence Awareness Month graphic;

10/20: *#PurpleThursday* asks individuals to wear purple;

10/21: *Fact Friday* encourages people to follow The Women's Center on Facebook and Twitter, where various myth vs. reality posts will be featured throughout the day to help dispel misconceptions about domestic violence; and

10/22: *#Shout-out-Saturday* honors The Women's Center's Founding Mothers' contribution to the Waukesha community.

Individuals can access The Women's Center's Facebook page at facebook.com/thewomenscenterinc to learn more about the daily events.

Throughout the month of October, full-sized purple silhouettes are also displayed on the grounds of The Women's Center to honor 43 victims who were killed by their abuser in Waukesha County since 1992.

Domestic violence continues to be an underreported crime, and the reality is that the public rarely hears about it unless it results in a homicide. Last year alone the Waukesha District Attorney's office reviewed on average 85 adult domestic violence cases each month. People of all cultures, races, occupations, income levels, and ages are victimized – by husbands, wives, boyfriends, girlfriends, fathers, mothers, and partners. Approximately one-third of abusers are well respected in their jobs and communities, which includes teachers, doctors, engineers, psychologists, lawyers, ministers, and business executives.

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's recent domestic violence homicide report indicates the number of deaths in 2015 are some of the highest since Wisconsin began tracking this crime, with the study stating the preliminary count for 2016 domestic violence homicides as significantly elevated.

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As The Women's Center enters their 40th year in 2017, they continue to be the only agency in Waukesha County providing programming for adults and children experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, abuse and trafficking.

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Founded in 1977, The Women's Center serves women and children who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, abuse and trafficking.

The Women's Center offers free and comprehensive services including domestic violence, sexual assault, and abuse counseling, an emergency domestic violence shelter, a 24-hour hotline, free on-site child care, legal advocacy, transitional living, and life skills programming that includes employment, parenting and grandparents support groups, educational forums and advocacy.

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