

MINUTES



Kings Partnership
for Prevention

General Meeting

October 15, 2020 1:00pm-3:00pm, via Zoom

Welcome and Introductions

- 78 people plugged in for the online Zoom meeting

Announcements

Karina Casarez, *KPPFP Office Administrator*

- Kings County 2020 Virtual Prevention Awards
 - It's that time of the year again to celebrate the incredible people, organizations, and hard work throughout our community! The Kings County 2020 Prevention Awards is an incredible opportunity to showcase the great work you are doing! Kings Partnership for Prevention invites you to nominate outstanding programs and individuals in the following categories for this year's annual Kings County Prevention Awards to be held virtually on December 3, 2020. WE NEED YOUR NOMINATIONS! Please review the criteria for each of the categories and submit nominations for your own programs, other community organizations, yourself, or other individuals. We ask that you provide contact information for the nominees, as we will send them an invitation to the event to be formally recognized. You can fill out the nomination form [here](#). Nominations will close Monday November 16th.

Domestic Violence & COVID-19 Panel

Keith Fagundes, *Kings County District Attorney*

Michelle Kubik, *Kings County Deputy District Attorney*

Have DV cases in Kings County increased since the pandemic began? If so can you share any Kings County statistics related to the increase?

Yes. Since March 2020, in Kings County, reports of domestic violence rose by 23.8% as compared to the 6 months proceeding. Reports of violations of restraining orders rose by 33.7%

Do you think COVID has affected those currently in an abusive relationship from leaving or seeking help?

A: Yes, domestic violence hinges on the concept of power and control. It's a cycle of coercive control that is enforced through emotional, psychological, and financial abuse reinforced by the physical acts of violence. Isolation is a well known tactic for abusers seeking control. The fear of the pandemic and getting

COVID-19, spending more time at home, and business closures creates the “perfect storm” to allow for more control and more isolation. It enables abusers to keep their victims under close watch. Friends, families, and coworkers often provide that support or that empowerment to break free from an abusive relationship and the physical distancing weakens those important social relationships and connections causing a feeling of further isolation and making it less likely for a victim to seek support. The added stress of finding childcare, experiencing job loss, and financial strains further intensifies that problem and causes more tension in the relationship and in the family unit causing more barriers for their plan to escape. Business restrictions also apply to domestic violence shelters and other help centers making physical access to resources more limited than they were before.

Vicki, Kings County District Attorney Investigator

If Domestic Violence is suspected, who do we report it to?

A: Best place to report domestic violence is your local law enforcement agency, whether it's the Sheriff's Department or police department. If you're concerned about not being able to get out of the home, contact a family member or friend that can report it for you. Investigators can then come to you to help you. People can ask to meet away from the home at a certain time when they know that their abuser will be away/busy. They will take measures to meet with the victim away from the abuser and get the victim the help they need.

Would you investigate the crime any differently if it were a male victim versus a female victim?

No, a victim of any crime is a victim regardless of gender. The line of questioning and the resources provided are the same for male or female victims.

*Luz, Tribal Social Service Director,
Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut
Tribe*

In your opinion are there signs that someone is a victim of domestic violence? What should family and or community be aware of?

Notice the isolation or increase of isolation. During COVID, it's easier for the perpetrator of the crime to isolate the victim. Be aware of rare injuries/bruises on the wrist or neck. Look out for injuries and stories that don't go along with the injuries. There are also a lot of mental health symptoms. Depression, crying spells, coping mechanisms that involve drugs and/or alcohol is also a sign. In current times where we all have to be in doors, one sign could be rare postings- if they rarely post on social media or the posts seem sad/depressing. *Check on a friend*.

Lisa, *Domestic Violence Victim Advocate II,*
Kings County District Attorney Victim Witness

How has the pandemic affected your work with domestic violence victims? How will that look moving forward?

Since the closure, it has been difficult to speak to the victims in person due to social distancing. The front lobby of the office also had to be closed. The communication has been primarily by phone or email. Although it's difficult not speaking to the victims face to face, the phone calls have brought on a new light to communication. Victims have realized how easy it is to pick up the phone and call and so she has noticed a large influx of phone calls. Over the phone, the victims seem to be able to open up more, which was something that was not expected.

Do you think the impacts of COVID will continue or do you think we will get "back to business" as usual?

Hoping to "get back to business as usual" but with everyone in the office and the changes they've made, they've been able to adapt and reach their victims and that's the most important thing. The victims have been very patient and understanding about that.

What resources are available for domestic violence victims in Kings County? Are those services limited to specific populations i.e. women and children only, men

One of the most common resources is Kings Community Action Organization which has assisted in getting shelter. Also helps with restraining orders, child care, food pantry. Central California Legal Services assists with domestic violence restraining orders, housing issues in terms of renting, utility bill issues, employment rights, SSI and food stamps, citizenship, and senior community (power of attorney and wills). The Salvation Army for utility bills, rent, food pantry. HSA for employment training, welfare to work, housing, CalFresh, Medi-Cal. The VAWA unit, Deputy District Attorney, and the investigators. Family Law Facilitator which does legal help. Kings United Way 2-1-1. The child abduction unit can help with child custody. One of the number one reasons victims don't leave their abusers is in regards to the fear of losing their child or not knowing where their child will go. Central la Familia for immigration assistance, visa, VAWA visa. The Housing Authority. Local police departments. California Victims Compensation Board. Equine therapy has been wonderful for victims and their children. It is more like family therapy.

No, for the most part, these resources are not limited due to gender or age. There are shelters for men and you don't need to have children for all these services.

In your opinion what is the greatest need for domestic violence victims in Kings County?

Safety is one of the biggest obstacles. A safe place to go to and a safe place to stay. This is usually a huge concern for children involved. Legal services are also a concern, especially in regards to child concern. Jobs and financial security is also a concern. The abuser is usually the “breadwinner” of the family. Mental health is also a need.

Stacy, *Domestic Violence Survivor*

What’s the best advice to give to take a stand against domestic violence?

No one is alone. We are survivors and with the right resources and people, there will be a change with the support. Even when you feel like you want to give up- don’t. Push yourself. Push yourself and allow the people who want to help you help you.

What can the community do to be supportive?

Check in on the survivor and see how they’re doing and how they’re holding up. Resources of getting families and victims together and doing activities.

How did you know where to go in the community for assistance and was it helpful?

She found resources from the Kings County Human Resources department with hotel vouchers and shelter. Then she found the Victim Advocate who has been with her the whole way. She was told she’s not alone. She was able to be sheltered in a hotel up to 30 days and with the resources that were given to her by Lisa, she was able to be sheltered in a safe house. It took ease off her mind that no one would hurt her or her children.

In your opinion can an abuser change?

In her case, she believes no. She believes an individual can if they choose to. The effort needs to come from the individual and only that individual can choose to do so.

Where do you receive the support you need during this difficult time? Family, friends, counselor, or other?

Lisa, the Victim Advocate.

Bernadette, *Domestic Violence Survivor*

How can we take a stand against domestic violence? How can we as a community be supportive?

Having resources available and letting people know of where/how to find them. One of the main questions people ask is: “how much does it cost?” In this situation, people are usually trying to get out fast and don’t have the funds to pay for the help. Having a friendly, caring, supportive voice that is there for you. Sometimes it’s easier to talk to a “stranger” whereas people you know may have

expectations of you. Having the advocate immediately there to help was her ultimate resource to leaving the relationship.

What would you consider to be your greatest professional resource as a survivor of domestic violence?

The Victim Advocate. Not only did the advocate reach out and constantly check on her and keep her updated on how the case was going, but also let her know of all the therapy and counseling resources that are available. Having the advocate makes her feel more aware of what's going on.

Has the COVID-19 experience affected you getting closure with the case? What do you think we should be doing to better help victims gain closure and move on?

COVID did not have a big impact on her case because it was moving along before the pandemic. But the case may be going back to trial and those proceedings will be affected due to COVID due to social distancing measures.

In your opinion can an abuser change?

She likes to be optimistic and believe that anybody can change. However, she doesn't believe ALL abusers can change. Believes that some may have the potential to do so but that also relates to the resources they have available to them. If they have enablers that tell them it's not their fault, those abusers may not be able to change. There are abusers who may have been under the influence but may not use or be under the influence now and so are in a different mindset and may not be in the same state of mind. Additionally, if the abuser has talked to someone, such as a therapist. She believes that unfortunately, there are some people who are stuck in their ways.

What's the best approach to take a stance against domestic violence?

Don't be afraid. She wasn't afraid for her life necessarily but more afraid of what the abuser could do to her friends and family. Was afraid that he would hurt them in order to hurt her. Let people around you know what's going on. No matter what other people say, ultimately, it's your life and your sense of safety at stake. Reaching out to a Victim Advocate and have them advise you to the steps. Ultimately, don't stay. If you have to get up, go to a hotel, go to a friend's house, do what you can to not stay in that situation.

What is one of the most rewarding things that you've experienced during this process or in the field of domestic violence?

Stacy- That she could survive and provide for herself and children and that she had somewhere to call home with all the resources and help.

Vicki- seeing a victim that is happy and in a safe place. When they know their abuser will not come back to hurt them. The victims that come out stronger and are able to tell you personally that they are stronger.

Luz- When they're able to start their life over without anxiety or pain and when they are allowed to gain their independence back and choose happiness for themselves.

Michelle- When you see that the victims are empowered and that they've successfully accessed the resources and have accepted the help. When the victim has become the provider for their family.

Lisa- To see a victim push through no matter the barriers.

Once a case is closed, do the resources end? What happens for survivors after?

Vicki- receive referrals from outside parties that want to continue to provide services for victims or family. (Counseling, treatment services, housing etc.)

Michelle- The relationships are maintained with victims forever. Victims are still available to victims after the case is closed.

Are their services available to people in abusive situations even if charges are not filed?

Yes, services are still available to any victim.

What are the services available at the Santa Rosa Rancheria for victims of crime in general?

Batter intervention collaborates with probation. Victims of Violence collaborates with outside agencies that work with their insurance. Immediately respond and find services that are culturally based. Provides assistance with financial aid. Working with other American tribes and what is working well with them. In the process of developing a hotline on the reservation.

Does it happen when you realize that with reports, the roles of the victim and abuser are actually reversed?

Yes, sometimes that happens. It's important to go back, look at the evidence, reinterview witnesses. It takes follow-up investigation.

Does the investigation ever really end?

No. Investigation continues through even the process of the jury trial

To Stacy: are you or your children receiving any type of therapy assistance? What's working for you or would you recommend any certain type of therapy for other victims?

She was looking for horseback riding therapy on her own but then Lisa showed her Circle T Ranch. The experience for her and her children is amazing. Also looking into family therapy.

- We want to acknowledge domestic violence survivors and bring awareness. There will be a paint night at Circle T Ranch for invited victims. The art will be displayed on October 30th from 10-2pm. It will be a pop-up outside “drop in” where art will be displayed and there will be refreshments available. Please come by and look at the art that these survivors created to help express their feelings of their victimization.

A list of resources discussed during this panel will be provided on the General Meeting landing page of the KPFP website

Roundtable Sharing

- Jiezl Westover: The Kings County Office of Education is proud to coordinate the 10th Annual Central California Truancy Summit. This event allows for opportunities to explore ways to address the root causes of truancy and chronic absenteeism. The Central California Truancy Summit is a well-attended forum featuring innovative ideas, experts, and resources ideal for those who are working to eliminate truancy and chronic absenteeism in California. The summit will feature expert speakers, panelists, training, and breakout sessions on strategies and opportunities to address the issues at the root of truancy and chronic absenteeism. This is a great opportunity for learning and networking between lawmakers, law enforcement, educators, school administrators, child welfare & attendance specialists, SARB coordinators, truant officers, behavioral health professionals, social workers working with children and families, substance abuse providers, and community-based organizations working with youth and families. The 10th Annual Central California Truancy Summit is set for **March 10th, 2021 through March 11th, 2021**. As a vendor, you are encouraged to advertise your business at a cost-free booth during the event. To ensure proper arrangements are made, please confirm attendance by **November 2, 2021**, by contacting Gen Almanzar genevieve.almanzar@kingscoe.org or Jiezl Westover jiezl.westover@kingscoe.org. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/15xWHWG5eiwyUCwopdIqzEnFLEjhE68D1/view?usp=sharing> -
- Ken Baird with Family Support Group: will have a meeting next Tuesday; if you know of someone who has a family member or is supporting a family member that suffers with a mental illness, they are here and actively meeting on Zoom. Go to Behavioral Health on how to contact and receive invitations to meetings.
- Alyssa Ravelo: Hello, Unido Por Salud team is currently recruiting high school youth to participate in art workshops and other activities. If they are interested, they can fill out the short form in this link: <https://www.flow.page/unidosporsalud> :) (aravelo@healthcollaborative.org)
- George: ACEs Aware initiative will have their Network of Care Session on November 18th from 9am-10:30am. You can find more about it [here](#). You can sign up and speak at one of the upcoming meetings (form is on the website).

- Lisa RochaDanks: CASA of Kings County - We are still recruiting for CASA Advocates and will be holding an Information Session via/Zoom on November 4, 2020. Please contact our office to register 559-587-9908 or mlemus@casakingsco.org
- Ivette Chaidez: Calling all educators, health professionals, first responders and community members who would like to advocate! Impact Teen Drivers is having an event Monday the 19th at noon to kick off Driver safety Week. Webinar. Registration link https://uso2web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYrfuGgrz8qHtXMLMWiiYkZorYoosohMroj?fbclid=IwAR3q4k_S3-WN9EVgEfb24nPcKVdvVVE5KNiDaU5jNyApDMqUZajAeuogEGs
- Alix: Tulare and Kings County Warmline 1-877-306-2413 is available 24/7; The Source LGBT+ Center is still hosting online support groups for the LGBT+ community email alix@thesourcegibt.org
- Erika Lopez: 211 Kings County Dial 211, visit search by text or Live Chat 211kingscounty.org, text your Zip Code to 898211 or 211 Intelliful. Turkey Trot <https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/Hanford/KingsUnitedWayTurkeyTrot?remMeAttempt=>
- Antoinette: The Human Services Agency has implemented flexibilities in the delivery of its safety-net programs, all while protecting the health and safety of the community to reduce risk of transmission. These measures will ensure that residents receive the support they need without delay. We hope you can attend the conference call so that we may share any updates, gaps in services, and resource needs and developing plans on returning to our “New Normal”. Hope to hear from you, if you are not able to attend please email me your updates. (559) 852-2020 Participation Code 220110#. The facilitator is Maria Rodriguez-Lopez and she can be reached at Maria.Rodriguez-Lopez@co.kings.ca.us if anyone has questions or needs information that was shared during the call or needs to provide her information. Will be held October 16 @ 2:30pm. Flyer of various rental and utility companies throughout the county can be found _____ A lot of conversations in regards to Pandemic EBT (Snap services aka. Food stamps). PEVT is a separate card for the normal EBT/CalFresh benefits. Providing assistance to families whose children are at school (March-June). Have not gotten full approval yet but if the government allows it, HSA will be providing it again.
- Winslow: WestCare is still accepting referrals and offering services in the office and through Telehealth. 559-584-8100

Meeting Adjourned

Workgroup Highlights

- Substance Use Prevention (First Wednesday, 9:00am-10:00am, via Zoom)
- HEAL (Healthy Eating/Active Living) (Second Wednesday, 1:30- 3:00pm, via Zoom)
- Kings County Mental Health Taskforce (Fourth Thursday, 9:00-10:30am)
- ACEs Network of Care Session (November 18th, 9:00am-10:30am)

Want to join one of our workgroups? Email Karina at kfpf.assistant@gmail.com and she will get you connected! Make sure your team is at the table!