

WEDNESDAY



DAILY TIMES-CALL

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Sources for domestic violence statistics

Violence in America goes deeper and comes closer to many families than we would like to admit. Domestic violence is America's dark little secret, thrust into prominence by media coverage of the O.J. Simpson case. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, a woman is battered by her husband or boyfriend in this country every 15 seconds, making domestic violence America's most common — but least reported — crime. In a T-C Line call last week, a reader wanted clarification of information shared by other writers during the Men's White Ribbon Campaign, and here are sources of some statistics cited:

■ Nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) report being physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner at some point in their lives. — Commonwealth Fund survey (1999).

■ It is estimated that 8.8 million children witness domestic violence every year. — U.S. Department of Justice (March 2005).

■ In 92 percent of domestic violence incidents, crimes are committed by men against women. — U.S. Department of Justice (January 2004).

■ Homicide is the second leading cause of death among pregnant women. — American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 95 (March 2005).

■ Family violence costs the nation between \$5 to \$10 billion annually in medical expenses, police and

court costs, shelters and foster care, sick leave, absenteeism and non-productivity. — Medical News, American Medical Association (January 2002).

We understand the statistics are alarming, and we thank readers for giving us the opportunity to educate the public, which is crucial to prevention of abuse. We applaud participants of the White Ribbon Campaign and members of our community who are committed to ending violence. We also invite readers to log onto our Web site www.safe-shelterofstvrain.org for more information about domestic violence or call our business line at 303-772-0432 to speak with an advocate directly to answer any more questions they may have.

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