

New Data Shows Trauma and Systemic Inequities among Root Causes of Domestic Violence

Written by End Domestic Abuse WI, Elise Buchbinder
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The Asha Project's new "Saving Our Sisters and Saving Ourselves (SOS)" campaign aims to decrease violence among Black women and offers trauma-informed support.

Milwaukee – The City of Milwaukee continues to experience increasing incidents of domestic violence (DV), intimate partner violence (IPV), and homicides related to DV/IPV. A new study from The Asha Project, an initiative with the state coalition End Domestic Abuse WI, recently found that trauma and systemic inequities, such as economic stress and financial challenges, are among key factors that lead Black men to commit acts against their female partners.

The study is part of the organization's Saving Our Sisters and Saving Ourselves (SOS) public awareness campaign, which focuses on reducing domestic and intimate partner violence and related homicides committed against Black women, who represent the largest group losing their lives. The campaign utilizes the universal distress signal "SOS" and social media messaging to alert the community of services and resources available for Black men who may be struggling with depression, anger, and anxiety in relationships as well as a history of trauma.

"The spikes in domestic violence and intimate partner violence are exacerbated by the multi-faceted effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that disproportionately impact Black Americans and other communities of color," said Antonia Drew Norton, Director of The Asha Project. "Our goal is to do more to effectively disrupt this cycle of violence towards Black women while also providing Black men with the mental health resources and support that they need."

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The SOS campaign is guided by Dr. William Oliver, a content expert researcher at the University of Indiana, who conducted focus groups with Black males in Milwaukee. The focus groups were crafted to enhance understanding of how men who reside in inner-city neighborhoods in Milwaukee view the causes, justifications, and consequences of domestic violence and community violence in neighborhoods experiencing the highest rates of fatal and non-fatal violence.

The full report can be found here: [SOS Campaign Report](#) . For more information on The Asha Project and to download the report visit, ashafamilyservices.org

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (End Abuse, www.endabusewi.org) is the leading voice for victims of domestic abuse in Wisconsin. At End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, we educate shelter and program volunteers and advocates, law enforcement, legislators, and community members to provide safety and support to survivors. We strive to shift Wisconsin from the attitudes and beliefs that cause domestic violence to values of mutual respect and equity, and we partner with communities in the effort to prevent and end domestic abuse. We encourage reporters to include the National Domestic Violence Hotline number [1-800-799-SAFE(7233)] in their stories for victims who need help. A list of local Wisconsin domestic violence victim service providers can be found at www.endabusewi.org/get-help