

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Contact:**

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### **The Hole in the Courthouse Ceiling**

In the lobby ceiling of the Eastland County Courthouse is a hole. It is high and small enough that unless a person were to look up, it would remain unnoticed. Once seen, it could easily be passed off as normal wear and tear of a historic building. However, it is actually a bullet hole and the last remaining sign of a domestic fatality that occurred within the Courthouse.

While details of that event are now mostly available through word of mouth from those who were there, this hole has not lost its significance because, although that tragedy unfolded nearly four decades ago, the physical and emotional impact of domestic violence is still something that impacts individual and community life in Eastland County today.

It can be easy to shrug off the statistics showing one in five women or one in ten men are impacted by domestic violence as a problem for bigger cities. However, what is not so easy to put aside are the local numbers from an agency providing services to those who choose to seek out help.

Last year, the Eastland County Crisis Center provided over 4,000 domestic violence services to men, women, and child victims of abuse. These victims came from all communities and crossed all traditional demographic lines. They sit in church pews, football bleachers, restaurant booths, or in the car behind you at the light. They bring you food, stand behind you in line at the bank, or maybe even wave at you from across the street. They are as much a part of this community as any other person. And yet, far too many suffer in silence- afraid of the embarrassment, shame, or even risk of future harm if they were to leave.

This month, all citizens of Eastland County are asked to join the Eastland County Crisis Center in a wide range of Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) activities to show support for those victims who have come forward or those who may be afraid to do so, that they are not forgotten. They are not to blame for the abuse. They can have hope.

The hole in the Courthouse ceiling may one day entirely disappear, but for now it serves as a reminder of how serious domestic violence can be.

### **Domestic Violence Awareness Month Activities:**

#### **October 1<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>: Paint One Purple at Serenity Escape**

Make an appointment with Felicia at Serenity Escape to get one fingernail painted purple and receive 10% of that day for your visit, plus be entered into a raffle to win free artwork with your next manicure or pedicure!

#### **October 2<sup>nd</sup>: Day of Unity**

Share DVAM posts showing support for victims on Facebook and Twitter (@eastlandcvac)

**October 10<sup>th</sup>: Candlelight Vigil & Memorial Service (Eastland County Courthouse- 6:30 pm)**

Stand together in recognition of those murdered as a result of domestic violence

**October 11<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>: Health Care Against Domestic Violence/EMH Toiletry Drive**

Drop off unused toiletry items at Eastland Memorial Hospital to help victims of domestic violence

**October 19<sup>th</sup>: Wear Purple Day**

Whether it is a shirt, tie, accessory, or entire outfit, show your support for DVAM by wearing purple. Pictures can be uploaded/shared online at @eastlandcvac and/or with the hashtag: #WEGOPURPLE

**October 22<sup>nd</sup>: Safe on Sunday**

Faith communities are affirming healthy relationships and safe families

**October 31<sup>st</sup>: Pledge To End DVAM**

Pledge to make a difference in the lives of domestic violence victims with a \$10 donation.

To learn more about the DVAM events scheduled for Eastland County, please contact Gena at 254.629.3223 or log onto the Eastland County Crisis Center website: [eastlandcrisis.org](http://eastlandcrisis.org). Events are also posted on Facebook & Twitter: @eastlandcvac. Eastland County Crisis Center services are provided free of charge and are available to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or child abuse by calling: 254.629.3223/888.686.3222.