

### Definition

We define domestic violence as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone. (US Dept. Of Justice)

### Zonta Clubs of SC support:

- The work of the ad hoc SC House Criminal Domestic Violence Reform Committee, which gathered testimony from victims, industry experts and law enforcement, to recommend new domestic / intimate partner violence laws and amendments to existing laws; and the work of the Governor's Regional Councils on Domestic Violence.
- The work of the Legislators who have drafted and introduced new and amended bills to change the mindset of perpetrators, protect victims, provide prosecutorial and investigative tools, and to ensure funding for victim provider services.
- The work of victim service providers to raise the standard of services and treatment, including Evidentiary Abuse Affidavit documentation capabilities, to enable victims to re-enter a life free of violence.
- The work of community institutions to create and build an environment free of violence for all residents, especially children and youth.

### Zonta Clubs of SC support laws and policies which:

- Give law enforcement the authority to make arrests without a warrant based on probable cause. Authorize law enforcement agencies to develop, adopt and implement written procedures for police response to domestic violence calls.
- Amend aggravated assault to include the attempt to strangle and suffocate, and the display of a firearm.
- Amend eviction to allow a victim but owner of property to leave the property without loss of title, and to allow a restraining-ordered eviction of the offender from the property immediately on reported incident.
- Allow victims to take a leave of absence without fear of losing their employment, and in special circumstance, allow victims to be eligible for a paid leave of absence.
- Extend the victims compensation fund to include victims of domestic violence, providing that the offender's loss of income affects the victim if the victim had been residing with, and receiving direct support from the offender at the time of the offender's arrest.
- Increase the protection of victims' personal information, including address and telephone number; provide for victims to change their telephone number free of charge.
- Address housing issues through policy on early termination of leases and protection from discrimination based on past status as a victim of domestic violence.
- Develop a statewide automated phone/text system, alerting victims to changes to the offender's detention or incarceration.
- Require that public schools provide staff and parents with information on dating violence and bullying, including warning signs and protocol for addressing suspected cases of abuse.
- Require schools to collect data on the number of incidents reported and the actions taken by school employees to assist victims of dating or domestic violence.
- Establish a One-Stop Center to provide resource & referral services, technical assistance, funding provisions for victim services, and restorative justice circles, and post hotline numbers.