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Media Contact: Angie Rosser
Phone: 304-965-3552
Email: ARosser@WVCADV.org

West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WVCADV) Launches Annual Statewide "Light in the Window" Public Awareness Campaign

Charleston, WV – Today, the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WVCADV – www.wvcadv.org) launched its annual statewide "Light in the Window" public awareness campaign in recognition of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Light in the Window campaign entails a visual display of purple-bulbed electric candles appearing in the windows of homes, businesses, government buildings, churches and campuses in communities across the state; each candle is accompanied by an informational display card providing details about the Light in the Window Campaign and the collective strength symbolized by the purple flames displayed in windows across West Virginia.

Each light displayed signifies a commitment from the people who reside or work in the respective home or business to support respectful relationships. Purple lights appearing across the state represent a unified stance that domestic violence is not acceptable in our neighborhoods, schools, workplaces and homes.

This marks the third year for the annual statewide event and participation continues to grow as WVCADV anticipates over 5,000 candles will be displayed in October 2010. WVCADV and its fourteen member programs throughout the state coordinate a variety of events to engage and educate multiple audiences, such as friends and family members of victims, the law enforcement community, government and public officials, health care providers, employers, teachers and students, among others.

The campaign also provides an opportunity for friends, families, communities, etc to discuss the context in which domestic violence occurs. Domestic violence is not limited to physical abuse; it encompasses numerous tactics that may include coercive behaviors to establish and maintain power and control, emotional and physiological manipulation, financial abuse, sexual assault, and threatening to harm children, other loved ones or the family pet.

"The Light in the Window campaign heightens awareness about the prevalence of domestic violence in our communities and it serves as a reminder that each person has a role in ending domestic violence," said Sue Julian, Team Coordinator of the WVCADV. "Whether you are included as part of a victim's support system or you are a community activist interested in social change, everyone has a responsibility in eliminating violence in the home – making every home a safe home." Julian added.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) evolved from the "Day of Unity" in October 1981 conceived by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. In October 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed and common themes of the awareness month continued through the decades: mourning those who have died because of domestic violence, celebrating those who survive, and connecting those who work to end violence.

To participate in this campaign, contact the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence at (304) 965-3552.

About the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WVCADV):
The West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence is committed to the elimination of personal and institutional violence against women, children, and men. By developing a strong network of shared resources and support, WVCADV provides safe space and quality service for victims of domestic violence, and works for systemic change to assure families' options for building lives free from violence.

About West Virginia's licensed domestic violence programs:
WVCADV consists of a network of fourteen licensed domestic violence programs that provide direct services to victims and their children in all of West Virginia's 55 counties. On any given day, over 500 women, children and men receive assistance from licensed domestic violence programs in West Virginia. Services can be accessed 24 hours a day by contacting the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE.

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