

For Immediate Release
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Domestic Violence Advocates and Allies Issue Wake Up Call After Recent Murder in Boston

In announcing the murder charges against Roger Paron for the September 4th homicide of his wife Victoria Paron, Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley underscored that “no one should have to live in fear of an intimate partner.” Domestic violence advocates and allies in Massachusetts echoed this pronouncement and outlined a few critical steps to help save people’s lives. Starting with learning more about the issue, everyone has a role to play in helping to end domestic violence, including related homicides.

Victoria Paron is the 22nd victim of domestic violence homicides in Massachusetts since January 1, 2010 according to Jane Doe Inc. Mary R. Lauby, Executive Director of Jane Doe Inc. stated, “Victoria’s murder is an urgent call for people to recognize that domestic violence homicides are by and large predictable and therefore preventable with appropriate action.”

Deborah Collins-Gousby, Co-Executive Director, Casa Myrna Vazquez, Inc., explained, “This tragedy is a stark reminder that abusive and controlling relationships can affect any one of our friends, family members, co-workers or neighbors. If you’re concerned about someone you know and aren’t sure how to help, call our SafeLink hotline at 877-785-2020. We’ll provide information and connect you to resources in your community.”

Connecting to domestic violence programs is one of the most protective factors against domestic violence and domestic violence homicide. Advocates are trained to help victims consider their best options for safety, navigate the criminal justice, housing and services systems and provide support along this journey.

“In the face of this tragedy and the trauma surrounding it, Partner Agencies at the Family Justice Center remain resolute, alongside community members, in their efforts to end family violence. This incident is a painful reminder of the need to talk far more openly about issues of family violence with those around us,” added Anne Marie Delaney, Director, Family Justice Center a project of the Boston Public Health Commission.

Oftentimes neighbors who are interviewed after a homicide express shock and offer shallow impressions of the perpetrator and victim that reinforce misconceptions about who is affected by domestic violence. Groups such as Close to Home in Dorchester encourage neighbors to learn more about the issue and break the silence that isolates victims and allows the violence to continue unchecked.

Delaney outlined five things that every group agrees can make a difference in helping family members friends, coworkers and neighbors who are in abusive relationships:

Five things someone can tell an adult victim of family violence: 1) I am afraid for your safety. 2) I'm afraid for the safety of your children. 3) You do not deserve to be treated like this. 4) There is help available. 5) I'm here for you. Delaney noted that the complexity of these situations also require that one remain ready to offer words of encouragement and support no matter how many times it may take in order for there to be an end the family violence and abuse.

If someone is concerned for their own safety or someone they know, they can find information and links to local and national resources on the Jane Doe Inc. website at www.janedoe.org.

To find help for someone who is being violent or abusive toward a partner, please call the MA Dept of Public Health at 617-624-5497.

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