

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH

AWARENESS - SERVICES - PREVENTION



Good News About the Fight to End Domestic Violence

Summer 2026

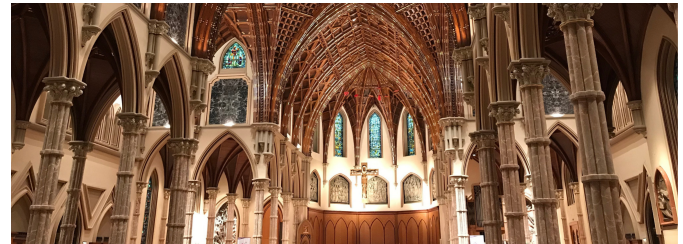
Standing With Survivors: DV Survivors' Mass Celebrates 11 Years

An Invitation from Father Charles Dahm DVO Founder and Board Chair



The 11th Annual Domestic Violence Survivors' Mass will bring our community together in prayer, support, and solidarity.

In 2016, we began celebrating an annual Mass at Holy Name Cathedral for victims and survivors of domestic violence and their children. We wanted to emphasize the Archdiocese of Chicago's support for those affected by abuse and mark Domestic Violence Awareness Month with a clear message that survivors are not alone.



11th Annual Domestic Violence Survivors' Mass

Holy Name Cathedral
735 N. State Street, Chicago, Illinois

Saturday, October 17, 2026 at 5:15pm CST

President: Father Charles Dahm, O.P.,

Founder and Board Chair of Domestic Violence Outreach



Each year, I have been grateful to welcome a survivor who courageously shares her testimony about the urgent need to end this abuse. Her words give voice to experiences too often hidden and strengthen our commitment to eradicating domestic violence.

In years past, representatives from throughout the Archdiocese attended together, often carrying signs bearing their parish names. Their presence was a powerful reminder that domestic violence affects every community and that each of us has a role in ending it. This year, I invite our DV ministries and all parishioners to join us and renew that visible show of support. The Mass can also be viewed online for those unable to attend, but nothing compares to the energy of being there in person.

This year's Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, October 17, at 5:15 p.m. at Holy Name Cathedral. Everyone is welcome, especially survivors, their children and families, and all who wish to stand with them in prayer and support.

Stronger Together: DV Outreach Groups Fall Network Meeting



Jan Burdulis will moderate a conversation with Outreach Group members and representatives from across DVO on Saturday, November 7th, at 9:00am via Zoom. Together, we will reflect on October events, exchange ideas, and look ahead to another round of Mini Grants, Outreach Group spotlights, upcoming events, and more ways DVO can support the network.

Registration is now open. Scan the QR code or go to bit.ly/DVONov7th





With Gratitude to John Monaco



DVO co-founder John Monaco retires after 15 years of extraordinary service, leaving a lasting legacy of leadership, growth, and prevention.

John Monaco was already retired from a successful business career when he heard Father Charles Dahm preach about domestic violence at his parish. The message moved him to act, but John did more than volunteer. He challenged Father Chuck to stop working as a “lone ranger” and build an organization that could carry the mission forward.

Together, they assembled the team that has guided DVO since 2011. John became a co-founder, a pillar of the organization, and the steady force behind much of its growth. He contributed

countless hours, took on critical administrative responsibilities, and helped transform DVO from a one-person effort into the thriving organization it is today. In DVO's early years, John trained parish volunteers to raise awareness about abuse and connect victims and survivors with help. He knew these conversations belonged in faith communities, where people often turn during times of crisis.

John also believed deeply that prevention was DVO's most important work. Awareness and services were essential, but the only true answer was to stop violence before it began. That conviction led John to foster a relationship with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and bring Dating Matters to Chicago Public Schools. He built partnerships with local organizations and schools, trained educators, and supported them as they implemented the program. Through the prevention work he championed, hundreds of young people gained skills to build healthier relationships, recognize unhealthy behaviors, and make safer choices.



John remained committed through DVO's transition from Dating Matters to HeaRT. Before retiring last month, he completed two final trainings for educators preparing to teach HeaRT this fall. John's retirement marks an important transition for DVO. It will take a team to carry forward the many responsibilities he shouldered, a fitting reflection of just how much he gave to the organization and its mission.

In his farewell message, John wrote, “I will always treasure the relationships, accomplishments, and memories we created together.” DVO will treasure them too. As Father Chuck shared, “We all owe John our heartfelt thanks.” John, thank you for challenging DVO to grow, giving so much of yourself to its mission, and ensuring prevention remains central to its future. We wish you good health, well-earned rest, and more time to enjoy retirement.



Welcoming New Board Members

DVO is pleased to welcome Angie Neuman and Michelle Hranka to our Board of Directors.



Angela Neuman

Angie brings more than 40 years of banking experience and currently serves as a vice president and advance practice banker with U.S. Bank Wealth Management. She also has a long history of community service, including financial literacy education and volunteer work supporting families throughout Chicagoland. Angie is especially drawn to DVO's work bringing conversations about domestic violence into trusted community spaces and preventing violence through education.



Michelle Hranka

Michelle is a licensed attorney with experience in corporate law as well as early professional work with victims of violence in the nonprofit and criminal justice systems. She brings a thoughtful and compassionate perspective, along with a strong understanding of the complex challenges facing individuals and families affected by violence.

Both are already representing DVO at events, sharing our work, and building new community connections. We are excited to have Angie and Michelle on board and grateful for the energy, leadership, and commitment they are bringing to DVO.

Back to School with HeaRT



DVO is helping middle school students build the skills they need for safe, healthy relationships before violence begins.

As students return to the classroom, DVO is beginning an exciting new chapter in our prevention work. This year, we are bringing the Healthy Relationships Toolkit (HeaRT) to more schools throughout Chicagoland.

Developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HeaRT builds on Dating Matters, which DVO has supported for years. The curriculum teaches middle school students about healthy communication, boundaries, consent, warning signs, and digital safety. It equips young people with the tools to navigate friendships, dating, and online interactions before harmful patterns take hold.

More Than A Curriculum

DVO trains educators to lead HeaRT in their schools, allowing students to learn from a trusted adult who remains available and can offer the program year after year. We provide free virtual and in-person training, coaching, ongoing materials and support, professional development hours, and compensation for participating educators.

Parents Take HeaRT

Caregivers can complete this free online program at their own pace, either alongside a student taking HeaRT or on their own. DVO is working hard to spread the word to parents at school and family events across the communities we serve.

THE MARY KAY FAMILY
FOUNDATION

Expanding HeaRT's Reach

We are grateful to the new Chicago Public Schools educators who dedicated part of their summer break to training with DVO. Now, we are building the partnerships needed to bring HeaRT to more schools throughout the suburbs.

As a new member of the West Suburban Chamber of Commerce and Industry, DVO introduced HeaRT to more than 100 educators and administrators at the Chamber's 65th Annual New Teachers Breakfast. In partnership with the Lyons Township Mental Health Commission, we're offering free, in-person educator training on September 26. **Contact us to join this or a future training!**

Support from the Mary Kay Family Foundation, our 2026 HeaRT Curriculum Sponsor, and funds raised at DVO Family Fun Night allow us to keep the program free for schools this year. Removing the cost makes it much easier for schools to say yes.

Our vision is for HeaRT to become a regular part of middle school education throughout Illinois. Each new school helps us reach young people earlier and prevent violence before it begins. To learn more or help bring HeaRT to your school or community, scan the QR code or visit DVOHeart.org.



Meet the Team Behind HeaRT

Meet the small but mighty team leading the growth of DVO's prevention work.



Alexandria Zuck, Prevention Program Director

Alex brings extensive nonprofit leadership, community building, and program development experience. A longtime La Grange Park resident, she is passionate about expanding access to prevention education in the western suburbs.

DVO is actively hiring HeaRT Coaches. Prevention professionals interested in joining our team can contact heart@domesticviolenceoutreach.org.

Jessica De La Cruz, HeaRT Coach

Jessica brings more than five years of violence prevention experience in Chicago Public Schools and now guides school staff as they implement HeaRT.

Sarah Gannon, HeaRT Coach and Trainer

Sarah has more than a decade of experience in health and relationship education, educator training, coaching, and program evaluation.





Mark Your Calendar: DVO This Fall

Connect, learn, and get involved during Domestic Violence Awareness Month and throughout the fall.

September

14th, 8:30-10:30am: Movers & Shakers Breakfast: Domestic and Sexual Abuse, with DVO on panel, Countryside

16th, 7:30-9am: DVO at the HCBA Membership Breakfast, Ruffled Feathers Golf Club, Lemont

23rd, 5-9pm: DVO Presentation and Discussion, Lemont Junior Woman's Club

26th, 9am-4pm: In-Person HearT Educator Training, Countryside

October

6th, 6pm: Domestic Violence Candlelight Walk and Panel Discussion, St. Gianna Church to Saint Xavier University

10th, 9:30-11:30am: DV Awareness Walk, St. Katharine Drexel & Black Catholic Women Say No to Domestic Violence

11th, 12:30pm: Father Charles Dahm Preaches on DV, Queen of Apostles Spanish Mass at Queen of Angels Church

12th, 6pm: DV Outreach Ministry Interest Meeting, Queen of Apostles Parish Center

13th, 7-9pm: Trivia Night and DVO Raffle, Hop District Community Brewing Co., La Grange Park

14th, 6pm: DV Panel Discussion, Queen of Apostles Parish Center

15th, 5-7pm: 'Pause Prom Resource Fair, DVO Table, Countryside

16th, 4:30-5:30pm: **16th, 4-5 pm:** Healthy Friendships Story/Craft, with DVO Raffle, Three Stories Bookstore, Lemont

17th, 10 am-2pm: DV Awareness Walk, Queen of Apostles and Welles Park

17th, 5:15pm: 11th Annual Domestic Violence Survivors' Mass, Holy Name Cathedral

18th, 7:30, 9 and 11am: Fr. Chuck Dahm Preaches on DV, Holy Family Parish, Inverness

24th: St. Padre Pio DV Awareness Event, after all Masses, St. Padre Pio DV Ministry

30th, 4-6:30pm: Haunted Trolley with DVO Table and Raffle, La Grange Park

November

7th, 9am: Stronger Together: DV Outreach Groups Fall Network Meeting, Zoom

December

4th, 5-8pm: Light Up for HearT, Brookfield Zoo Lights, Savannah Ballroom



Domestic Violence Outreach Team

Shannon Medic Young, Executive Director, shannon@domesticviolenceoutreach.org

Board of Directors

Father Charles Dahm, O.P., Board Chairman

Jan Burdulis, Secretary

Pam Davis

Michelle Hranka

Angie Neuman

Deb Panos, Development

Annie Ryder, Communications Director

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Valerie Yokie, St. Raymond's

Deborah Hammond

Bernita Johnson, St. Katharine Drexel

Maureen Farrell, Public Policy

Patricia Broderick

Jessica George, Brand Manager

Alexandria Zuck

Believe in Our Mission? Want to Do More?

DVO is growing and looking for passionate, committed people to join our Board of Directors, Advisory Council, committees, volunteer team, and prevention team. If interested, contact Shannon.

Thank You for Your Generous Support

Your generosity helps DVO continue this critical work. Donate through our website or scan the QR codes to give through Zelle or Venmo. You can also use Zelle at donate@domesticviolenceoutreach.org or Venmo at @domesticviolenceoutreach.org.

Checks can be mailed to Fr. Chuck Dahm, O.P. at 1914 S. Ashland Avenue, Chicago IL 60608.

For information about stock transfers, IRA rollovers, or including DVO in your will or living trust, contact Naomi Gutierrez at naomi@domesticviolenceoutreach.org.

**DVO
Website**



Zelle



Venmo

