

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH

AWARENESS - SERVICES - PREVENTION



Good News About the Fight to End Domestic Violence

Spring 2026

A Note from Shannon: Reflecting on Our Annual Benefit Gala

Our Annual Benefit Gala this spring was a powerful reminder of what this community makes possible. More than 180 supporters came together for a Sunday brunch—longtime champions of DVO and those just beginning their connection to this work.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to meet so many inspiring individuals who share a deep commitment to ending domestic violence. As someone new to this role, I especially valued the chance to share my own passion for this work, reflect on the experiences that brought me here, and speak about my hopes for DVO's future.

It was equally meaningful to hear from others. Kathleen Galvin spoke beautifully about the impact of parish ministries, and John Monaco highlighted the importance of reaching young people early through prevention education.

We also had the honor of celebrating Fr. Chuck Dahm's 89th birthday—a moment that reminded all of us of the compassion, leadership, and legacy that continue to guide this organization. Together, we reflected on the work ahead: expanding prevention to more middle schools, strengthening our

parish network, and growing our reach to include interfaith and community groups.

Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$37,418. Just as meaningful was the sense of momentum in the room—a reminder that this work belongs to all of us, and that together, we can continue to grow its impact.



SHANNON MEDIC YOUNG,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





Ending Violence Before It Begins: DVO Brings HeaRT to ISBE Conference

"To stop violence, we must begin with the education of young people."

When Pope Leo shared these words on International Women's Day, it was more than a statement—it was a call to action, one that echoes the very heart of DVO's mission. He spoke of the need for a stronger educational alliance—bringing together families, schools, parishes, and communities—and affirmed a truth at the center of our work: every person deserves dignity, respect, and relationships free from harm. Prevention must start early—and it must be intentional.

**"To stop violence,
we must begin with
the education
of young people."**

-Pope Leo XIV

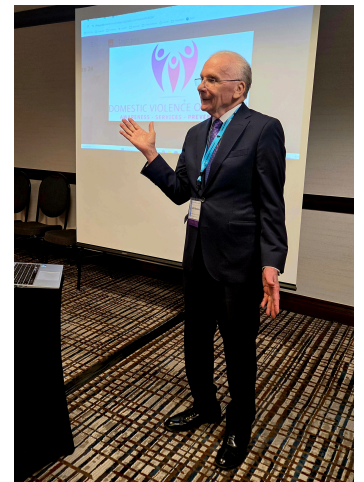


**SHANNON MEDIC YOUNG AND
JOHN MONACO AT ISBE SCHOOL
WELLNESS CONFERENCE.**

That urgency was on full display at the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) School Wellness Conference, a highly attended, statewide gathering of educators, administrators, and student support professionals committed to student well-being. This year's conference, held in Bloomington, reached capacity with a waiting list—making it especially meaningful that DVO was selected to present.

On May 5, John Monaco shared DVO's work and the impact of HeaRT (Healthy Relationships Toolkit), an evidence-based program developed by the CDC and designed specifically for middle school students. Building on the foundation of Dating Matters, HeaRT reflects the realities young people face today and equips them with the skills to recognize healthy and unhealthy relationship dynamics before patterns of abuse take hold. The response was powerful, affirming both the need for this work and the readiness of schools to embrace it.

A key new component of HeaRT is its parent program, now available online for anyone to access. This two-part training empowers parents and caregivers to reinforce healthy relationship skills at home and engage in meaningful conversations with their children—extending prevention beyond the classroom and into everyday life.



**JOHN MONACO, COO,
PRESENTS AT ISBE.**

As we work to expand HeaRT into more schools, we are also navigating an important transition. In addition to onboarding new partners, we are supporting our existing schools as they shift from Dating Matters to the updated HeaRT model. At the same time, printed program materials are no longer provided by the CDC at no cost.



 [Learn More](#)

We are committed to finding the most effective path forward—but doing so will require additional time and resources. If you believe in this work, we encourage you to help us expand HeaRT by connecting us with schools in your community, supporting our efforts, or joining us at our upcoming DVO Family Fun Night with the Chicago Dogs (pg. 4), where we are raising funds to grow this critical program.



Connecting Across Our Parish Network (May 16)

Join us for our upcoming *Stronger Together: DVO Parish Network Gathering* on Saturday, May 16 at 9:00 AM via Zoom. This gathering is an opportunity to connect across our network, share ideas, and learn from the meaningful work happening in parishes and communities.

All are welcome—whether you are part of a DV ministry, interested in starting one, or simply want to learn more about DVO's work. Representatives from several parishes will share recent activities and achievements, offering inspiration and practical ideas for others.

REGISTER



We'll also introduce our Parish Spotlight of the Month program, share key takeaways from our network-wide survey, and announce our new Mini Grant program. DVO team and board members will provide updates on future plans, upcoming opportunities for collaboration, and ways DVO can continue to support your efforts. Time will be set aside for questions, shared challenges, and resource sharing.



Growing Stronger Together: DVO Launches Mini Grant Program

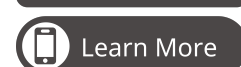
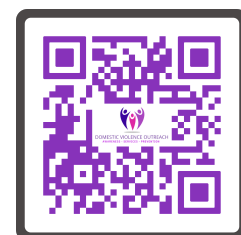
DVO is excited to introduce a new Mini Grant program designed to strengthen parish-based domestic violence ministries and expand their reach within local communities. These small but impactful grants will support awareness efforts, educational programming, and initiatives that create safer, more supportive environments for those affected by domestic violence.

Our parish partners are already doing incredible work—often with limited time and resources. Many have the vision and commitment to do more but need additional support to extend their reach. This program is designed to help make that possible.

Mini Grants may be used for a variety of efforts, including hosting awareness events, bringing in guest speakers, developing resource materials, or launching new ministry initiatives. They can also support collaboration between parishes, helping to build stronger networks and share best practices.

Applications will open May 16, with grant recipients announced in late July. As we continue to grow, we hope this initiative will both strengthen existing ministries and invite new parishes, faith communities, and community groups to join this work.

By investing directly in local efforts, we are empowering communities to take an active role in our three pillars: Awareness • Services • Prevention.





Take Me Out to the Ballgame—For a Great Cause

Rally the family and grab your friends for DVO's second annual Family Fun Night with the Chicago Dogs Baseball Team on Saturday, June 13 at Impact Field in Rosemont, Illinois. We had so much fun last year, we're doing it again! The game begins at 6:00 PM— the atmosphere and food is great, and the mission is even better.

Tickets include game admission and access to our own private bullpen, along with a two-hour ballpark buffet, a Chicago Dogs hat, and a kids activity pack. Stay for fireworks after the game, and don't miss DVO throwing out the first pitch.

Proceeds will help expand our prevention program in middle schools—because the best way to end dating violence is to stop it before it begins. Come out, pitch in, and show your support. Sponsorships start at \$250—contact Shannon to get involved. Can't make it? Please consider making a donation at www.givebutter.com/DVOFamilyFunNight.



Pitching In for Violence Prevention:

DVO FAMILY FUN *Night*

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2026
IMPACT FIELD, ROSEMONT, IL

6:00PM GAME TIME



SCAN THE QR CODE OR GO TO:
GIVEBUTTER.COM/DVOFAMILYFUNNIGHT

QUESTIONS AND SPONSORSHIP INFO,
CONTACT SHANNON AT
SHANNON@DOMESTICVIOLENCEOUTREACH.ORG

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Deborah Hammond
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Maureen Farrell, Public Policy

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Thank You for Your Generous Support

Thank you for your generosity. We invite you to consider deepening your support for Domestic Violence Outreach (DVO). You may give by mail, through our website, via stock transfer or a rollover IRA, or by including DVO in your will or living trust. Securing DVO's future is critical for future generations. For more information or donation forms, visit DVO's website or contact Naomi Gutierrez at naomi@domesticviolenceoutreach.org. Donations may also be mailed to Fr. Charles W. Dahm, O.P., 1914 S. Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60608, or made by phone at 312-371-7752.