



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION TASK GROUP JANUARY 13, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was held via Zoom videoconference. Following introductions, Ariel Ruttenberg called the meeting to order at 10:35am.

IN ATTENDANCE

Dan Martin / Village of New Lenox, Ariel Ruttenberg / New Lenox Police Department, Jenny Guiney / Guardian Angel Community Services, Vickie Menard / The Living Room - Trinity Services, Inc., Jen Staros / The Living Room – Trinity Services, Inc., Olga Viano / New Lenox Community Park District, Marie Kress / The Mental Wellness Center of Manhattan, Amirrah Abou-Youssef / Family Violence Coordinating Council – 12th Judicial District, Jan Dombrowski / HERO, Jen Vujosevic / Lincoln Way Community High School District 210, Michelle Knierim / Uniquely You Behavioral Health, Nicole Suhm / Crisis Center for South Suburbia, Jennefer Hofferica / Nadine’s Blue Butterfly, Penny Eriks / Silver Cross Hospital, and Erin Hanrahan / Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes from the November 11, 2024 Task Group Meeting, which had been disseminated via email to Task Group members, were discussed. Amirrah Abou-Youssef made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Marie Kress. After no further discussion, the motion carried and the minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

“Teen Dating Violence: What You Should Know to Support and Help Prevent”

This event was scheduled for Tuesday, October 29, 2024 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm, via Zoom Videoconference. The event was cancelled because one of the speakers could not attend. The speakers were: Alicia Guerrero (mother of Briana Valle whose teenage daughter was killed in a domestic-related incident in Romeoville), Jenny Guiney, Groundwork Community Outreach Supervisor, Guardian Angel Community Services (who was going to lead a general discussion on teen dating violence and services offered), a law enforcement officer (possibly a school resource officer), and Marie Goulet, LCSW and Lead Social Worker for New Lenox School District #122 (who was going to provide a school perspective on resources, policies, social media, etc...).

A discussion was had regarding whether to re-schedule or move onto another event.

Following the discussion, it was decided that we WILL re-schedule this event. It was decided that the event will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 7:00pm to 8:30pm, via Zoom. The speakers, as noted above, will be Alicia Guerrero, Jenny Guiney and Marie Goulet. A law enforcement officer will NOT speak at this event.

This event will be held in support of Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

NEW BUSINESS

Speaker for the January 29, 2025 Coalition Meeting.

It was suggested that Magdalena Campos (Will County Government / HERO) would be a good guest speaker for the Coalition Meeting. Magdalena (“Maggie”) has lived experience and has lost a loved one to domestic violence. Jan Dombrowski advised that Maggie is currently in Florida, but upon her return Jan will ask her if she will speak.

Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month – February, 2025

“*Building Healthy Relationships with Ourselves and Others*” is an event that has been held in the past. This year “*Teen Dating Violence: What You Should Know to Support and Help Prevent*” will be held in support of this campaign.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month – April, 2025

“*Building and Supporting Healthy Relationships*” is an event that has been held in the past. Historically, Breann Fisher, Guardian Angel Community Services, was the featured speaker for this event. Jenny Guiney graciously offered to take over this role and also suggested other speakers that may be interested as well. It will likely be someone from the Sexual Assault Service Center.

A small planning team will be needed to plan this event as there will not be enough time between the task group meeting in March and a date in April for this event.

If a panel format is chosen, the following volunteered to speak:

1. Per Jenny Guiney, someone from Guardian Angel Community Services (Sexual Assault Service Center).
2. Penny Eriks / Silver Cross Hospital
3. Erin Hanrahan / Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital

Ariel will send an email to those who expressed interest on the Planning Team.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month – October, 2025

“*One Thing: Speak Up, Speak Out*” and “*Domestic Violence 101: Awareness, Prevention and Safety*” are events that have been held in the past. This was placed on the agenda as a placeholder so that members can start thinking of ideas to support this campaign.

In addition to our own event, Dan suggested that this group provide additional support for the “*Will County Take Back the Night*” event, that’s held annually in the month of October. Amirrah and Jenny are both on the planning team for this event, which will be held on October 23, 2025 – same time and location.

Jenny Guiney suggested that we should not overlook prevention activities for boys as well.

Other Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Activities

5K, Candlelight Bowl, Music / Entertainment, Rally / Vigil, collaborations with “Ladies Night Out” events were suggested as additional ideas that can be done to support domestic violence awareness.

GOOD OF THE ORDER / ORGANIZATION UPDATES

Nicole Suhm / Crisis Center for South Suburbia, spoke about a class that they offer called Domestic Violence 101. Nicole advised that the class can be held anywhere (or via Zoom). Nicole will have someone from Community Outreach contact Dan to see if something can be scheduled.

Erin Hanrahan / Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital, provided feedback regarding future events. Erin advised that we should be mindful of the number of presenters (panel) and the allotted time. For example, a 60-

minute program may be too short for 4 presenters. Sometimes presenters run long, which makes it difficult for presenters that follow as they will likely feel rushed.

Jan Dombrowski / HERO, advised that she texted Maggie and will be speaking to her today at 3:00pm regarding being the guest speaker at the January 29th Coalition Meeting.

Dan Martin / Village of New Lenox, advised that the March 26, 2025 New Lenox Safe Community Coalition Meeting will be held at Gatto's Restaurant in New Lenox. The meeting will begin at 10:30am and a luncheon will immediately follow.

NEXT COALITION MEETING

The next New Lenox Safe Community Coalition meeting will take place on **Wednesday, January 29, 2025 / 10:30am via Zoom Videoconference.**

NEXT TASK GROUP MEETING

The next meeting of the Domestic Violence Prevention Task Group will be **Monday, March 10, 2025 / 10:30am via Zoom videoconference.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:07am.

Domestic Violence Prevention Task Group

“To reduce physical injuries and deaths, and emotional injury and hardships, associated with domestic violence, through the establishment of collaborative partnerships and the implementation of educational programs, strategies and initiatives.”