



Women's Advocates

Breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

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Crisis Line: [651-227-8284](tel:651-227-8284)

Did you know?

Topics included below are part of Women's Advocates' free education provided in the community. To request a presentation, [click here](#).

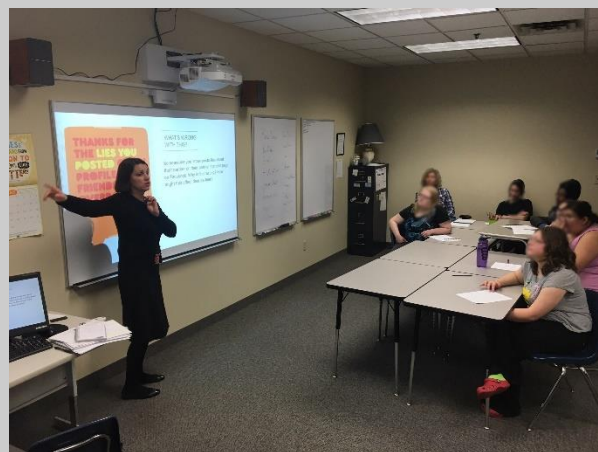
At the shelter

New Partnership - AccessAbility, Inc.

For domestic violence survivors, economic independence is frequently the determinant between violence and safety. Women who have recently left an abusive relationship face high barriers to employment, which is essential to empower survivors with the tools they need to independently support themselves and their families. We work to ensure our residents have as many resources as possible by helping them set and work toward goals for economic and housing stability.

Soon, Women's Advocates will launch a partnership with a local organization that serves individuals facing obstacles in finding jobs and community resources. AccessAbility, Inc.'s (AAI) mission is to provide opportunities for self-sufficiency to people with barriers to employment and community inclusion. AAI's services include basic adult education, job readiness training, and trial employment opportunities. Participants may also earn various workplace certifications, including ServSafe and OSHA.

Beginning in January, women staying at Women's Advocates can elect to take part in some or all of AAI's partnership opportunities as they continue on the



Kids, Consent, and the Holidays

The holidays are often a time when children are expected to hug and kiss relatives at family gatherings. However, some children may be uncomfortable being asked to engage in physical contact with a relative, especially if a child has experienced a form of abuse.

Questioning such expectations of holiday hugging can actually start a great conversation about consent - for example, are there other ways your children could acknowledge relatives or express affection

journey to independence. Residents will be eligible to work with AAI for up to 90 days to support their transition between emergency shelter and independent housing.

The first week of the program will include a job training and orientation, critical for some survivors who are gaining work experience for the first time. We look forward to this partnership in the new year!

Visit [Accessibility, Inc.'s website](#) to learn more about them!



How to Help this Holiday and Beyond!

Thank you to all generous supporters who have provided new loungewear and gifts to Women's Advocates! As we look forward to the new year, we seek community support to fulfill shelter and resident needs, including:

Target Gift Cards to help residents shop for personal holiday gifts for their families and fulfill immediate resident needs year-round.

AmazonSmile: When shopping online, all you have to do is start your shopping at <http://bit.ly/smileWA>, designate Women's Advocates as your charity of choice, and the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to us! Please bookmark the link for future use.

Volunteers: We are looking to schedule 1-2 volunteer groups each month to help with shelter-wide cleaning and yardwork projects. You can find our volunteer information and application [here](#).

Any questions about volunteering or donating gift cards can be sent to development@wadvocates.org.

beyond physical contact? Could this be a way to help your child understand that "No means no?" [This article](#) explores consent and holidays in further depth. Women's Advocates discusses consent and boundaries in every healthy relationships presentation it delivers to students.

Domestic Violence & the Holidays

Research on levels of domestic violence during the holidays is mixed. There is no national comprehensive study on domestic violence levels during the Christmas and New Years holidays. Some shelters report an uptick in hotline calls around the holidays, while others, including the National Domestic Violence Hotline, report a dramatic decrease in calls.

Despite the mixed research, it is certain that domestic violence does not stop for the holidays, and many victims experience additional stress and unique challenges, such as the need to put on a facade for family and friends. The stress and pain of abuse can also be compounded by the stress of traveling, family gatherings, and other holiday preparations. To learn more, including ways you can help shelters and survivors, [here's a helpful guide](#).

Volunteer Spotlight: Alpha Chi Omega

Women's Advocates and the University of Minnesota chapter of Alpha Chi Omega have had a long-standing relationship, continuing through this fall. Throughout the past few months, members of this organization have volunteered monthly at our shelter to provide arts and crafts activities for the children staying with us.

These volunteers have also spent a few dozen hours helping to assemble and distribute awareness materials about Women's Advocates and our 24/7 crisis line to 50 businesses throughout the Twin Cities area. These items will be essential for companies to have on-hand in case a client, shopper, or visitor in their local neighborhood is in need. If you would like to order crisis information materials or learn more about our education opportunities, [click here](#).

In-Kind Donations & Wish List

Questions about specific item donations can be sent to donations@wadvocates.org. When immediate needs arise, we post requests for those items on our [Facebook](#) page.

Our newly-created Amazon **Wish List** of new, essential needs is now available: <http://a.co/jkkHfvm>.

For the safety and privacy of our staff, shelter, and residents, *deliveries of donation items must be previously approved and scheduled in advance. Unscheduled deliveries will not be accepted.*

Lastly, a handful of students from Alpha Chi Omega spent an evening in early December with us, helping shelter residents decorate for the holidays. We're so thankful for these active and dedicated volunteers - thank you Alpha Chi Omega!

