



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

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Family. Home. Relationships. These are words that should evoke warm thoughts of love and security. This is why when crimes are perpetrated behind closed doors, within intimate relationships, the offense is egregious and unacceptable. As your District Attorney, I am committed to protecting children, prosecuting intimate violence crimes, and working diligently with our partners in the community to prevent domestic violence from occurring. Crimes committed within the sanctity of a relationship are reprehensible; therefore one of the first objectives I put into place upon assuming this office was to establish the Crimes Against Children Division. A team of highly trained prosecutors work closely with victim advocates, investigators, and counselors to ensure the unique needs of every child who is victimized are met throughout the investigation, prosecution, and the subsequent recovery.

The second component of my strategy for combating intimate violence is to establish the creation of the Enhanced Violence Against Women Prosecution Unit. The goal is to improve our response to violent crimes against women by focusing on the vertical prosecution of the defendant and heightening services for the victim. Our office has always been committed to aggressively prosecuting domestic violence defendants. However, I restructured of our personnel to form this dedicated unit of prosecutors in order to address the connectivity of the intolerable types of crimes perpetrated on the women of our community, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, and homicide. Traditionally prosecuting homicides has been considered separate from domestic violence, when in many cases the history and motivation for such a deplorable act is based in domestic violence dynamics. The worst possible outcome of an abusive relationship is death. As of April 2013, 37 percent of the 38 homicide cases in various stages of prosecution involve some form of domestic violence.

Although the Crimes Against Children Division and the Enhanced Violence Against Women Prosecution Unit are comprised of highly trained and specialized prosecutors, I want the community to understand that these two teams are serving one very basic concept: our homes, familial and romantic relationships, must exist without violence. Research shows us that boys who witness domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults. It is not uncommon for an adult parent who engages in violent acts with a spouse to also brutalize vulnerable children in the home as well.

Domestic violence affects individuals in every community, regardless of age, economic status, gender, race, religion, nationality or educational background. It's a very simple formula:

ABUSE + RELATIONSHIP = DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INCIDENT

Let's stand together and put an end to domestic violence. In the spirit of bringing the community together to take a stand, please join me October 12, 2013, 7:00 AM, at Mooney Grove Park for the Third Annual Justice Run. This run/walk honors Domestic Violence Awareness Month and proceeds will benefit Family Services of Tulare County and the Central California Family Crisis Center of Porterville. For more information, please contact 636-5461 or visit our website at <http://www.da-tulareco.org>. I look forward to seeing you there and please remember there are no silent crimes. Report domestic violence and let us help.

Tim Ward
District Attorney