



CONTACT THE
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Spotlight On Domestic Violence

*First Step Newsletter
A Program of
The Family Guidance Center*

THE MISSION OF FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER'S FIRST STEP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE NEEDED SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TO INCREASE THE COMMUNITY'S AWARENESS ABOUT THE PROBLEM.

Domestic Violence Does Not Stop At the Workplace

On March, 2, 2016, a horrifying scene took place at the McDonald's restaurant on Hwy 321 in Hickory. At 6 pm on March 2nd Richelle Lail, 22, and Cody Watts, 28, employees of McDonald's, met in the parking lot. Eric Terril Yount, 22, rammed the truck where Watts was sitting with his SUV. Lail confronted Yount and Yount then allegedly shot and killed her. Yount then began shooting into Watts' truck multiple times. Family Guidance Center's director, Anne Peele, learned that a child, Watt's son, was in the truck at the time of the shooting, but was not injured. Watts later died of his wounds. Yount fled the scene and stole a vehicle from a local car lot. Later that day Yount, who had no prior criminal record, turned himself in to police. At the time of this article, Yount's court date has been set for July 11th, 2016 and the state has announced it is seeking the death penalty.

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Richelle Lail, 22, mother of two
and
Cody Watts, 28
have lost their lives in what police are calling
"some kind of domestic dispute"



We celebrate all mothers and those who assume a mothering role on this special day. We pay special tribute to all mothers who lost their lives to domestic violence.

Important Advice From Moms

Staff members share the advice they received from their mother.

"The Lord never gives you more than you can handle." - Janice Morrow

"Practice the Golden Rule and to do unto others are you would have them do unto you."

- Helen Whisnant

"Don't marry for money." - Tom McNeely

"Always follow your heart and do what you know is right." - Kelli Clapper

ON THE INSIDE

DV at Work
Safety Planning
The Cost of DV at Work



Story continued from Page 1.

The full details have not been released, but police have said “they were treating this case as domestic in nature.” Police have not released the nature of the relationships between Yount, Lail, Watts, or Watt’s son who was in Watts’ truck at the time of the shooting.

At Family Guidance Center we have seen tragedies like this far too often. This time domestic violence did not happen behind closed doors. Two victims were shot at 6 pm when the restaurant was busy, the intersection was packed, and people were everywhere.

You can call us anonymously for yourself or a friend. We have worked with victims for months over the phone without ever knowing their name. We want to help in any way that we can.

Abuse Can Happen Anywhere.

On March 7th 2016, the Hickory Daily Record reached out to our director, Ann Peele for a commentary on the event. For details you can find the article [here](#). The latest posting to date, April 24th 2016, can be found [here](#).



Safety Planning

When victims of domestic violence end a relationship they are in incredible danger. It is vital to have a safety plan for your own protection. Loveisrespect.org offers an interactive safety plan at loveisrespect.org that takes into consideration the resources that you have available to you.

We understand if you are not ready to talk to us. That is your decision and we want to make good resources like Loveisrespect.org available to you. Helping victims of domestic violence is what we do.

If you or someone you know is in an abusive situation,

Call First Step: 828-228-1787

or

The Crisis Line: 828-228-1787



You are going to be safer in a public place, but that does not mean that you are protected. The tragedy our community suffered in March made us realize just how vulnerable we really are. We assist victims of domestic violence with creating safety plans for free. While the interactive plan is extremely useful, it cannot sit in front of you with empathy and experience.

The Cost of Domestic Violence in the Workplace

Domestic violence does not care about work schedules, responsibilities, your feelings, or the bottom line and, as a result, often costs victims their jobs and employers productive employees. Abusers can do any of the following to abuse a victim at work:

- ◇ Contact the victim repeatedly to check up on where they are, who they are with, and what they are doing
- ◇ Contact the victim's supervisor repeatedly to gain the victim's schedule, to check up on the victim to make sure they are really at work, or potentially spread malicious rumors in order to get the victim fired
- ◇ Monitor the victim's behavior by installing or hacking surveillance equipment and/or by encouraging co-workers to report on the victim's activities
- ◇ Showing up unannounced at the workplace in order to monitor what the victim is doing and the people they work with
- ◇ Show up at the workplace in order to start or continue a disagreement
- ◇ Prevent the victim from getting to work on time by sabotaging a victim's work clothes, hiding car keys, withholding money for transportation, and more in an effort to get the victim fired

Victims are often fired or asked to leave their jobs as a result of their partner's behaviors. Victims who do seek help by going through the court system may miss days of work. "Victims may need to take days off to appear in court, apply for a protection order or seek medical attention. But missing work can put victims of violence in peril of losing their job — at the exact time they desperately need a regular paycheck (1)." Victims who do not have an income may be forced to stay in an abusive relationship until they can save up enough money to leave.



Employers know that domestic violence does not stop at the door. Domestic Violence costs employers time and money in hiring, training, and replacing victims who quit, who are fired, or whose lives are taken by their abusers.

“Homicide is the second leading cause of injury death for women at work, according to the CDC, and intimate partners commit a significant percentage of those murders (1).”

Nearly 1 in four private industry establishments with over 1,000 employees “reported at least one incidence of domestic violence, including threats and assaults in the past year” in a 2006 study and yet “over 70 percent of United States workplaces do not have a formal program or policy that addresses workplace violence (2).”

Domestic Violence costs employers time and money and victims the resources they need to leave.

It's time more employers and co-workers know what to look for. Domestic violence affects all of us, no matter where we are.

1) When Domestic Violence Becomes A Workplace Issue. (2015), Retrieved from <http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

2) The Facts on the Workplace and Domestic Violence (n.d.). Retrieved April 2016 from <http://www.workplacesrespond.org/>