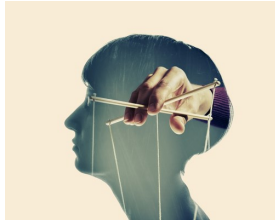


# July 2021

## Let Freedom Ring...or Not.

### Special Dates

- July 6 - Volunteer mtg. 3:30
- July 7 - Volunteer training starts
- July 7 - Looking Forward support group
- Oct. 2 - 5K— Shenandoah Co. Park



As we start into July it seems that our thoughts often turn to our celebration of the 4th of July as Independence Day. We are grateful for the freedom that this holiday commemorates for us and look forward to celebrating our independence with picnics and parties.

In our work with survivors of domestic and sexual violence here at Response, we are all too aware that many of our clients do not enjoy the same freedoms that most people do. Not because they are denied freedom by our country, but because they are denied freedom by their abusers. A common misconception is that abusers are individuals who deal with anger issues, when in reality, domestic violence almost always stems from the abuser's need for power and control over their partner.

Although most of us can easily picture an abused person with bruises, a black eye, or other injuries, we know that most intimate partner violence is not nearly as visible. Physical and sexual violence are common types of abuse, but there are other recognized forms of intimate partner violence: emotional, psychological, financial, and stalking. All forms of IPV include an element of coercive control and often intersect with each other, so it is difficult to separate the different forms.

Let's look at some examples of ways that abusers control their partners to get a better idea of how a survivor's freedom can be limited.

- \* **Constantly checking up on the partner** - recording mileage on the car; monitoring phone calls and texts; coming home unexpectedly; showing up at the workplace; insisting on regular text or call "check-ins".
- \* **Isolating the survivor** - asking the partner to spend more time with them and less time with family and friends; moving the partner away from a support system; relocating to a rural area; requiring permission for appointments and social activities; maintaining only one vehicle so that the partner stays home.
- \* **Controlling finances** - putting partner on an allowance; maintaining bank accounts in abuser's name only; causing the victim to lose a job by frequent calls at work or refusing to provide transportation; hiding money or accounts from the partner; threatening to evict the partner from the home.
- \* **Emotional abuse** - constant criticism; threatening to hurt themselves, partner, or loved ones if the survivor leaves; denying known facts to make partner doubt themselves; exhibiting unpredictable, angry outbursts; encouraging excessive drug or alcohol use.
- \* **Stalking of former partners** - leaving gifts or other items in the partner's car or home; numerous unwanted texts or phone calls; watching or following the survivor; sending secretly taken photos of the partner; hanging around the partner's workplace.

This July, let's remember our community members who might not enjoy the same level of freedom as we do. Thank you for supporting the work we do.

### Current Needs

- Kids' toothpaste
- Kids' shampoo
- Juice boxes
- Paper plates
- Aluminum foil

## Survivor Story

### Cori Bush



When we think of coercive control in abusive relationships, a survivor who recently has been speaking out about her own experience is Congresswoman Cori Bush. During an interview with the NY Times in January, Bush described how it is possible for an intelligent, independent person to become involved in a controlling, abusive relationship.

At the young age of 19, Bush thought that her new boyfriend was a devoted and loving partner. He provided the attention and romance that she craved at that time. As a preschool employee who was financially insecure, Bush fell in love with her boyfriend's generosity and loved the fact that he spoiled her and her family.

It didn't take long until his attention turned into a way to control Bush; for instance, he would answer her phone on the pretext of wanting to talk to her friends, but it soon became a way to screen her calls. He had rules about when or how she could wash dishes or use the stove.

Eventually his behavior became physically violent, to the point that he once shot at her with a gun. When she tried to end the relationship, he pinched her, removing skin and flesh, cut her with knives, and threatened to hurt himself; she was afraid to leave because of his violence. Each time this happened her boyfriend would become sweet and loving again, starting the cycle all over.

Bush never called the police during these incidents because she didn't want her abuser to go to jail; the stigma associated with being in an abusive relationship was also a factor, as she didn't want people to question her intelligence or judge her for staying with an abuser.

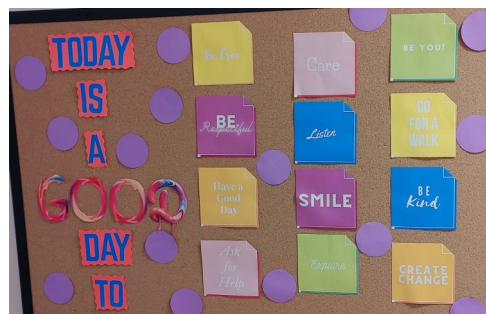
As Bush begins her Congressional career, she wants to bring awareness to the importance of combating domestic violence. "Every time that we see that someone died at the hands of their partners, that's something we could've stopped, as a society."

## Around the Shelter

### Our June bulletin board



A little pick-me-up bulletin board for our staff and shelter residents! Today is a good day to practice kindness and self-care. What will you do today to make life a little better for yourself and others?



# Recap of Events

## Senior Bingo

Seniors are one of our underserved populations here at Response, and one of the hardest groups to reach. As a way to recognize WEAAD (World Elder Abuse Awareness Day) in June, our staff decided to take information about our services to residents of long-term care facilities...in the form of BINGO!

We created bingo cards that had various terms, services, and information related to elder abuse, and turned a bingo game into a learning opportunity. It was amazing how the residents responded to this very difficult topic and still had fun playing the game!



We were able to take our game into four area facilities: Dutch Haven, Life Care, Greenfield Reflections, and Consulate. Several other residential care facilities were unable to allow visitors, but did take our special Bingo games to use during their activity times.

A big thank you to the staff at these homes for their assistance in helping our elder population learn about domestic violence and our services here at Response!

# Upcoming Events

## Looking Forward Support Group



We will be starting a brand new support group in July, and this time it is a group geared specifically for seniors! Although most survivors of domestic and sexual violence share many things in common, our seniors are in a different stage of life than our younger clients. So we have developed a group just for those folks!

Topics to be covered are types of abuse, safety planning, budgeting, coping skills, and more. In addition to learning useful information, just sharing space with folks who have similar experiences can be so helpful!

If you know someone who might benefit from this group, please encourage them to get in touch with Sarah at 540-459-5599 or [sarahh@responseva.org](mailto:sarahh@responseva.org).

## Celebration of Hope 5K

**SAVE THE DATE!!** Oct 2, 2021 is the date for our "Celebration of Hope 5K" fundraiser! Plans are in the making for our first ever 5K, so check out the details!

**Place:** Shenandoah Co. Park

**Time:** registration 8:15-8:45am, race starts 9am.

**Fees:** Early Bird through Sept.3 - \$35/adult, \$25/youth 12 and under. Regular registration - \$45/adult. Day-of registration - \$50. Groups of 10+ \$350 and receive 2 additional tickets free. The first 100 registrants will receive a t-shirt. Sponsorships are available and will have name/logo placed on the t-shirt.

Info and ticket sales soon on our Upcoming Events page. <https://www.responseva.org/upcoming-events> or call the office for more info—540-459-5599. Spread the word and get ready to run!

