



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy, Astorino Announce Formation of Northern Westchester Risk Reduction team to Reduce Incidents of Domestic Violence

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Pound Ridge, NY - Research has shown that approximately one of every four women is a victim of domestic violence. Despite its bucolic setting, Northern Westchester is not immune to the horrors of intimate partner violence. In 2011, the Town of Lewisboro, long perceived as one of the safest communities to live in, was shaken when Samuel Friedlander reportedly beat his wife to death, then shot and killed his children before turning the gun on himself.

As a concerned husband and father, Senator Terrence Murphy has been a long-time advocate for the victims of domestic violence. As a result, Senator Murphy has been instrumental in the formation of the Northern Westchester Risk Reduction Team (NWRRT), a consortium comprised of towns, local law enforcement and community agencies brought together to provide resources where services have been sparse for victims of domestic violence.

At a press conference held October 4 at Pound Ridge Town Hall, Senator Murphy and Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino announced the new program and core partners, including the Westchester County District Attorney's Office, Westchester County Family Justice Center, Hope's Door, Pace Women's Justice Center, the Westchester County Department of Probation, and the Lewisboro, North Salem, Pound Ridge, Somers and Bedford Police Departments.

Among the elected officials and agency representatives pledging their support were,

Westchester County Legislator Francis Corcoran, Pound Ridge Town Supervisor Richard Lyman, Somers Town Supervisor Rick Morrissey, North Salem Town Supervisor Warren Lucas, Lewisboro Supervisor Peter Parsons, Lewisboro Town Councilman Peter DeLucia, Somers Police Chief Michael Driscoll, Lewisboro Police Chief Charles Beckett, Pound Ridge Police Chief Dave Ryan, Lewisboro Town Justice Marc Seedorf, and CarLa Horton, Executive Director of Hope's Door, Inc.

"This partnership will address a major gap in providing services in northeastern Westchester. It will reduce the incidence of domestic violence and homicides, and increase the safety of victims while holding abusers more accountable," said Senator Murphy. "It is incredibly important to me that victims of domestic violence in all corners of Westchester County have access to services in a safe environment, so they can get themselves and their children away from their abusers."

"Tragedies caused by domestic violence are often beyond comprehension, but they are real," said Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino. "This new initiative applies a community based approach to three core principles - cooperation, coordination and communication; with the goal of preventing domestic violence and providing support for its victims."

Domestic violence survivors speak of the realities and difficulties of trying to get help - of being encumbered by a lack of public transportation, access to the courthouse, legal services, nearby counseling services, or the availability of part-time police departments. Additionally there is the "small town" stigma - the fear that everyone in a small town knows about everyone else's personal lives - which makes victims reluctant to seek help from friends, neighbors and law enforcement.

This confidential pilot program will bring services closer to the victims, by providing secure spaces to meet, advocates to provide direct services and support to victims who otherwise feel geographically, emotionally and socially isolated.

Program coordination and victim services will be provided by Hope's Door, Inc., a licensed and approved provider of residential and nonresidential domestic violence services. An Assistant District Attorney will travel to the site to meet with clients.