

PRESS RELEASE: January 26, 2008

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Our mission is to create and encourage a social, political, and economic environment in which domestic violence no longer exists, and to ensure that battered women are supported and that batterers are held accountable. MCEDV mobilizes and coordinates community action through a statewide network of domestic violence projects. Through these partnerships, we focus our resources on public policy, education, and systems advocacy.

Statewide Helpline:
1(866)834-HELP
1(866)834-4357

www.mcedv.org

The New Year Begins with a Double Domestic Homicide Leaving Three Children Motherless

Maine – Passion is no excuse for murder. People experience passion, pain and anger everyday. Most of us have experienced the heart wrenching feelings of rejection and the stinging rage of jealousy that comes from seeing a former partner with a new lover. The majority of people do not pick up a gun, knife or weapon to murder or harm. Richard W. Widdecomb Jr. did.

Reports state that Widdecomb confessed to murdering Katie Cabana of Marshfield and Aaron Settiani of Eastport. Widdecomb also shot Cabana's child in the foot. Nothing excuses this violence and the ultimate tragedy.

It is domestic violence at its worst. Utilizing the term "domestic violence" when reporting on homicides between intimate partners or family members sets the context for the crime. Not calling domestic violence what it is—excuses violence and fails to place the responsibility on the person who chose to murder and take the lives of others and injure a child.

In Maine, domestic violence is a serious and tragic crime. A national report released earlier this month measuring the rates of female homicide, places Maine 19th in the nation. Over the last ten years, domestic violence has been attributed to more than half the homicides in Maine. A national study shows that more than half of the female victims of domestic violence live in households with children under the age of twelve. As Maine citizens go forward in the new year, each of us must consider how we are going to make Maine a safer place for women, children and men.

The 2006 Maine Domestic Abuse Homicide Review Panel Report notes that many people who know domestic homicide victims expressed frustration because they knew abuse was occurring. They asked: "What could I have done? I knew he would kill her. I wanted to help but didn't know what to do."

In order to prevent needless deaths and ensure women and children's safety, everyone must make a commitment to intervene and reach out to anyone we suspect is in an abusive situation.

Each of us can help by learning more about domestic violence and the available resources. Local domestic violence projects offer this information for anyone. They additionally provide free and confidential services for people who are experiencing abuse or those who know someone experiencing abuse. Each domestic violence project can be reached by: 1-866-834-HELP.

We must also hold all batterers accountable before their violence escalates to a potentially lethal situation. When domestic violence does escalate like it did in Washington County, we must name the crime and not make excuses.

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence extends its sympathies to the families and friends of Katie Cabana and Aaron Settiani.