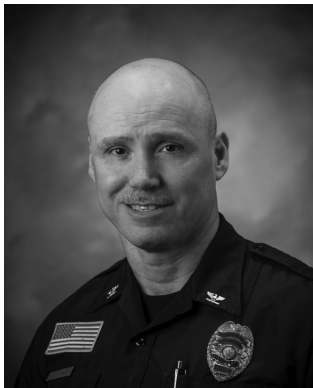


SIUSLAW OUTREACH SERVICES

Domestic Violence



Every officer has a story about a domestic violence call they have responded to. We are taught in the basic academy and by our field training officers that they are one of the most dangerous calls an officer has to respond to, and it only takes a couple to find out that is true. Emotions are running high, often alcohol or some other substance is involved, and a lot of the time you as the officer are seen as the enemy by everyone involved. But my biggest question as a young officer was always "Why doesn't she just get out".

I have responded to numerous domestic violence calls during my years with the Florence Police Department involving couples from all walks of life, types of employment and financial resources. After investigating those cases, being involved in the prosecution and attending additional trainings, I started answering my own question

of "Why doesn't she just get out". It's hard to understand the control an abuser has over the victim and the amount of time and effort they have put in to gaining that control. Fear and Love are very powerful and often times the tools used by the abuser. The fear of losing your home or being able to care for your kids to the fear of being ashamed or losing "status" makes a lot of abuse victims stay. The love they have for their family, even the abuser when he is not "angry", makes abuse victims stay. These are just a few of the reasons why a victim might stay in an abusive relationship but having that basic understanding allowed me to see the reality behind the decision to stay. Knowing this, also allows us as the police to understand why we may not get the cooperation from a victim that we think we should. It helps explain why we may get some cooperation at the beginning, when the victim is in crisis, but how that cooperation may end when it comes time for the victim to follow through and hold the abuser accountable for what they did after the crisis is over.

I've asked myself if I had to leave forever right now, with kids and limited access to my finances, what would I do? My answer is always I don't know if I could do

it and that is without all the emotional baggage that comes along with being an abuse victim.

Some officers from our department are currently involved in an investigation, with all too often circumstances, of a domestic violence case. On the night of the incident the officers contacted the victim, who due to her history was not real supportive or trusting of the police. She had been viciously assaulted by her abuser and eventually confided in the officers what happened. Between the time of the incident and now that the trial date is approaching the victim and abuser have reconciled once again and are back together. The victim has changed her statement about what happened several times, to include saying the abuser wasn't even in Florence at the time, and called department supervisors in an attempt to stop the case from moving forward, even accusing the investigating officers of harassment because they won't stop their investigation.

It would be easy for our officers to ask themselves "Why doesn't she just get out" and not put the work in to this case that they have, but then what would the outcome be???????

John Pitcher
Commander, Florence
Police Department

In 2020 SOS locally served...

477 survivors of domestic violence

92 survivors of domestic violence under the age of 17.

627 sheltered nights for survivors fleeing

62 received legal services

444 calls to SOS Crisis Hotline

97 after hours requests from law enforcement of medical services to assist victims

2020 National Statistics

1 in 4 women reported abuse by an intimate partner

1 in 9 men reported abuse by an intimate partner

72% of all homicides were the result domestic violence

Domestic violence cost the national economy

12.5 billion dollars

MARCH AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE!

Everyone is invited!


JOIN US SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3 AT 12:45PM
starting at Veterans Memorial in Old Town

Businesses and homeowners are encouraged to decorate in purple and convey messages of anti-violence and encouragement for those suffering abuse.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Come march with SOS End Domestic Violence
Sunday October 3
Gather by 12:45 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial on Bay Street
march begins promptly at 1:00 p.m.
and continues through downtown Florence

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How you can help SOS

- Volunteer for: Front desk reception, office assistance, clothing sorter, fundraising, or crisis line
- Join Friends of SOS: An annual donation of \$100 or more
- Support the SOS Endowment Fund
- Donate items such as: Sleeping bags, tents, shoes, blankets, clothing, coats and small household items

For more information on how you can help or get involved, contact SOS staff at 541-997-2816.

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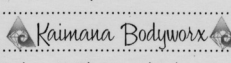


We invite you to join us.

• **Sunday Worship in person & online 9am & 11am**

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