



TRAINING INSTITUTE on STRANGULATION PREVENTION

Strangulation Prevention E-Newsletter - Oct. 2017

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO & PRESIDENT

Welcome to the second edition of Strangulation Prevention E-News. The Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention has launched this newsletter to provide you with the most current and succinct information about non-fatal and near-fatal strangulation assaults. Our goal with E-News is to share important information regularly. Each E-News will focus on one subject, one organization or individual and share one Featured Resource.

This month is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) evolved from the "Day of Unity" held in October 1981 and launched by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The intent was to connect advocates across the nation who were working to end violence against women and their children. This month we are focusing on Advocacy, survivor Tara, and our Featured Resource is our Victim Brochure - What Victim's Need to Know in English and Spanish.



Let's UNITE this month to bring awareness and education to our survivors, community, legislators and media. Please watch our October webinar series which feature members of our National VOICES Survivor Network. Please share our resources. Please educate a survivor about the dangers of strangulation. Please let us know what you are doing for Domestic Violence Awareness Month and we will share with others.

Thank you for your commitment to this lifesaving work.

-Gael Strack & Casey Gwinn

THE HEART OF ADVOCACY

"Why didn't someone tell me?" she said with tears running down her face. We were in Longview, Washington, providing a four-hour training to police, prosecutors, medical professionals, and advocates. As we broke for lunch, an unidentified woman came



up to me and said, "You need to hear my story." I (Casey) said, "Tell me your story."

As she spoke, she was angry and deeply troubled. She said she was 52 years old and in a healthy, happy 30-year relationship. But she said that when she was 19 she became involved with an abusive boyfriend. She said she had been strangled nine times to unconsciousness, but she always recovered. She said that after two years, she left him and never looked back. But then she began to shake. She said, "Four years ago, I had my first cryptogenic stroke. Two weeks ago, I had my third cryptogenic stroke. I survived, but my neurologist told me that if I have one more brain bleed, he thinks it will kill me." Now, she was crying and shaking.

She said, "He is going to kill me 30 years after he abused me!" And then she looked right at me and said, "Why didn't someone tell me? I deserved to know and now I am going to die." All I could muster was, "We didn't know 30 years ago. I am so sorry." And I hugged her. She was right though. She deserved to know the potential consequences of being strangled. All victims deserve to know, but very few professionals are telling them. -Casey Gwinn (An excerpt from *Why Didn't Someone Tell Me? Health Consequences of Strangulation Assaults for Survivors*, Domestic Violence Report)

Resources for Advocates:

- [Strangulation: The Last Warning Shot - What Every Advocate Should Know Webinar sponsored by California Crime Victims Assistance Association](#)
- [How Do Survivors Define Success? from *The Full Frame Initiative*](#)
- [Domestic Violence Report from *Civic Research Institute*](#)
- ["Meet me at the hill where we used to park": Interpersonal Processes Associated with Victim Recantation from *Social Science & Medicine*](#)
- [No Visible Bruises: Domestic Violence and Traumatic Brain Injury from *The New Yorker*](#)
- [HELPS Brain Injury Screening Tool](#)
- [Strangulation in Intimate Partner Violence Fact Sheet infographic](#)
- [Facts of Strangulation Victim Brochure](#)
- [Chapter 8: Victim Advocacy in Strangulation Cases from the *Investigation and Prosecution of Strangulation Cases California Manual*](#)
- [Chapter 10: Victim Advocacy in Strangulation Cases from *Responding to Strangulation in Alaska Manual*](#)
- [One Love My Plan Danger Assessment app created by The One Love Foundation](#)
- ["I Felt Close to Death": A Phenomenological Study of Female Strangulation Survivors of Intimate Terrorism from *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*](#)

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

Tara thought she was checking into a hotel to celebrate with her boyfriend, but what happened was beyond her worst nightmare. She was nearly beat to death, strangled, and held against her will. When she called for help, the system let her down. Tara shares her story hoping it will make a difference for others.





Survivor Story - Tara

Are you doing all you can to support survivors? Are we? Please take two minutes to fill out or 5 question [Domestic Violence Awareness Month - Strangulation Survey](#).

FEATURED RESOURCE

Facts of Strangulation Victim Brochure

This brochures gives victims the facts about strangulation and provides a log for their signs and symptoms. This month in particular, please help us prioritize victim's health and safety.

We are happy to report that over 90 jurisdictions now have custom brochures. **Can we count you in?** If you would like to receive a custom brochure, please follow [these instructions](#).

[Click Here to download Facts of Strangulation Victim Brochure](#)

Is there is question you would like answered? We are happy to help. [Contact Us!](#)

Strangulation

Visible Signs

Reddened spots, Bruised face, Swollen lips, Cord or rope marks, Bruises

Observing Changes

Documentation by photographs sequentially for a period of days after the assault is very helpful in establishing a journal of physical evidence.

Victims should also seek medical attention if they experience difficulty breathing, speaking, swallowing or experience nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, headache, involuntary urination and/or defecation, especially pregnant victims. A medical evaluation may be crucial in detecting internal injuries and saving a life.

Losing Consciousness

Victims may lose consciousness by any one or all of the following methods: blocking of the carotid arteries in the neck (depriving the brain of oxygen), blocking of the jugular veins (preventing deoxygenated blood from exiting the brain), and closing of the airway, making breathing impossible.

Strangulation has only recently been identified as one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence; unconsciousness may occur within seconds and death within minutes. When domestic violence perpetrators choke (strangle) their victims, not only is this a life-threatening assault, but it may be an attempted homicide. Strangulation is an ultimate form of power and control, where the batterer can demonstrate control over the victim's next breath, having devastating psychological effects or a potentially fatal outcome.

Sober and conscious victims of strangulation will first feel tender and severe pain. If strangulation persists, unconsciousness will follow. Before losing into unconsciousness, a strangulation victim will usually resist violently, often producing injuries of their own neck in an effort to free the assailant, and frequently also producing injury on the face or hands to their assailant. These defensive injuries may not be present if the victim is physically or chemically restrained before the assault.

Additional Signs and Symptoms

A larger version of the graphic above which contains detailed signs and symptoms is available for download at http://www.strangulationinstitute.com/download/brochure_and_Facts_Victims_of_Strangulation_V1.pdf

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Facts Victims of Strangulation (Choking) Need to Know

UPCOMING EVENTS

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|---------------|---|
| October 24-27 | Advanced Course - We are delighted to report the October Advanced Course is SOLD OUT. We will open up registration for the February 2018 Advanced Course soon! Watch our website for details. |
| October 31 | Loudoun Co, VA |
| November 6-9 | National Advocacy Center, Columbia, SC |
| November 14 | Essex Co, NJ |
| November 16 | New York City, NY |

[Click here for a full list of upcoming events](#)



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