



## Monarch Services Welcomes Domestic Violence Awareness Month

### *COVID-19 Uniquely Impacts Domestic Violence Survivors*

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:** Delphine Burns, *Communications Manager*  
**Email:** [delphineb@monarchsc.org](mailto:delphineb@monarchsc.org)  
**Phone:** (831) 707.2206  
**Website:** [www.monarchsc.org](http://www.monarchsc.org)

**Overview:** Today, Oct. 1 marks the beginning of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. According to the [Centers for Disease Control](#), 1 in 4 female-identifying individuals and 1 in 9 male-identifying individuals have experienced sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

While *Monarch Services* supports survivors of domestic violence every month, October is a unique chance for community members to proactively discuss domestic violence, demonstrate their support for survivors and raise awareness. This year, the impact of domestic violence has been magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic. Social isolation has left many survivors in homes that are unsafe and has fractured some support networks that survivors may typically rely on to seek help or escape violence.

While the shelter-in-place orders are necessary to protect our community from further spread of the virus, home is not the safest place for those being abused by their partners. Monarch Services has seen a swift uptick in the number of domestic violence survivors we are serving. In fact, we served an average of 15 new clients weekly for the first few weeks follow the “shelter in place” mandate.

*Monarch Services* encourages individuals experiencing violence to call our crisis line for support. While individuals are physically isolated and may feel emotionally isolated as well, we want to remind them they are not alone. Additionally, we encourage third-party individuals to call if they witness or hear domestic abuse.

This October and every month, join us as we mourn for those whose lives were taken by domestic violence, celebrate survivors’ healing process and unite against domestic violence. Check in on your friends, reach out to your loved ones, remind them they are not alone. Your support makes a difference. Our 24-hour confidential, bilingual crisis line (1.888.900.4232) remains fully staffed and we encourage anyone who needs help escaping violence, safety planning or emotional support to call us any hour of the day.

#### **Actions you can take to address domestic violence:**

- Be a caring and consistent adult in the life of a child
- Talk to loved ones about violence and oppression
- Create a culture of consent in your home
- Use social media to raise awareness among your peers
- Listen to and validate a survivor of trauma

**About Monarch Services:** Monarch Services has a 44-year history in Santa Cruz County of providing advocacy and resources to community members affected by violence. Services include court accompaniments, restraining order assistance, counseling, emergency shelter, 24-hour crisis line, outreach, education and support groups. Monarch Services is the only rape crisis and human trafficking center in Santa Cruz County and includes an emergency response team. All services are available in Spanish and English and are free or low cost.