



LCADV History, Purposes, Principles of Unity and Philosophy

WHO WE ARE

The Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence (LCADV) is a statewide network of battered women's programs, other organizations, and individuals who share the goal of ending violence against women and children in Louisiana. LCADV empowers its members through advocacy, education, resource development, and technical assistance.

OUR HISTORY

The LCADV arose out of the desire of those working with battered women to meet on a regular basis in order to share ideas and information, receive education and training relevant to their work, jointly study and respond to proposed governmental policies and operations, and enhance either individual efforts to effect social change. Their first meeting took place in 1979.

By April of 1980, the group had appointed an acting president and secretary, named the organization, and began to develop the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

On April 26, 1982, the Louisiana Coalition Against domestic Violence was incorporated as a private, non-profit corporation registered with the Secretary of State and doing business in Louisiana. In March of 1986, the Coalition's application for 501c 3 tax-exempt status was granted by the Internal Revenue Service.

OUR PURPOSES

To support the development and provision of comprehensive services to battered women and their children throughout the state of Louisiana. These services, including shelter and related assistance, are to be designed to assure safety and promote empowerment.

To provide a forum for, and a structure in which, workers within the battered women's movement can meet regularly to share information, identify resources, receive training, and obtain technical assistance to help them achieve their respective purposes.

To improve the systems that respond to domestic violence by providing education and training for individuals in allied professions whose work brings them into contact with battered women and their families.

To work toward the elimination of domestic violence by exposing its root causes through the promotion of public awareness of the nature of the problem, the need for change, and the services currently available throughout Louisiana.

To foster inclusiveness and diversity within the battered women's movement in Louisiana.

OUR PRINCIPLES OF UNITY

The Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence is composed of people dealing with the concerns of battered women and their families. We represent both rural and urban areas. Our programs support and involve battered women of all racial, social, religious, and economic groups, ages, and lifestyles. We oppose the use of violence as a means of control over others lives. We strive toward becoming independent, community-based groups in which women make major policy and program decisions.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The LCADV works to end violence against women. This violence affects women and their children, of all ages, income levels, lifestyles, races, and geographic areas. We define woman abuse as physical harm, or the threat of such harm, experienced by a woman at the hands of her partner. In addition, battered women suffer the use of threats, insults, or other behaviors intended to intimidate, humiliate, or otherwise diminish their physical, psychological, and/or spiritual being.

Woman abuse cannot be adequately understood as solely an individual or family problem. Intervention at these levels will never stop woman battering, though services to provide safety for victims and their children are vital until violence against women is indeed stopped. In many ways, our society supports the idea that violence is an acceptable means of problem solving and that women are appropriate targets of violence. This coalition recognizes that inequality between men and women is a major cause of woman abuse. Additionally, we recognize other forms of oppression, such as racism, classism, and homophobia, contribute to woman abuse in our society. Therefore, we support the ideal of equality among all people and appreciate that social change toward this end is necessary to stop woman abuse.

No one deserves to be beaten. The person who chooses to use violence as a means of gaining control over a partner is responsible for the abuse and should be held accountable. Unfortunately, the abuser has rarely been held accountable by society. Too often women who seek help are turned away or blamed for the violence done to them. Until our society begins to hold abusers accountable, our institutions will continue to support violence against women.

This coalition believes that all battered women have the right and capability of making decisions for themselves and that they have the right to establish a nonviolent living situation. In addition, we believe that battered women's programs best serve women by offering them the opportunity to regain control over their lives through finding safety, emotional support, and advocacy. The Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence is dedicated to bringing about change in our institutions, laws, policies, attitudes, and beliefs which will allow women and their children to live lives free from violence.