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News Release

*For Immediate Release*

## **Family Violence Task Force Launches Domestic Violence Campaign**

With a significant increase in aggravated assaults recognized in the fall of 2012, the Springfield Police Department (SPD) decided to take a deeper look into the incidents being reported. Their research found that domestic assaults were driving overall assault numbers with 70 percent of all aggravated assaults in Springfield being domestic in nature.

At the end of 2012, the SPD logged 2,476 domestic violence incidents for the year, averaging over six incidents per day. The total amount of incidents had increased from 2,207 in 2011.

Representatives from both the SPD's Uniform Operations Bureau and the Investigations and Support Services Bureau met with the Greene County Prosecutor's Office to develop a better approach to addressing domestic assault investigations and prosecutions. One part of their approach included the development of the Family Violence Task Force, which includes representation from the SPD, the Greene County Prosecutor's Office, the City of Springfield's Department of Public Information, Community Partnership of the Ozarks, The Victim Center, Harmony House and many more local organizations. Goals formed by the task force for 2013 focused on community-wide education efforts and addressing the issues of family violence, including domestic violence and child abuse in the community.

Domestic violence does more than inflict emotional and physical pain, and its effects can often spill over into all aspects of a victim's life. "It also affects the lives of those around them at home, at work, at school and the overall quality of life throughout the Springfield community," said Springfield Police Chief Paul Williams.

With the help of financial sponsors, Verizon, Ozarks Technical Community College, ASIS of the Ozarks and the Springfield-Greene County Health Department, the task force is able to bring international lecturer, [Mark Wynn](#), to Springfield. Wynn has spoken to police academies all over the world, and he has served as an advisor to state, national and international leaders to help shape law and policy on domestic violence. He is also a survivor of this type of abuse.

Specialized training is being offered by Wynn for local law enforcement officers and prosecutors on Oct. 10. On Oct. 11, Wynn will share his expertise with the community in a free "[Stop the Violence](#)" conference at the Springfield Art Museum auditorium, 1111 E. Brookside Drive. The conference will also include a panel discussion featuring a domestic violence survivor and representatives from the SPD, Greene County Prosecutor's Office, Harmony House and The Victim Center.

In an effort to further spread the message throughout the community, the task force also reached out to the City of Springfield's Department of Public Information to develop a public awareness

campaign. Together, they have created a public service announcement, print and outdoor advertising, and will soon have messaging in many other public areas. For more information, visit [www.sgfsafe.com](http://www.sgfsafe.com).

“We hope to make a positive impact on this soaring problem by educating not only victims but also those who may come in contact with victims,” said Williams.

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