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## **Men against domestic violence Signers of pledge vow never to assault a woman**

*Author: Amy Littlefield; Gatehouse News  
Service*

Men in Brockton punched, choked and threatened their wives and girlfriends this week, sometimes in front of children, according to several calls to the police department.

That made it a pretty typical week, police said.

"(Domestic violence) definitely takes up quite a bit of our services," Brockton police Capt. Emanuel Gomes said Thursday.

"It's part of the landscape of the job."

Domestic violence affects everyone from the wealthy to the homeless, experts say.

"We see women who live in lovely million-dollar homes to the women who live in the housing developments," said Patricia Kelleher, president and CEO of Brockton's Family and Community Resources Inc., a regional agency.

At Quincy's Domestic Violence Ended (DOVE) program, director Sue Chandler said her staff takes calls and receives visits from a similar range of women.

Shelters like DOVE and advocacy groups like Jane Doe Inc. say the prolonged economic downturn has provoked a rise in brutality against women, but on Thursday

men across the state took part in White Ribbon Day to take a stand against the violence.

The fourth annual White Ribbon Day was observed across the state to encourage men to vow never to commit or condone violence against women. The event is sponsored by Jane Doe Inc.

"It's really a time for men to be recognized as a part of the solution," said Erin Banner, director of the Brockton-based agency A New Day.

Through Dec. 8, there had been 30 domestic-violence deaths in Massachusetts in 2010. Most of the victims were women, according to Jane Doe Inc.

Almost all killers in domestic-violence homicides are men.

White Ribbon Day is intended to remind men that their own daughters, nieces, granddaughters and other loved ones could become victims. Chandler and DOVE's community outreach director, Jen Yerdon, said the campaign does seem to be helping widen awareness of the problem. Chandler said more men are supporting DOVE, including on the service's board, while Yerdon said a teen dating violence prevention program is well-established at Quincy, North Quincy, Randolph and Holbrook high schools.

"Teenage boys are realizing their responsibility," Yerdon said.

Thursday's events included a State House ceremony attended by hundreds of people, including Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and Gov. Deval Patrick.

In Brockton, the recent murders of Maria Avelina Palaguachi-Cela and her 2-year-old son have served as a powerful reminder of violence against women - and their children. Palaguachi-Cela was an immigrant from Ecuador.

The South Shore's latest reminder came on New Year's Eve, when John J. McKenzie of Weymouth was charged for firing shots at his ex-wife's home and threatening several others at an apartment building.

McKenzie held police in a standoff before he was arrested at his own home. He now faces 13 charges, including attempted murder. He also faces violating a restraining order taken out by his former wife and their daughter.

Police said McKenzie's ex-wife told them there had been a history of domestic violence.

"It's often times a very silent but deadly epidemic," said Kelleher, adding that the situation can be even more isolating for immigrant women.

"They don't know how to speak the language, they don't know who they can trust and so they don't reach out for help," she said.

Family and Community Resources and A New Day help victims regardless of their immigration status. But immigrants are the smallest population served by Family and Community Resources, Kelleher said.

Advocates hope men will remember promises made on White Ribbon Day throughout the year. "It's not just a one-day, one-shot deal.

This is a problem for both men and women and all community members to face every single day," Banner said.

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