

The South Dakota Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault and The Compass Center Partner With Verizon to Educate Youth on Domestic Violence, Bullying
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Attorney General Marty J. Jackley Takes Part in Announcing Campaign

PIERRE, S.D., Dec. 19, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- According to a national survey, 57% of teens know someone who has been physically, sexually or verbally abusive in a dating relationship.* Now, South Dakota school children will receive information and resources on what to do if they or a friend is experiencing domestic violence, dating violence and bullying thanks to the partnership between Verizon and the South Dakota Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault (The Network) and The Compass Center in Sioux Falls. Attorney General Marty J. Jackley announced the grants of \$20,000 to The Network and \$10,000 to The Compass Center from the Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon, at a ceremony today.

The grant to The Network builds upon a \$13,750 grant from the Verizon Foundation in 2010 for a teen education campaign in South Dakota. The Network has 20 partner agencies** that work in their communities in collaboration with local law enforcement, and school districts both public, private and tribal to reach teen and pre-teen school children. The curriculum covers teen dating violence, bullying and domestic violence.

"The Verizon funds allowed the Network and member agencies to provide 138 presentations to 3,153 youth last year and due to the demand for presentations, the funds for two years were utilized in one year," said Krista Heeren-Graber, executive director of The Network.

"The need for prevention education is great and we are excited for the opportunity to partner with Verizon and our member communities for another year."

The Compass Center will provide teen dating violence and healthy relationship education to youth ages 13 to 18-years-old in Minnehaha, Lincoln, Turner and McCook Counties in southeastern South Dakota. The prevention education programs are planned for The Compass Center, area YMCA/YWCA facilities, after school programs, community centers and Boys and Girls Clubs.

"The goal of the project is to reach out to our youth of today for a brighter and better future tomorrow that helps to end the violence that is taking place in teen dating relationships," said Patty Brooks, executive director, The Compass Center.

Domestic violence prevention and education are a corporate cause of Verizon. "One of the best ways to prevent teen dating violence, bullying and ultimately domestic violence, is to educate our youth about healthy relationships and what resources are available to help address any problems they, or their friends, may be having," said Seamus Hyland, president--Great Plains Region, Verizon Wireless. "These educational efforts are important for the communities we serve, for our customers, employees and their families."

The Verizon Foundation uses its technology, financial resources and partnerships to address critical social issues, with a focus on education and domestic violence prevention. In 2010, the foundation awarded nearly \$67 million to nonprofit agencies in the U.S. and abroad. Through Verizon Volunteers, one of the nation's largest employee volunteer programs, Verizon employees and retirees have volunteered nearly 6 million hours million hours of community service since 2000. For more information on the foundation, visit www.verizonfoundation.org.

In addition, Verizon Wireless supports domestic violence agencies around the country through the HopeLine® phone recycling and reuse program. Since 2001, HopeLine has collected more than 8 million phones; awarded more than \$10 million in cash grants to prevention and awareness programs nationwide; and donated more than 106,000 HopeLine phones with 319 million minutes of airtime to victims, survivors and domestic violence organizations. For more information on how to donate no-longer-used devices, visit www.verizonwireless.com/hopeline.

* *Liz Claiborne Inc., Conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, (February 2005).*

****Partner agencies for The South Dakota Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault Grant implementation:**

- Artemis House in Spearfish
- Brookings Domestic Abuse Shelter in Brookings
- Children's Inn in Sioux Falls
- Communication Services for the Deaf in Sioux Falls
- Communities Against Violence and Abuse in Lemmon
- Compass Center in Sioux Falls
- Domestic Violence Network of the Lakes Region in Madison
- Domestic Violence SOS in Vermillion
- Family Crisis Center in Redfield
- Jan Manolis Family Safe Center in Huron
- Missouri Shores Domestic Violence Center in Pierre
- Missouri Valley Crisis Center in Chamberlain
- Mitchell Area Safehouse in Mitchell
- Safe Harbor in Aberdeen
- Wholeness Center in Flandreau
- Winner Resource Center for Families in Winner
- Women's Resource Center in Watertown
- Working Against Violence, Inc. in Rapid City
- Yankton Women's Center/Shelter in Yankton
- YWCA Family Violence Program in Huron

About The South Dakota Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault

The Network's vision is for collaborating with allies across the state to eliminate family violence and sexual assault in South Dakota. Since 1991, the Network has partnered with shelters and crisis centers in the state to provide valuable services and funding for victim services. In 2010, the Network member agencies provided crisis counseling, shelter services, advocacy and support, and other resources and assistance for 11,734 females, 3,439 males; 5,405 were children. Many children accompany their mothers to stay in shelter to flee violence in their home. For more information, visit www.sdnafvsa.com.

About the Compass Center

The Compass Center, formerly known as The Rape and Domestic Abuse Center, and first known as Citizens Against Rape, was established in the Sioux Falls Community in 1976 as part of a grassroots effort to address the problem of rape and domestic violence. The goal of the organization is to reduce the incidence of rape and domestic violence in our rapidly growing region. The Compass Center is a non profit 501(c) 3 organization that offers many programs to help individuals with counseling and advocacy related to rape, sexual assault and domestic violence in their lives. For more information, visit www.thecompasscenter.org.

About Verizon

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE, NASDAQ:VZ), headquartered in New York, is a global leader in delivering broadband and other wireless and wireline communications services to mass market, business, government and wholesale customers. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, serving 94.1 million customers nationwide. Verizon also provides converged communications, information and entertainment services over America's most advanced fiber-optic network, and delivers innovative, seamless business solutions to customers around the world. A Dow 30 company, Verizon employs a diverse workforce of more than 194,000 and last year generated consolidated revenues of \$106.6 billion. For more information, visit www.verizon.com.

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