



## CCRT Monthly Newsletter

I can't believe we are more than halfway through 2020! While it has been quite the adjustment, we at DAC want to support and assist you all as best we can! While our on line trainings, meetings, and community events have presented a new "normal" we hope to remain just as engaged as possible! If you or your teams have any training needs, community awareness events or promotions, or just want to spread some joy & kindness, please email your ideas and shout outs to [DAC\\_Training@dac.state.ok.us](mailto:DAC_Training@dac.state.ok.us).

### In this issue:

- General Updates
- Inside Story
- Upcoming Trainings & Webinars

### Heads Up, Team Coordinators!

**Please keep an eye out for a "needs survey" that will soon be distributed via email. We are wanting to check team statuses, common benefits/issues, training needs, TA needs, and overall demographics. These responses will help us better serve our teams throughout the State, so your input is greatly appreciated!**

### DISTRICT ATTORNEYS COUNCIL, TRAINING & OUTREACH DIVISION

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## Domestic Abusers Use Tech that Connects as a Weapon During Coronavirus Lockdown

### Technology and violence

Pre-COVID-19 research shows that approximately 75% of women and girls experience cyber or technology-facilitated violence, which is often misogynistic, hostile or both in nature. Recipients of online harassment, image-based abuse such as "revenge pornography" and other digital transgressions experience them not only on social media platforms but also in the home. These experiences include text message or online threats of death or rape, harassment, monitoring and stalking by a current or former intimate partner. Technology-facilitated violence is the most common type of intimate partner victimization, and it accompanies in-person psychological, physical and sexual violence. It's also linked to physical, psychosocial and behavioral problems

### The COVID-19 factor

Since COVID-19, reports of intimate partner violence, child sexual exploitation and other serious crimes suggest a surge in offenses. Public health officials are asking people to socially distance and stay at home. These policies isolate women and girls from sources of support and place them in contact with abusers for extended periods of time without reprieve, which worsens control and abuse. Technology-facilitated forms of control and abuse, like disabling phone or internet services and monitoring electronic communications, are particularly damaging during pandemic lockdowns. Many other digital transgressions including livestreaming child sexual abuse, nonconsensual photo sharing and forced pornographic consumption, are exacerbated by the combination of technology, time and isolation. Abusers have also used technology and the pandemic in efforts to cover up their crimes. In one case, a man disabled location services on his wife's phone and used her text messaging services in an unsuccessful attempt to fool her family into thinking she was alive. He was ultimately arrested for her kidnapping and murder. Additionally, there are countless nonlethal acts of partner violence relating to COVID-19, including threats of eviction for coughing, forced physical contact during times of isolation and refusal to share soap or hand sanitizer, among other behaviors designed to gain power and control. Adults aren't the only victims during the pandemic. As children stay home from school and spend more time online, they may fall victim to predatory loved ones and online strangers. Reports of online child sexual abuse are on the rise.

### The system comes up short

There are few resources to keep women and girls safe, and those that exist are commonly plagued with problems. Police, courts and corrections officials historically have failed survivors by blaming the victim, dropping charges and not attempting to rehabilitate offenders. They have also failed to take appropriate action in most cases of cyber violence against women and girls. Budget cuts are creeping into already underfunded homeless shelters, domestic and sexual violence hotlines, community outreach and related human services in some of the most populous states, including New York and California. Technological solutions like improved digital device security, abuse-aware technology design that distinguish users from others based on visual or behavioral cues and two-factor authentication to online services are not yet widespread. At the same time, online providers have not done enough to curb harassing behaviors. All of this is detrimental to public health, especially for vulnerable populations.

### How to respond

There are several ways to address COVID-19, technology and interpersonal violence. Domestic violence agencies need to reach people at home. Local and national domestic violence hotlines and online chat services can promote their services via Hulu and Facebook ads, Roku background screens, Google homepages and local news. Agencies can also conduct surveys to learn about vulnerable people's communication preferences. Insurance companies and local and state governments can offer telehealth visits, and social service agencies can reach people in crisis online. Access to technologies like domestic violence apps SmartSafe+ and Circle of 6 can help victims with collecting and storing evidence that can be used in later criminal justice proceedings. They can also provide immediate access to local and national rape crisis hotlines and resources. Also, tools like Take Back the Tech! map instances of violence against women and girls worldwide as a way for survivors to have their stories heard and call on others to take action.

Full story can be found [here](#)

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ODAC is providing a wide variety of continuing education and live webinars. All live webinars will be streamed on the GoTo Webinar web conference platform. Registered attendees will receive a confirmation once registered for each training that will contain a unique link for the specific webinar. All questions regarding webinars may be sent to DAC Training and Outreach Division at [DAC\\_Training@dac.state.ok.us](mailto:DAC_Training@dac.state.ok.us)

**DID YOU KNOW**  
that DAC now has an on-demand training site which allows access anywhere, at any time with online courses that will provide Continuing Education Credits from the Oklahoma District Attorneys Council?  
Click [here](#) to start earning continuing education credits!