



Declarations, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026



FALLING INTO SOMETHING NEW

We have been sharing our newsletter quarterly for the past several years, and now it's time for a change!

We will be trialing shorter newsletters on a monthly basis in the coming months so we can share with everyone more frequently.

RECOMMENDATIONS?

Share with us!

If you have recommendations for newsletter topics, puzzles, or feedback on the newsletter, please share with us here!:

[https://forms.office.com/r/
qpEwLSb5un](https://forms.office.com/r/qpEwLSb5un)





MONMOUTH COUNTY LIBRARY

ANDREA GUZMAN, LIFE COACH

The Monmouth County library system is a hidden gem that many might underestimate. The library is not just a place for you to borrow books, DVDs, and other types of literature, but can also be a great resource! One of the greatest features about the Monmouth County Library system is that it gives you access to multiple locations. For example, if you live in Hazlet, you can utilize the same library card to borrow books from the Marlboro public library. You can identify if you are eligible to obtain a library card for the library system at this link:

<https://monmouthcountylib.org/library-cards/>

Outside of this, the library system holds community events year-round, to promote connection amongst residents. You also don't need a library card to attend most of these events. Some listed at the Marlboro location are bereavement support groups, family Storytimes, and Drop-in Adult coloring. Other library locations even host movie nights! Linked is the Monmouth county's library event calendar and it is continuously updated:

<https://monmouthcountylib.libcal.com/calendar?cid=21037>

If you are interested in obtaining a library card, visit your local library, and bring an unexpired proof of address. This can be a state identification like your driver's license, a bank statement with your address, or a copy of your current lease.

Fall into Wellness

SUBMITTED BY: ALEXA RASPANTE, PROGRAM NURSE

FALL FOODS TO NOURISH YOUR MIND & BODY

-  Pumpkin
-  Apples
-  Carrots
-  Sweet Potatoes
-  Leafy Greens
-  Beans
-  Nuts/seeds
-  Lean Proteins
-  Oats/whole grains

\$10 MEAL IDEA

SWEET POTATO HARVEST BOWL

- ROASTED SWEET POTATO
- BLACK BEANS
- BROWN RICE
- FRESH OR FROZEN VEGETABLES
- CHOPPED APPLES

OPTIONAL: ADD CHICKEN,
AVOCADO, OR CHEESE
FOR EXTRA PROTEIN &
HEALTHY FATS



FALL HEALTH CHECK-IN

My Fall Wellness Checklist

- ☐ SCHEDULE ANNUAL PHYSICAL
- ☐ SCHEDULE DENTAL APPOINTMENT
- ☐ REVIEW MEDICATIONS
- ☐ CHECK PRESCRIPTION REFILLS
- ☐ GET RECOMMENDED VACCINES
- ☐ CHECK BLOOD PRESSURE
- ☐ REVIEW UPCOMING APPOINTMENTS
- ☐ CHECK-IN WITH SOMEONE I TRUST



MENTAL HEALTH MYTH BUSTERS: HALLOWEEN EDITION

-  MYTH: Anxiety is "all in your head"
-  FACT: Anxiety can produce very real physical symptoms
-  MYTH: You have to be in crisis to ask for help
-  FACT: Early support can prevent problems from becoming crises
-  MYTH: Self-care means expensive spa days
-  FACT: Self-care can be as simple as eating a favorite meal, sleeping, taking medication, attending appointments or setting boundaries



FY26 CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

KERRI EGER, CCO

Thank you to everyone who participated and shared feedback in our FY26 Annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey!

Eighteen of 40 consumers participated, exhibiting a 45% participation rate. Overall satisfaction was very strong. Thirteen consumers were extremely satisfied, three were very satisfied, and two were satisfied. No consumers reported being dissatisfied.

What Consumers Value Most:

- **Respectful, caring support:** Consumers repeatedly described staff as kind, patient, professional, attentive, nonjudgmental, and dependable.
- **Feeling heard and involved:** Many consumers said staff listen carefully, validate their concerns, offer emotional support, and collaborate with them on decisions and goals.
- **Assistance that supports independence:** Consumers highlighted assistance with housing, budgeting, grocery shopping, appointments, medication management, healthy living, transportation, food access, and maintaining their homes.
- **Meaningful progress toward goals:** Consumers shared examples including securing housing, preventing eviction, reconnecting with family, managing benefits, preparing resumes and letters, improving nutrition, volunteering, and addressing physical and behavioral health needs.



OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

Although many consumers said no changes were needed to their services, several consumers requested more social events and community activity updates, additional time with staff, more information about available services, and stronger support with housing and financial-resource navigation.

CONCLUSIONS

The survey shows that consumers place strong emphasis on the value of the consistent relationships they have with Declarations staff. The feedback supports the impact of person-centered support while pointing to practical ways to strengthen services, through expanded social connection, and continued advocacy around housing, benefits, and financial resources.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

JENNIFER BEATTIE, DCSS-A

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month (DVAM), and for 2025 and 2026, the theme is ***“With Survivors, Always.”*** While the overarching message is still one of safety, support, and solidarity, this year sees a call to action for survivors.

This past year, social media and the news have been flooded with information regarding the Epstein Files, the recent devastating case regarding Jane Doe and Cornell, proposals to cut funding for grant programs under the Office on Violence Against Women such as a \$14 million cut to transitional housing and a \$15 million cut to legal assistance ([NNDEV.org](https://nndev.org)), and an increase in opinions shared on social media about women’s roles and duties, such as having children and the priority of caring for the home. While these things are not mutually exclusive with domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV), these news stories and social media postings can greatly affect all women, especially those who have experienced violence and abuse.

**IN JUST ONE DAY IN 2025, THE
20TH ANNUAL DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE COUNTS REPORT
FOUND THAT DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE PROGRAMS SERVED
MORE THAN 84,000 VICTIMS OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACROSS
THE UNITED
STATES.**

National Network to End Domestic Violence,
2026

ACCORDING TO THE UNITED NATIONS:

“Domestic abuse, also called “domestic violence” or “intimate partner violence”, can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It can occur within a range of relationships including couples who are married, living together or dating. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or class

Victims of domestic abuse may also include a child or other relative, or any other household member.

Domestic abuse is typically manifested as a pattern of abusive behavior toward an intimate partner in a dating or family relationship, where the abuser exerts power and control over the victim.

Domestic abuse can be mental, physical, economic or sexual in nature. Incidents are rarely isolated, and usually escalate in frequency and severity. Domestic abuse may culminate in serious physical injury or death”.

(United Nations)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Domestic violence does not discriminate—it can affect anyone from any background. Just because someone has higher education or is financially well-off does not mean they are immune, though it does sometimes increase survivors' feeling of guilt and shame for feeling they "should have known better" or it is their fault it happened to them. People often shift the blame the victims, as we have seen repeatedly when accusations of sexual violence arise: what did they do to cause the other person to react like that? Did they drink too much? What were they wearing? Did they lead them on? Was the abuser having a bad day? Why didn't they just leave? I encourage people to take a moment to ask, why are we questioning the behaviors and actions of victims rather than condemning those of the abusers?

While raising awareness and obtaining justice for victims is crucial, it can also be extremely triggering for survivors and individuals experiencing domestic violence. Seeing posts about sexual assaults, abuse, people denying or questioning whether the abuse was "real," can be extremely difficult. Sometimes, people may experience flashbacks, dissociation, anxiety, anger, derealization, fear, and unwanted thoughts/memories. Sometimes, bodies respond without us realizing through racing thoughts, shaking, nausea, fatigue, panic attacks. No matter how much time has passed, there is no shame in having these reactions in relation to the flood of information, opinions, and actions seen in the news and social media.

MORE THAN 1 IN 3 WOMEN AND 1 IN 6 MEN IN THE U.S.

EXPERIENCE CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE, PHYSICAL VIOLENCE, AND/OR STALKING BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER IN THEIR LIFETIME.

Zhang Kudon, et. al. 2026

I saw a post on social media that stuck with me: survivors of DV, IPV, and sexual assault/sexual violence have already had to carry the weight of these things personally. It is not up to them to continue to re-open their wounds to educate others to the detriment of their mental and physical wellness. It's time for other people to take up the torch to advocate along-side survivors or in their place. Right now, the best thing some survivors can do if they are feeling triggered is disconnect and be kind to themselves. There is no shame in logging off of social media, unfollowing accounts, hiding posts, and focusing on self-care. Survivors don't owe their stories or truths to anyone. Additionally, the increase in information about domestic violence and sexual violence has been bringing up memories that were forgotten or providing education about experiences that were previously unidentified or explained away. Please know, you don't have to navigate these thoughts and feelings alone—there are confidential hotlines and text options, support groups, and therapists that can help process these experiences and provide information about resources to help navigate these difficult memories and emotions.

IN THE 12 MONTHS PRECEDING THE MOST RECENT NISVS SURVEY, APPROXIMATELY 6.7 MILLION WOMEN AND 2.8 MILLION MEN EXPERIENCED CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE, PHYSICAL VIOLENCE, AND/OR STALKING FROM AN INTIMATE PARTNER IN THE U.S.

Zhang Kudon, et. al. 2026

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

If you know someone who is experiencing domestic violence or abuse, please encourage them to seek support. Share information about confidential hotlines, text supports, or through a professional. Make sure you are there to listen and not judge, and make sure they know they are believed and not alone. Educate yourself about domestic violence and the challenges that can prevent people from leaving to help better understand the difficulty survivors experience and why it often takes many tries before they fully leave/cut ties. Leaving is the most dangerous time, as the abuser is losing control. Reach out to local legislators to advocate for increased funding and resources toward domestic violence survivors, especially in light of the proposals for federal grant cuts toward these crucial supports. Learn about local resources that can help support survivors.

Just because someone hasn't shared their story, does not mean they don't have one.

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST NISVS DATA, WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE AT LEAST ONE IPV-RELATED IMPACT IN THEIR LIFETIME, SUCH AS BEING PHYSICALLY INJURED, MISSING WORK OR SCHOOL, BEING CONCERNED FOR THEIR SAFETY, NEEDING MEDICAL CARE, OR FILING A POLICE REPORT.

Zhang Kudon, et. al. 2026

DV RESOURCES

180 Turning Lives Around

1 Bethany Rd, Hazlet 07730

888-843-9262

<https://180nj.org/>

JBWS

Morristown 07962

Main number: 973-267-7520

24hr Helpline & Referral: 1-877-782-2873

<https://jbws.org/>

NJ Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline

24 hour line: 1-800-572-SAFE (7233)

<https://njcedv.org/>

YOUNITY (formerly WOMANSPACE)

1530 Brunswick Avenue, Lawrenceville 08648

609-394-0136

<https://younitynj.org/>

Safe + Sound Somerset

Somerville 08876

24 hour line: 866-685-1122

<https://safe-sound.org/>

Women Aware

250 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick 08901

24 hour line: 732-249-4504

Toll-free: 833-249-4504

<https://womenaware.net/>

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233

Text BEGIN to 88788

Videophone for deaf survivors:

1-855-812-1001 or Text LOVEIS to 22522

<https://www.thehotline.org/>

Domestic Violence Awareness Project

<https://www.dvawareness.org/>

Other NJ DV Resources:

<https://www.nj.gov/dcf/divisions-offices/dow/dv-services.shtml>

ADDITIONAL READING

Holding Space: Three Ways to Support Domestic Violence Survivors: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/three-ways-to-support-domestic-violence-survivors/>

Power and Control: <https://www.thehotline.org/identify-abuse/power-and-control/>

Dynamics of Abuse: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/dynamics-of-abuse/>

Four Ways to Help Survivors or Victims Heal this Domestic Violence Awareness Month: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/four-ways-to-help-survivors-or-victims-heal/>

Find ways to start a conversation: <https://www.thehotline.org/support-others/talk-about-abuse/>

How Did This Happen Again?: Navigating Feelings of Self-Blame: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/how-did-this-happen-again-navigating-feelings-of-self-blame/>

50 Obstacles to Leaving: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/get-help-50-obstacles-to-leaving/>

Blame Shifting and Minimizing: There's no EXCUSE for Abuse: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/blame-shifting-and-minimizing-theres-no-excuse-for-abuse/>

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