

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

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Partnership allows prosecutors to share resources with domestic violence victims

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Thanks to a partnership with a Mecklenburg County agency that assists victims of domestic violence, the District Attorney's Office now has a simple but effective tool to make victims aware of local resources that can help them safely leave abusive relationships.

When victims arrive in court, prosecutors will give them cards that provide contact information for a number of local organizations that assist domestic violence victims. The discreet, business-sized cards offer tips to help victims develop a safety plan for leaving their abusive partner. The cards also encourage victims to call 911 if they ever feel that they are in immediate danger.

The cards were funded and provided by [Domestic Violence, Substance Use and Violence Prevention Services](#), a division of Mecklenburg County's Community Support Services. The agency offers counseling, support and education for adult victims of domestic violence, child witnesses and teen victims, as well as perpetrators of domestic violence. The organization also provides assistance to those struggling with substance abuse. Domestic Violence, Substance Use and Violence Prevention Services provided 1,000 cards in English and Spanish to the District Attorney's Office.

"Even something so small can make a huge impact on the lives of people who are enduring domestic violence," says District Attorney Andrew Murray. "The simple act of informing victims about the services available here in Mecklenburg County empowers victims to become survivors. We're so grateful to have such dedicated community partners who stand by my office as we work toward eliminating domestic violence."

"These safety cards in English and Spanish give victims a lifeline to local resources in a discreet format," says Michael Sexton, Information and Education Coordinator for Mecklenburg County's Domestic Violence, Substance Use and Violence Prevention Services. "These resource cards are much safer for the victim rather than a brochure sitting on the coffee table. We always want to put a victim's safety first and foremost."

In 2012, District Attorney Murray created a team of Assistant District Attorneys who exclusively prosecute cases of crimes that occur between people in intimate relationships. In recent years, the District Attorney's Office has played an active role in the Mecklenburg County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team, a multidisciplinary team that reviews



Prosecutors will distribute these cards to domestic violence victims.

domestic violence-related deaths in an effort to prevent future homicides and increase safety for victims. Prosecutors were also involved in the development of the Mecklenburg County Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchange Center, which was created to prevent violence from occurring between family members during the exchange or visitation of children.

To learn more about Domestic Violence, Substance Use and Violence Prevention Services or to schedule a confidential session or register for support groups, call 704-336-3210.

Any media interested in an interview may contact Mr. Sexton at 704-900-9346 or Michael.Sexton@mecklenburgcountync.org or Meghan Cooke McDonald, Community Liaison Coordinator for the District Attorney's Office, at 704-686-0726 or Meghan.C.McDonald@nccourts.org.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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