Ideas for Hosting DVAM 2020 Virtual Awareness Events

Virtual events are not a new phenomenon, but in the current time of COVID-19, awareness events have become more creative than ever. Around the globe, advocates are coming up with innovative ideas to commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) while observing social distancing recommendations. Although virtual events can be less engaging for some, for many this is a tremendous opportunity to reach a wider audience. For those with access to the internet, virtual activities and social media campaigns can be a great way to connect with diverse communities.

Below are some ideas that will help you plan DVAM #1Thing virtual awareness activities.

- Start an online fundraiser for your local program. These resources will assist local programs with fundraising needs in connection with responding to the increased needs of survivors and their families in the face of COVID-19. The images are downloadable by right-clicking and saving to your desktop. You will also find sample social media posts to accompany the images.
- Host a community Twitter chat, other social media event, or group Zoom session to talk with your friends and followers about the #1Thing campaign and how easy it is to jump into action. The #1Thing Action Guide Sample Social Media Posts and the Supporting Older Survivors of Abuse Sample Social Media Posts are great ways to engage your followers.
Host a virtual event using the Facebook Live feature to stream content to your Facebook audience in real-time. You can invite speakers or follow NNEDV’s Conversation Guide: Starting the Discussion About Domestic Violence. Another great resource from NNEDV is the 10 Tips to Have an Informed Conversation About Domestic Violence guide. A great example of a Facebook Live event for DVAM is NRCDV’s 2019 Call for Unity: #1Thing, One Movement.

Organize a virtual candlelight vigil. Participation in a virtual candlelight vigil consists of three simple steps: post, tag and share. Ask your followers to post a photo of a lit candle, or a picture of themselves holding a lit candle, and use the #1Thing photo frame to either Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Make sure to ask everyone to tag their post with #1Thing and your personalized hashtag. After they upload and share their post, make sure that they encourage everyone to participate.

Host a virtual book club on behalf of your agency. You can lead remote conversations about a book or article chosen by the participants.

Access online prevention education and activism resources from the PreventIPV Tools Inventory.

Organize a virtual dance party. The Three Questions and a Song videos highlight empowering songs selections that will surely make everyone dance.

Join or start a community mutual aid project. Mutual aid projects build community by taking care of the specific needs of members of your community including those that might be overlooked by traditional systems.

Organize a #1Thing car parade in lieu of a walk/run fundraiser. You can ask participants to submit their donations online prior to the parade. Those participating can received goodie bags filled with #1Thing signs to decorate their cars.

Remember, once you choose the type of online event you will like to host, you must think about accessibility, especially during the planning process. A new toolkit by the national disability advocacy nonprofit RespectAbility aims to help organizations do so. Also, check out Vera Institute of Justice’s Accessibility Tip Sheet for Virtual Meetings and Events to learn about language and disability accessibility needs for all virtual meetings.

Don’t forget to submit your event to the Domestic Violence Awareness Project’s calendar of events. This calendar features an interactive map of community-based domestic violence awareness events throughout the year. Click on the map or search to find events near you.