

## **Domestic Violence Response Team**

The Woodland Park **D**omestic **V**iolence **R**esponse **T**eam (DVRT) was started in 2002 as part of a statewide mandate requiring all police departments to establish a domestic violence crisis team. Woodland Park's DVRT works in conjunction with Woodland Park Police Department and is in partnership with the Passaic County Women's Center that provides assistance to male and female victims of domestic violence.

DVRT members are volunteers. Each member is required to complete a 40-hour training course provided by the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office, the Passaic County Women's Center, and the Woodland Park Police Department. During this training, eligible applicants will learn what domestic violence is, methods for dealing with domestic violence, and neglect and abuse of the elderly or disabled.

Victims of domestic violence are offered the opportunity to speak with a DVRT member. Members are trained citizens who respond to police departments on an "on call" basis. Members provide immediate support; inform victims of the law, their rights, safety options, and available resources. DVRT members have a secure and private area located within the police department and access to the necessary resources to help victims.

### **Domestic Violence Response Team Goals**

- To decrease the emotional trauma experienced by victims – by providing the victim with an opportunity to express her or his emotional response to the crisis and educating them about the dynamics of domestic violence.
- To increase a victim's ability to make an educated decision about their options – by increasing the victim's awareness of available community resources and legal options and an understanding of the legal process.
- To increase the victim's access to community resources – by providing the victims with the necessary information to access available community resources and assisting them in contacting those resources.

Anyone interested in more information about becoming a Woodland Park DVRT Member should contact Sgt. Jeffrey O'Brien at (973) 345-8111 or Benafsha Shahsamand, Passaic County DVRT Coordinator at (973) 881-0725.

### **Quick Links:**

<http://www.njaconline.org/25.html>

<http://www.njcbw.org/guide.htm>

<http://www.idealists.org/en/org/95616-280>

<http://www.hud.gov/local/nj/homeless/shelters/passaic.cfm>