

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL ACT

• Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senator BOXER as a cosponsor of the Domestic Violence Identification and Referral Act. With the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in the 1994 crime bill, Congress addressed the need to educate law enforcement, judges, and prosecutors about how to deal with situations of domestic violence. However, in this important piece of legislation, Congress overlooked a major resource in the battle against domestic violence—our health care professionals. Doctors, nurses, and others in health professions are often the first to see the effects of battering and are often in the best position to stop the cycle of violence before it goes any further.

While domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women, many doctors, and nurses are unaware or unsure of the symptoms, treatment, and means of preventing domestic violence. In 1992, a Surgeon General's report cited a study showing 35 percent of the women who visit hospital emergency rooms were there because of ongoing abuse. Additionally, the study found that only 5 percent of the abused women were actually identified as such. A 1995 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* [JAMA] determined that little had changed since the earlier study and that doctors still failed to identify women who were injured as a result of domestic violence.

In a June 17, 1992, issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* Dr. Richard F. Jones III, the then-president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists [ACOG], related how for years he had missed the obvious signs of physical abuse in women patients. He had been asking the wrong questions and failed to elicit the true cause of their injuries. Only when he started asking these women directly if they were victims of physical abuse did the truth emerge.

Similarly, according to an article in a November 1995 issue of *American Medicine*, 60 percent of those graduating from medical schools felt that an insufficient amount of attention within the medical school curriculum was given to the issue of family and domestic violence.

Since Senator BOXER, Representative MORELLA, and I introduced the Domestic Violence Identification and Referral Act in 1992, the medical community has taken many steps to increase outreach and education on the issue of domestic violence. However, as these studies show, the fact is that when it comes to domestic violence, the bruises and abrasions get dressed, but the cause goes unaddressed. Doctors miss the signs of domestic violence early on and then often miss them again when they have become catastrophic.

The Domestic Violence Identification and Referral Act provides incentives for medical schools to provide signifi-

cant training in identifying, treating and referring victims of domestic violence. The legislation will give preference in awarding grants under the health professions education titles of the Public Health Services Act to schools that have incorporated training in domestic violence into their curriculum.

The title VII and title VIII grant programs, singled out in the bill, are demonstration grants and makeup but a small part of the hundreds of millions of Federal dollars that go to medical schools for state-of-the-art medical education. It seems to me to be self-evident that if we give medical schools this sort of funding, they should at least give some time to addressing the No. 1 cause of injury to women.

In drafting this legislation we worked closely with doctors, nurses, medical schools, and domestic violence groups. The Association of American Medical Colleges, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Medical Women's Association, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, AYUDA, NOW Legal Defense Fund, American Nurses Association, National League For Nursing, Association of Reproductive Health Professionals, and the Family Violence Prevention Fund, among others, have voiced their support for this legislation.

I thank the many groups that assisted in drafting this legislation and Senator BOXER for her leadership in this matter. I urge the Congress to pass this important piece of legislation this year.

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, Senator WYDEN has been added as a cosponsor to S. 101, the Domestic Violence Identification and Referral Act.

Senator WYDEN is the original author of this legislation, of which I am proud to be the Senate sponsor. He wrote it while he was a member of the House of Representatives, and has been the driving force behind this very important legislation. I was honored in the 103d Congress, when he asked me to introduce the Senate companion version.

Since Senator WYDEN's election to the Senate last year, we have worked hand-in-hand on this legislation. I look forward to working together in the 105th Congress to finally bring this bill to passage. •

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 NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK

• Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to support the National Character Counts Week resolution. Senator DOMENICI has introduced this resolution, which declares October 19 through 25, 1997, as National Character Counts Week, on behalf of myself and the bipartisan membership of the Senate Character Counts Group. I especially want to thank Senator DOMENICI for his continuing good leadership on Character Counts.

The national Character Counts Coalition, an alliance of hundreds of groups,

and individuals, was born out of a meeting of some of our country's best thinkers and doers in Colorado less than 5 years ago. These folks had many of the concerns that I know a lot of us here in the Senate share about the wrong direction that many of our young people seem to be headed.

Character Counts calls on all of us, educators, church and youth leaders, community and business leaders, and most importantly parents, to reinforce six basic values, or pillars of character. These values are so important and basic that I do not think anyone could question them. They are: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

I have two young children, so I know firsthand how difficult it is for kids to make the right choices when they are constantly being bombarded by messages from our popular culture that it is cool to drink alcohol or smoke or use vulgar language. To counteract these messages, it is more important than ever that we instill in our young people the integrity and good character to stand up for what is right. Children are not born with good character. They learn by example, and if they have good role models all around them, I am confident they will make correct choices for themselves.

As evidence that children are eager, even hungry, to do the right thing if given the proper reinforcement, I want to hold up the story of 11-year-old Herbert Tarvin. Many of you may remember hearing on the news about the Brinks armored car that crashed in January of this year in one of Miami, Florida's poorest neighborhoods. Herbert was walking to school that day when he passed the wrecked truck, and like many of the adults all around him, he gave into the temptation to grab some of the money from the truck. Herbert's newfound riches totaled 85 cents. In all, some \$300,000 in cash and coins was stolen from the truck.

Fortunately, when Herbert got to school, he had a teacher who cared enough to urge her students to turn over any money they had taken. Herbert's conscience prompted him to turn his 85-cent windfall over to his teacher, who returned it to the Brinks Co. Herbert says he knows he should not have taken the money to begin with because his mom and teacher have taught him better than that, but I am proud of him for ultimately returning the money.

Many of the adults around Herbert did not act so honorably. After weeks of public pleas and investigations, only about \$300 of the \$300,000 taken from the truck has been returned. Even so, this story is heartening to me because I think it shows that children want to do the right thing when faced with difficult situations. As Herbert's mom and teacher have done, we all have a role in ensuring that all children are given the ethical tools they need to make difficult choices in today's world. Quite simply, that is what the Character Counts Program is all about.