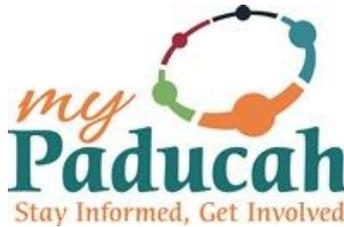


**NEWS
RELEASE**
June 9, 2015
City of Paducah, Kentucky



Contact: Pam Spencer
Public Information Officer
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Lethality Assessment Program Featured on *Your City at Work*

PADUCAH, KY— On the latest episode of *Your City at Work*, Public Information Officer Pam Spencer interviews Paducah Police Officer Austin Guill and Dana Sanderson, outreach advocate for the Merryman Domestic Crisis Center, about the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) and the partnership between the Police Department and Merryman House. The new episode of *Your City at Work* can be seen on Government 11 starting Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. It also airs Friday at 9:30 p.m. and Monday at 8 a.m.

In 2013 after receiving a grant through the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, the Paducah Police Department and Merryman House began using the LAP when officers respond to domestic violence calls involving intimate partners. The program uses a research-based form containing 11 yes or no questions. Depending upon the response to those questions by the victim, a protocol is triggered in which the officer calls a crisis counselor at Merryman House to link the victim immediately with services.

Officer Guill says, “The Lethality Assessment Program has really helped us do all we can as officers. When you sit down with a victim and ask those questions, we know we are doing all we can to extend the services that they need. I feel like it’s a good tool for the community to see that a police department is trying everything it can to get a victim into services. At that point I consider it a success, and I think we can prevent lethal incidents.”

Sanderson provides several statistics about domestic violence in Paducah and across the nation. She says on average a partner will attempt to leave an abusive relationship seven times. Sanderson says, “So many times a victim is financially dependent upon the perpetrator. So many times they are afraid of what will happen to their children. Also, the emotional manipulation is intense for these victims.”

Sanderson says once a victim is linked with a crisis counselor, the counselor has several goals with that first phone call including establishing a relationship and encouraging the victim to follow-up with services. Another goal is to create a safety plan. Sanderson says, “We want to empower these victims so that they can see that they can do it on their own.”

The Paducah Police Department had added an additional step to the LAP. An officer will follow-up with the victim within 48 hours of the incident. Officer Guill says, “What we are finding is that the perpetrator is no longer in the home, and the victim is very thankful that we went to the lengths that we did to get them in touch with the Merryman House.”

To contact the Merryman House, call 1-800-585-2686.



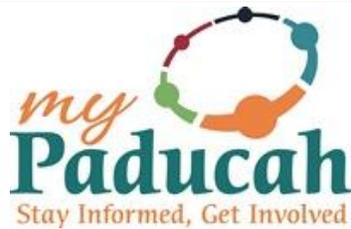
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In addition to airing on Government 11, the episode also is online at www.paducahky.gov and the various social media outlets for the City of Paducah including Youtube and Facebook. Check the website for program information, videos, news releases, and broadcast schedules. *Your City at Work* is hosted and produced by Public Information Officer Pam Spencer through the television production facilities at West Kentucky Community and Technical College. For more information about *Your City at Work* or other Government 11 programming, call WKCTC Television Production Coordinator Tom Butler at 270-534-3208 or Pam Spencer at 270-444-8669.

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