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**FSU AND FLORIDA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY JOIN FORCES  
TO PREVENT OFFICER-INVOLVED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — The Institute for Family Violence Studies at The Florida State University's College of Social Work and Florida's criminal justice community have joined forces to launch a first-of-its-kind initiative to prevent and reduce domestic violence in law enforcement families.

The centerpiece of the Law Enforcement Family Partnership (LEFP) is an online training course called "Officer-Involved Domestic Violence: A Prevention Curriculum." The training will be available to Florida law enforcement and correctional officers beginning April 1 and can be used as part of their mandatory re-training hours.

"Domestic violence is a problem that crosses racial, socioeconomic and occupational categories, and Florida's dedicated and conscientious officers deserve to have every tool at their disposal for making their families and communities safer," said Karen Oehme, director of the FSU Institute for Family Violence Studies. "Nowhere else in the United States has such a multidisciplinary partnership been dedicated to reducing officer-involved domestic violence."

The standardized curriculum is the first in the nation and will be available to Florida's approximately 45,800 law enforcement officers and 35,900 correctional and probation officers at no cost to the agencies. Officers in Florida are required to complete 40 hours of mandatory re-training every four years in order to keep their certification up to

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date. Completion of this curriculum would count toward the number of training hours required.

"Florida's officers are charged with protecting citizens, and they are held to the highest standards," said FDLE Commissioner Gerald Bailey. "This program makes critical training readily accessible. I know agencies of all sizes will be eager to take advantage of this program."

Secretary of the Department of Corrections Walter McNeil said he is pleased to make the training available to correctional and probation officers.

"This domestic violence prevention curriculum is a tool to help us educate our employees before there is a problem," McNeil said. "Keeping our Department of Corrections' families healthy is a priority of mine because we know good sons, husbands and fathers are also good officers."

In addition to the curriculum, the initiative includes multimedia materials for criminal justice agencies such as a roll-call video, posters, brochures and affirmation cards for officers. The affirmation card is a pledge the officer makes to "Be a good example by keeping my own family free of domestic violence; Get help when I need it; and Report suspicion of anyone committing domestic violence, including fellow officers."

The Institute for Family Violence Studies, which brought together a diverse cross-section of the university, law enforcement, and victim advocacy communities, spearheaded the initiative. The partnership plans to expand the curriculum, help develop statewide model policies and create additional tools to educate officers about domestic violence as potential funding allows.

"I applaud FSU and the criminal justice community for their bold move to stretch beyond intervention strategies and focus on prevention, which is critical to ending domestic violence in our state," said Tiffany Carr, president of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

More information for law enforcement agencies that wish to take part is available at <http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/>

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