



Mental health, domestic violence services advocacy by Delegate Crotty continues during pandemic

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty is encouraging the Navajo public to take advantage of the recently implemented Navajo Nation Mental Health Helpline that was coordinated and developed by the Navajo Nation Department of Health in March. The helpline provides over-the-phone mental health support to Navajo citizens who may be experiencing a mental health crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, Delegate Crotty is advocating for and urging Navajo leadership to support social services programs and domestic violence shelters that service the Navajo Nation and border town areas. Shelters are considered an essential service under the Navajo Nation's public health orders and have continued to provide assistance, services, and transportation for domestic violence victims.

"Many of our Navajo people across the Nation are facing critical concerns during this pandemic. Income instability, lack of personal protective equipment or PPEs, and decreased access to critical health care and social services are only a few of the issues needing to be addressed. However, another layer to this pandemic is mental health and support for domestic violence victims. I call on Navajo leadership to acknowledge these issues and act to increase support and resources to these vulnerable populations," said Delegate Crotty.

National and local reports of domestic violence have increased, partly due to shelter-in-place orders that mandate movement restrictions, state Delegate Crotty. This can result in exacerbating violence within the home. National reports also state that there has been a significant increase in calls to domestic violence hotlines and domestic violence reports to law enforcement.

"Recently, the United Nations called for urgent action to combat the recent surge in domestic violence due to shelter-in-home orders and I would convey these same sentiments to our Navajo leadership, chapters, programs and partners. Sheltering in place is very important to stop the spread of COVID-19, but we must also acknowledge that violence does not stop despite the pandemic," said Delegate Crotty.

Navajo citizens seeking domestic violence shelter services and resources may call the Strengthening Families Program at (505) 368-1157 to be connected with a victim advocate who will assist. Domestic violence shelters are also accepting donations for personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff and clients. PPE needs include face masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes and more.

Those experiencing a mental health crisis that need over-the-phone counseling may contact the Navajo Nation Health Command Operation Center's Mental Health Helpline at (928) 810-7357. The helpline is open to assist individuals daily from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. (MDT).

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