Purple Hijab and Kufi Day

The purpose of this campaign is to bring more attention to survivors of domestic abuse, raise awareness of how serious abuse can become, and encourage activism amongst those within the Islamic community. Participants also commemorate the lives lost to domestic violence.

Observed annually during Valentine’s Day weekend, the Baitul Salaam Network, Inc. (www.iphkd.org) spearheads this event. Baitul Salaam, in collaboration with Asadullah and Muslim Men Against Domestic Violence, strongly encourages others to take time to reflect on why Muslim women, children and even some men are dying due to abuse in their homes, and to participate in Purple Hijab and Kufi Day by planning their own events and activities for the observance. Community members, faith groups, community-based organizations and allies can find an event in their area and/or register an event on the website; find them on Facebook as well.

History
The stimulus for this observance originates from the murder of a Muslim woman, Aasiya Zubair Hassan, who was killed by her husband, Muzzammil Hassan, on Valentine’s Day weekend in 2009. Like many women, she had suffered from abuse for several years but kept it hidden for a myriad of reasons; most notably for the sake of not leaving her children. When she began to stand up for her rights and freedom, Aasiya called the authorities to have her husband evicted from the home under a domestic violence protection order. Sadly, her husband later tricked her into meeting about a project they were working on together, and at that location, he beheaded her. CNN News, among other media outlets, reported on this incident when it happened, Beheaded woman’s sister: I might have heard deadly confrontation.

“Imam Mohamed Hagmagid Ali, Vice President of the Islamic Society of North America, said Aasiya Hassan’s death serves “as a wake-up call to all of us, that violence against women is real and cannot be ignored […] The Muslim community is not exempt from this issue. We, the Muslim community, need to take a strong stand against domestic violence.”

1 For the purposes of this document, Islamic community is defined as a diverse grouping of Muslims from various geographic areas of the world, including Africa, the Middle East, India, Pakistan, the Caribbean, the U.S., Bosnian, Spain, and various other parts of eastern Europe.
**Taking a Stand**

To take a stand against domestic violence, organizers can plan an art display, candlelight vigil, prayer breakfast, Silent Witness display (cultural modifications can be made to the silhouettes), or social media event to raise awareness. Baitul Salaam requests that organizers contact them about their events so they may assist in promotion. Events are typically open to all members of the general public and may include two or three survivors of abuse as speakers, in shaa Allah. Access an Arabic or English edition of the guide, *From the Front of the Room: A Survivor’s Guide to Public Speaking* (2011) from the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (http://www.nrcdv.org/dvam/training-resources) to help prepare survivors for speaking out publicly about their experiences with violence and abuse. A training webinar about this resource, presented by the Peaceful Families Project (http://www.peacefulfamilies.org), is available from the HealthPath Foundation of Ohio (scroll to item 6, recorded on December 8, 2014).

**Planning an Event**

Planning time for these events may vary depending upon the type of activity being organized but starting 6 months out from the date of the event usually works well. For many organizers, the budget can remain small with the help of donations, such as the space to hold the event, food, gifts or compensation for the survivor speakers, resource materials, etc. Engaging a variety of community members, from agency staff to volunteers, faith leaders, business owners, youth groups, and more is the best way to have a successful event! Baitul Salaam suggests having a debrief about 10 days after the event to discuss what went well, where to improve, and accept suggestions for the next year’s activities.

**Contact Information**

For more details or assistance, please contact Baitul Salaam via their online contact form, by visiting their website at http://www.baitulsalaam.org, or by phone at 770-255-8500.