

Chicago



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Molly Maid supports domestic violence awareness

October 21st, 2009 10:52 am CT

Molly Maids don't just fight germs; they fight domestic violence as well. Molly Maid is the residential franchise cleaning service recognizable by the navy cars appointed with pink signage. Since 1996 the [Ms. Molly Foundation](#), a non profit organization founded by Molly Maid, has helped raise awareness of domestic violence by sponsoring a drive in October in recognition of "Domestic Violence Awareness Month". Over the course of its existence \$725,000 has been raised for local domestic violence shelters. The target for the 2009, "Making a Difference" campaign, is \$150,000 in funds and services to community safe houses and shelters.



With the majority of its cleaning staff being women, the issue of domestic violence is an issue that hits close to home. Eighty five to ninety five percent of domestic violence victims are female. The [National Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#) reports that "One out of every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime." Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, mental or financial and is generally perpetrated by the male partner seeking control.

Eleven Molly Maid franchises in the greater Chicago land area are participating in the drive this year. Participation might include revenue contributions, volunteering at a shelter, hosting a fund raising event or collecting clothing. Participation is voluntary and diverse. Franchise owners choose the local shelter or half way house they wish to support or pass the contribution to the national foundation.

Kristin Selmeczy, franchise owner of the Glendale Heights location, donates \$.25 of every cleaning job throughout the year. Her shelter of choice is the Family Shelter Service, servicing DuPage County, which her staff cleans twice a month pro bono. Her business has also gathered donations, appliances, clothing, toys and travel toiletries. Eight loads have already been delivered and another is collecting in her office.

A mom as well as a business woman, Kristin is concerned about her daughter growing up in a world where domestic violence exists and wants to ensure that her sons are schooled in the understanding that this kind of behavior is not acceptable. She believes women should, "Be socially responsible, respect women's issues....support each other".

Occasionally, an employee will relate a domestic violence event and utilization of a local agency. After cleaning a Family Shelter Service location, an employee remarked, "Kristin that was really hard for me. I used to live there".

The [Family Shelter Service](#) offers "individual and group counseling, court advocacy and services, shelter, hotline, teen services, children's services, and Latina services". Pam Matriscino, Community Donations Coordinator, appreciates the cleaning service offered by Kristin's business which might not otherwise be affordable due to funding cuts and the stringent economic climate. Pam remarked that Kristin's donations are stocked in their resale shop's which are open to the public and fund domestic violence clients free of charge.

Regardless of where you live, if you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence you can begin to regain self empowerment by calling the [Illinois Domestic Violence Helpline](#) at 877-863-6338.

For more info: Contact the Molly Maids in Addison, Highland Park, Lake Bluff, Grayslake, Oak Park, Carpentersville, Tinley Park, North Aurora, Skokie, Glendale Heights or Lisle to participate in the drive this year.

For more information on domestic violence see the vavor research in brief, "[The Facts about Domestic Violence](#)".



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