



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

301 SECOND STREET - WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA 95695 - 530.666.8180 - FAX 530.666.8185

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy District Attorney

Phone: (530) 666-8092/jonathan.raven@yolocounty.org

**Family Justice Center Hosts Domestic Violence Strangulation Training
Training will highlight new California laws for domestic violence
and sexual assault victims.**

(Woodland, CA) – May 7, 2012 – The Yolo County Family Justice Center, California District Attorneys Association and the National Family Justice Center Alliance will host a training on strangulation issues in domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Recognizing the importance of California’s new law classifying strangulation crimes, these partners will provide this training on Thursday, May 10, 2012 at the Woodland Community and Senior Center. The training is open to all of prosecutors, domestic violence service providers, law enforcement professionals, first responders and medical professionals

“Today, more than 10% of the women killed each year in this country are strangled, and the lack of external injuries plus the lack of medical training for domestic violence professionals has minimized the focus on this type of violence,” stated Gael Strack, CEO of the Family Justice Center Alliance and the primary advocate for California’s new strangulation law (SB 430).

Many states still do not adequately address this violence in their criminal statutes, policies or responses. When domestic violence perpetrators use strangulation to silence their victims, not only is this felonious assault, it can be an attempted homicide. Strangulation is also a form of power and control which can have a devastating psychological effect on victims in addition to a potentially fatal outcome.

“Most domestic violence offenders who strangle their partners want the victim to know they can kill them so they will live with the knowledge of their partner’s lethality day and night,” stated Casey Gwinn, President of the National Family Justice Center Alliance. “The abuser generally does not want to kill or seriously injure the victim but instead wants to instill fear. Now, we can help hold these violent abusers accountable before they kill,” said Gwinn.

Yolo County Sheriff Ed Prieto and District Attorney Jeff Reisig are both on the Board of Directors of the Yolo County Family Justice Center. Reisig stated that Yolo County is fortunate to have experts from the Family Justice Center Alliance visit us from San Diego to provide this invaluable training. “I know our prosecutors and victims’ advocates will greatly benefit from the expertise of Gael and Casey,” said Reisig. Sheriff Prieto added that he is confident the training will be another tool that will allow his detectives and deputies to complete their investigations. “Understanding both the motivation of these suspects and the physiology of strangulation injuries of the victims will really help my deputies,” said Prieto.

The Yolo County Family Justice Center was established in 2011 as a single location to provide comprehensive services to victims of domestic violence, including medical treatment, legal services, police protection, counseling and other services. The mission of the Yolo County Family Justice Center is to provide collaborative, confidential, and comprehensive services in support of individuals and families whose lives have been impacted by family violence and abuse. All residents of Yolo County who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or elder abuse are encouraged to seek assistance. For more information about the Yolo County Family Justice Center and its hours of operation visit www.fjcyolo.org.

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