



5K walk to aid victims of domestic violence

By Danielle Ameden

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Supporters of domestic violence victims will rally for the 2nd annual 5K "Walk to Break the Silence" on Oct. 19 in Framingham.

The fundraiser aims to raise awareness as well as \$50,000 to help local nonprofit Voices Against Violence continue to provide free services to sexual and domestic abuse victims and survivors.

"What we really hope to be able to do is give the community an opportunity to come together and show support for victims and survivors," the organization's director Mary Gianakis said.

The fundraising is especially important this year, Gianakis said, because Voices, a program of the South Middlesex Opportunity Council, worries the government shutdown could affect its federal funding.

Meanwhile, Gianakis said her organization saw a 65 percent spike last fiscal year in clients coming through the door.

"We're not sure why, but it's a pretty significant strain on current resources and really speaks to the ongoing need for services," she said.

The 5k takes place during National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and provides an opportunity for people to speak out, Gianakis said.

Former Middlesex District Attorney Gerry Leone will serve as the event's honorary chairman.

The race starts at 10 a.m. at the downtown Framingham common.

Registration is free, but participants are asked to seek tax-deductible donations from friends, family and coworkers to go toward the services Voices provides.

"We set our goal really high this year," Gianakis said. "I'm hoping that we'll get close."

Register, learn more or donate by visiting www.firstgiving.com/smoc/vavwalk2013, or call 508-820-0834.

For help with domestic violence, call Voices' 24-hour hotlines at 1-800-593-1125 or 508-626-8686.

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Read more: <http://www.wickedlocal.com/framingham/news/x928794914/5K-walk-to-aid-victims-of-domestic-violence#ixzz2hnpOYwsV>