

NEW TENNESSEE LAW ENLISTS BEAUTY INDUSTRY TO HELP CUT OUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

YWCA leads effort to educate all licensed cosmetologists and barbers across Tennessee

(NASHVILLE, Tenn. – May 3, 2021) - Salon professionals have a unique relationship with their clients. The women and men behind the chair are in the perfect position to hear about and see the signs of domestic violence. But many may not know how to respond. Thanks to a new Tennessee state law, licensed beauty professionals will soon have the tools to learn about the signs of abuse, how to respond, and what resources are available to help. This effort to educate Tennessee’s beauty professionals was led by YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee and volunteer Susanne Post, a Nashville-based salon owner, stylist, and survivor of domestic violence

“We see our clients on a regular basis and for long periods of time,” said Post. “They trust us. They confide in us. We know when things aren’t right. This training will help everyone in the industry know the signs and resources when abuse is happening. This new law has the potential to save many lives.”

Post and advocates from the YWCA testified before several Tennessee House and Senate Committees during the 112th General Assembly session. The bill was carried by Knoxville Senator Becky Massey and Franklin Representative Sam Whitson, who also sponsored similar legislation during the abbreviated General Assembly session of 2020.

“The COVID-19 pandemic showed that not everyone is safer at home,” said Rep. Whitson. “I’m proud to have sponsored this legislation and equally proud of the vast majority of my colleagues for recognizing the crisis of domestic violence and acting to make positive change in our laws. While we had to wait a full year before we could get this measure passed, we have a much better and stronger law because of the pandemic.”

The new law requires that the anti-domestic violence training be available online, at no cost, be limited to up to one hour. It does NOT require licensees to become a mandatory reporter. It goes into effect on January 1, 2022. Licensed cosmetologists have two, two-year renewal cycles to take approved training. Students and instructors in cosmetology schools will need to certify they have taken the training before receiving their license. The Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance worked closely with Rep. Whitson and Sen. Massey, Post, and the YWCA on crafting the legislation. Similar laws exist in just a handful of states, including Illinois and Arkansas

The YWCA and Post began educating beauty professionals in Nashville in late 2017. They created the Shear Haven education program and delivered anti-domestic violence education to dozens of individual salons and stylists until the pandemic put a halt to in-person training in March of 2020. A few months into the pandemic, Barbicide - the industry leader in safety - teamed up with Post and the YWCA to offer the Shear Haven training online. To date, more than 23,000 beauty professionals from around the world have taken the training.

“We have been working to educate and end domestic violence in our community for more than four decades,” said Sharon K. Roberson, President & CEO of YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee. “This new law is an excellent step in reducing a crime that impacts one in four women and one in seven men in the U.S. We’re grateful for the support of our elected officials at taking steps to end this crisis.”

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Learn more about the Shear Haven training by visiting the [YWCA website](#) and take the training and quiz on the [Barbicide website](#). Local resources are found on the YWCA website and the Hotline - the national domestic violence resource is found on the Barbicide site.

If you or someone you know has questions about domestic violence or needs shelter, please call YWCA's 24-Hour Crisis & Support Helpline - 800-334-4628 or TEXT 615-983-5170.

About YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee

For 123 years, YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee has helped women, girls and families in Nashville and Middle Tennessee build safer, more self-sufficient lives. YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. Programs include Domestic Violence Services, Girls Inc., AMEND Together, Social Justice & Advocacy, Dress for Success and the Family Learning Center. For more information, visit <https://ywcannashville.com>, follow us on twitter @YWCANashville, Instagram @YWCANashvile and find us on Facebook at facebook.com/YWCANashville

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