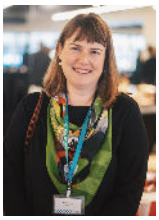
MARCH EVENTS

- Women's History Month
- Brain Injury Awareness Month
- March 3-5: NNEDV Conference
- March 7: Navigating Life after Brain Injury Seminar
- March 8: International Women's Day

THROUGH THE YEARS

- Advocacy
- Celebration
- Education



The fight for women's rights has always been about more than just equality. It has been about safety, autonomy, and the ability to live free from violence. Throughout history, women have fought for the right to vote, to work, to be heard, and to be protected under the law. These struggles have paved the way for modern efforts to address domestic violence as a crime, promote healthy relationships, and create a society where empowerment and safety go hand in hand.

To continue this work, we must also focus on increasing the income status of women, decreasing gender inequities in income and economic opportunities and decreasing poverty, especially among women and women-led households. Not remedying these factors may pressure women to stay financially dependent on their abusive partners.

Because this progress is critical, STANDING FIRM continues to stand and work with the Family Care Act Coalition in Pennsylvania, the Alliance for Access and Assets, Level Up Greater Pittsburgh Pay Equity Campaign, Women & Girls Foundation, YWCA Greater Pittsburgh, PA Women Work and more.

For Help:
Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh

National Domestic Violence Hotline

Women's Law Project

International Women's Day Toolkit

The movement that began 115 years ago to demand fair wages, safer work conditions, and the right to vote continues today as we advocate for gender equality and pay, addressing systemic bias, and supporting women in leadership in all arenas.

It also brings to the forefront that although we've come a long way, we still have far to go.

"Today, International Women's Day (IWD) serves as a popular mainstream moment that celebrates the social, economic, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for advancing gender equality worldwide." (IWD, 2026)

Mark your calendars: Saturday, May 9th
Celebrating Survivors Annual Gala

LEARN MORE

If you would like to learn more about STANDING FIRM, email contactsf@standing-firm.org

or

schedule your Information Session with our Director, Megan Rose

MONTHLY AWARENESS POSTERS

Access here.

BRIGHT SKY APP

Bright Sky is a safe, free, easy-to-use app and website that provides practical support and information on how to respond to domestic violence. It is for anyone experiencing domestic violence, or for those worried about someone else.

**Upload only if safe to do so.*

Download for IOS

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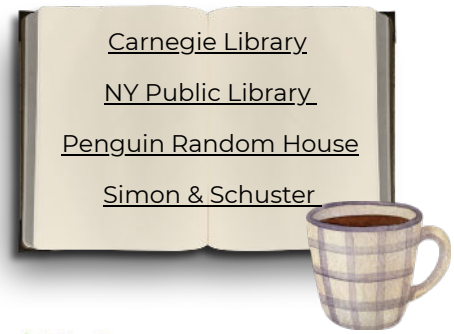
MARCH READS



Led by the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA), March has been designated as National Brain Injury Awareness Month. The goal is to educate, reduce stigma, and highlight the daily challenges experienced by over 5.3 million Americans living with a brain injury.

"My Brain Journey" is the theme for 2026 and it encourages those living with a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) caused by external forces (accidents, falls, repeated hits to the head) and Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) which are caused primarily by strokes, infections, or seizures.

In the past decade, researchers have been studying the correlation between TBI and domestic violence. It's important that medical providers screen anyone who has lived with or is living with currently domestic abuse--regardless of the length of time between events.

"Abusers will often hit their victims on the head to conceal bruises. An estimate 36% of domestic violence survivors have sustained injuries to the head, neck or face.[1] Women seeking medical attention for these injuries are 7.5 times more likely to be survivors of domestic violence than women with other bodily injuries.[2] TBI may also be associated with sexual assault with or without the experience of domestic violence."

As an employer, it's important to look at the big picture if an employee is having difficulties at work, especially since they may not have disclosed that they have or are experiencing domestic violence. (Click on the "My Brain Injury Journey image above to learn more.) People living with TBI may experience some of these issues listed below:

- Not having the ability to make safe choices.
- Trouble focusing and completing tasks.
- May experience anxiety or depression and possibly substance abuse to cope.
- Struggle to find the correct words; memory issues.
- Trouble sleeping and managing stress, and more.

Economic stability is critical to a survivor being able to leave and stay out of an abusive relationship, so employers should consider concerns and accommodation options prior to taking further action.

Our Program Associate, Karen, will be attending a seminar (Navigating Life After Brain Injury, presented by Class Community (classcommunity.org) this month and looks forward to sharing information in an upcoming issue.

[1]Wilson, Sharon. R. (2009). Traumatic brain injury and intimate partner violence in Connie Mitchell's Intimate Partner Violence: A Health-based Perspective. 187. Oxford University Press, Inc., New York: NY.

[2]2011. Fern Gilkerson. Participant's Guide. Traumatic Brain Injury as a Result of Domestic Violence. Module V.

Brain Injury Awareness Toolkit
WVU Medicine: Check out what's happening locally!