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# AADA Press

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## Who's Laughing?

"Sulking in someone else's pain doesn't make it go away, but laughing at it perpetuates it." -Ashley McDonough



I recently attended a stand-up comedy show in South Houston with a group of friends. For the most part, the comics were very funny and we enjoyed ourselves quite a bit. Halfway through the show, I heard a joke that made me cringe my teeth and feel a little gut-wrenched. The comedian made a comment about the Houston Texans kicker, Kris Brown. The comedian said he (Kris) would be able to up his averages if a picture of Rhianna's face was painted on the ball, making reference to the "other" Chris Brown.

Some may argue that the guy was in fact a comedian and his job is to make fun of offensive topics that catch people's attention. Well, I'm here to tell you that some jokes are simply not funny. I don't know about you, but I do not think domestic violence is a topic that makes many victims laugh.

In the March 2009 issue of Newsweek entitled "Domestic Abuse Myths," the author makes a great point about victim blaming: "In most domestic-abuse cases, we're talking about a situation where one person is wielding power over an individual through pain, fear and domination. It's not about being scared to leave because of the dangers that await you in the world; it's about being too scared of what's at home to leave."

As long as society continues to make jokes about the victims of domestic violence, society will continue to make light of the situation or even blame the victim. So why should we care about domestic violence? What really happens to the victims anyhow?

According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2009), the perpetrator's abusive behavior can cause an array of health problems and physical injuries. Victims (men, women, or children) may require medical attention for immediate injuries, hospitalization for severe assaults, or chronic care for debilitating health problems resulting from the perpetrator's physical attacks. The direct physical effects of domestic violence can range from minor scratches or bruises to fractured bones or sexually transmitted diseases resulting from forced sexual activity and other practices. The indirect physical effects of domestic violence can range from recurring headaches or stomachaches to severe health problems due to withheld medical attention or medications.

The impact of domestic violence on victims can result in acute and chronic mental health problems. Some victims, however, have histories of psychiatric illnesses that may be exacerbated by the abuse; others may develop psychological problems as a direct result of the abuse. Examples of emotional and behavioral effects of domestic violence include many common coping responses to trauma, such as: Emotional withdrawal, denial or minimization of the abuse, impulsivity or aggressiveness, apprehension or fear, helplessness, anger, anxiety, disturbance of eating or sleeping patterns, depression, suicide and post-traumatic stress disorder.

If you or someone you care about needs assistance, or want to set up a workshop for your organization, business, religious affiliate, or social group, please contact AADA today at: 713-974-3743 or at [www.aadainc.org](http://www.aadainc.org)

## Side Notes:

Final donation amount from the Telfair Charity of your Choice Walk: \$1444.69—Thank you Telfair!!!

Please remember to do your online shopping through GoodSearch and designate AADA as your charity of choice. Up to 30% of your purchase is directly donated to AADA!

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# SPOTLIGHT

## Current Collaborations

**W.S.S. Tri-County Child Development Council, Inc.** believes that by empowering the families to meet the needs of their children while striving toward self-sufficiency, provides the family with the greatest opportunity of long-term success. Currently, AADA is in the process of establishing collaborations on their educational program for healthy family relations. For more information about the W.S.S. Tri-County Child Development Council, please visit their website at: <http://www.wsstricounty.org>

**Gateway to Care** is a 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that each resident of the Harris County / Greater Houston area has access to affordable and accessible healthcare. AADA collaborates on their planning committee and their clients receive access to healthcare through their services. For more information about Gateway to Care, please visit their website at: <http://www.gatewaytocare.org/>

**The Tahirih Justice Center** is an innovative, efficient, and strategic nonprofit organization that works to protect immigrant women and girls from gender-based violence through legal services, advocacy, and public education programs. The Tahirih Justice Center has provided legal assistance to some of AADA's clients. For more information about The Tahirih Justice Center, please visit their website at: <http://www.tahirih.org>

**The Iba Sina Foundation's** mission is to ensure the health of the community by providing integrated preventive and primary care in a clinic setting through the dissemination and application of health related knowledge, thereby enhancing the quality of life for future generations. AADA actively participates in their health fairs and refers victims for medical assistance. For more information about The Iba Sina Foundation, please visit their website at: <http://www.ibasinafoundation.org>

**Houston Shifa Services Foundation** is a non-profit organization founded by local physicians whose mission is to provide a community oriented alternative for those who cannot afford medical treatment. AADA refers clients for much needed medical assistance. For more information about The Houston Shifa Services Foundation, please visit their website at: <http://www.shifaclinichouston.org>

**Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston** is a nonprofit organization that provides a comprehensive network of social services aimed at promoting and facilitating self-sufficiency. AADA will soon conduct an information session to Catholic Charities' attorneys and staff about DA issues pertaining to Asian American Communities. For more information about Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, please visit their website at: <http://www.catholiccharities.org>

**The Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition** exists to raise awareness about human trafficking, assist in identifying victims and improving victim services. We do this through projects that assist in either rescuing or restoring Human Trafficking victims in the Greater Houston Metropolitan Area. AADA will hold a seat on their information panel in September. For more information about The Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition, please visit their website at: <http://www.houstonnrr.org>

## Children Who Witness Abuse

In 60 percent of homes in which the mother is being abused, children are being abused as well (TCFV, 2009). I would challenge to say that the children are being abused in 100 percent of the homes. When we understand what the emotional effects of witnessing abuse are, we begin to note the emotional and cognitive distress that is going on in the child's mind. Children who have been exposed to violence in the home tend to exhibit more externalized anti behaviors. These behaviors can include: bullying, acting out in the classroom, and mimicking language heard in the home. These children also tend to exhibit more internalized behaviors which would include anxiety, depression, exhaustion, and other temperament problems.



Another issue associated with children witnessing violence in the home is that those children may learn to develop violent tendencies of their own. According to Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), people learn from one another, via observation, imitation, and modeling. "Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action." Children who witness and become "used to" violence in the home are more likely to repeat the behaviors later on and perpetuate the generational cycle of violence.

Early intervention and prevention programs are crucial to breaking the generational cycle of violence. Encourage your children's schools to incorporate teen-dating violence or anti-bullying curricula into their programs. AADA offers age appropriate classes and workshops to Intermediate and High School youth. AADA also offers classes to parents, teachers, and other education professionals. To learn more about scheduling a workshop or presentation, please contact AADA at [amcdonough@amacolutions.com](mailto:amcdonough@amacolutions.com)

Need assistance for yourself or someone you care about? Call the 24-hour hotline at 713-339-8300 . If you suspect a child is being abused, please contact the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 1-800-252-5400 or make a report online at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)



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Dear Friends,

As always, AADA would like to extend our sincerest thank you to all of our volunteers, donors and supporters. Without community support and the countless volunteer hours—clients would be deprived of the valuable direct services they so desperately need.

Sincerely,  
AADA Leadership and Staff