



February 2023—Issue No. 13

Association Newsletter

Empowering Members To Empower Us All

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Celebrating **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

In our work as ESD professionals, we reflect often on these words from Martin Luther King, Jr. We consider the critical truth that our work to prevent violence must include everyone, growing organically, from the ground up, in every community, every country, every household. To truly eliminate violence, we must transform it at the root—all the roots.

Similarly, a platform like the Association of ESD Professionals must reflect the multiplicity of voices and perspectives driving this movement forward if it is to uplift and amplify the field of empowerment self-defense—for all of us.

February is Black History Month in the U.S. and Canada (the UK and Ireland will celebrate later in the year), and at the Association of ESD Professionals, we take it as an opportunity to celebrate those members of the African diaspora and those living in Africa (making up a significant and growing part of our incredible ESD network expanding across the world) making waves today in the field of violence prevention and empowerment. Look out for features across our social media platforms commemorating their work and Black History Month.

We seek to amplify the voices and achievements of ESD professionals around the world every day and every month of the year. These special holidays are an extra reminder, an invitation, if you will, to center stories and contributions that have historically been pushed to the sidelines. With our perspective today, in 2023, we celebrate these protagonists and cheer them on.

A NOTE FROM ASSOCIATION MEMBER TRACIE ARLINGTON

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Trigger Warning: Domestic Violence

Her name is Kiera Bergman. She was a 19-year-old teen, verbally and physically abused by her boyfriend. Many of their arguments involved frontal choking; one day she decided to leave him. After Kiera had disappeared for a month, her body was found in the desert. Her boyfriend was the last to see her.

Kiera is my friend's daughter and together, with so many other people, we are keeping her memory alive by spreading awareness of Teen Dating and Domestic Violence.

Did you know?

- According to the CDC, 1 in 12 teens between 12-19 years have reported experiencing physical or sexual dating violence.
- Because so much of Teen Dating Violence (TDV) goes unreported, most studies show that 1 in 3 U.S. teens will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse from someone they are in a relationship with.
- [43% of U.S. college women](#) report experiencing violent or abusive dating behaviors.
- The LGBTQ community experiences higher rates.

Common Warning Signs

Please visit [Rainn.org](https://rainn.org) for a complete list, but I believe that isolation from friends and family is a MAJOR red flag. This is what happened to Kiera. Her boyfriend actually moved her to a new city.

How can we as instructors help?

Most of my students are of middle school and high school ages. I am always surprised to see how many students raise their hands when I ask if they have a friend in an unhealthy relationship. So, we take a deep dive into what "healthy" vs. "unhealthy" relationships look like. Defining TDV is critical, as most young people think it only involves physical violence or stalking.

Next, we discuss setting boundaries early, using words and a powerful voice if needed. It's critical that we teach our students to recognize the "warning signs." We want them to avoid an unhealthy relationship before it starts. I also encourage my students to learn how to encourage and support a friend that is experiencing TDV.

The “Upstander” effect is powerful, but they need to learn how to give support and a safety plan. I have listed several organizations below that can give the proper guidance.

Because choking is the second most common weapon used next to alcohol and drugs, I teach them how to get out of all the various choke holds.

Finally, I encourage my students to raise awareness about Teen Dating Violence. February is a great month to do so, especially on campus and through social media. Many High schools actually have “Empowerment Clubs.” We instructors of ESD Global have a powerful platform as well. Check out these media resources you can post in February:

Further Resources

- www.loveisrespect.org
- www.DoSomething.org
- www.teendvmonth.org

Written by: Tracie Arlington, www.PlayItSafeDefense.com

Reach out at: Tracie@playitsafedefense.com



ASSOCIATION NEWS

Credentialing in 2023

We are cheering on the next round of ESD professionals who will be taking the Credentialing Exam this month! Applications have closed for Period One of 2023, but are still open for Periods Two, Three, and Four.

Visit the credentialing page of our website at <https://www.esdprofessionals.org/exam> to learn more or apply for the next period of the Credentialing Exam. And if you missed it, check out our [blog celebrating the first credentialed ESD professionals](#) and read what they have to say!



How much is too much?

"Vulnerability is not weakness; it's our greatest measure of courage." —Brené Brown

Lastest Blog

"As a leader or facilitator, it is one thing to speak about vulnerability, it is another to lead the way (safely) into vulnerability. It is important to model healthy, vulnerable expression, but it must be done intentionally and with boundaries." —Amy Schmidt

How much vulnerability is it appropriate for facilitators to share during an ESD class? [Read our latest blog](#) for a thought-provoking reflection by ESD professional Amy Schmidt.

We would love to know your thoughts! Feel free to reach out with comments, or submit a blog of your own to toby@esdprofessionals.org!

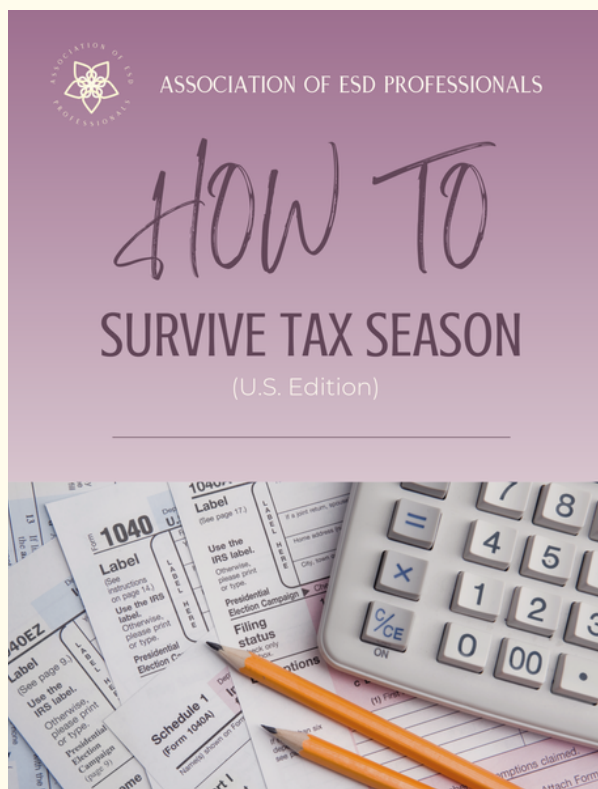
ASSOCIATION NEWS

Don't Miss Office Hours!

Thursday, February 23rd, 11am EST | Online

Join Tom Rose and a special guest for an insightful conversation designed for ESD professionals like you. Gain valuable insights for your ESD practice. [Register here.](#)

Be sure to check out past recordings on our [YouTube channel](#), and reach out to hello@esdprofessionals.org with any requests for guests or topics!



Ready for Tax Season?

We believe that financial empowerment is a critical piece of personal empowerment. Therefore, this tax season, we are offering some tax tips to all the ESD professionals who run businesses and nonprofits in the U.S.

Experiencing anxiety at tax time? That's normal. Sifting through seemingly endless paperwork, stressing over lost receipts, trying to understand what to deduct? Also normal. Even the seasoned taxpayer may still find tax season ... well, taxing.

Visit our [resources page](#) to download our latest How-To Guide to empower your tax season, and check out all our other guides while you're there!

ASSOCIATION NEWS



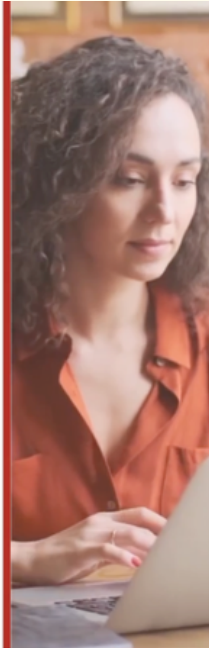
ESD Biz Tip of the Week

Be realistic with your time management throughout the day.



www.ESDProfessionals.org

The graphic features a white background with a decorative border of small gold dots. It includes the title 'ESD Biz Tip of the Week', a horizontal line, the tip text, the ESD Professionals logo, and the website URL.



ESD Biz Tips of the Month

- Be realistic with your time management throughout the day.
- Keep an ideas notebook and agenda notebook to stay on task with your business goals. (Or try using apps.)
- Always make time for self-care.

These suggestions are part of our new weekly series on business tips for ESD professionals! [Follow the Association on Instagram](#) for more tips, tools, and strategies to run your ESD practice with ease!

Seeking Authors and Contributors!

Our resources are created by and for ESD Professionals. While our team loves to craft blogs and How-To guides for you, we get really excited when experts, writing enthusiasts, and innovators from the ESD community add their voices to the mix.

Contact Toby, our Team Lead for Communications, at toby@esdprofessionals.org if you would like to contribute.



ESD WORLDWIDE

We're trying hard to keep the FOMO at bay, but there is just so much happening in the world of ESD, and we wish we could participate in all of it! Luckily, sharing the news with all of you is the next best thing. Ready for an ESD-packed year? We have news, events, and celebrations to share with you. Think something or someone should be included in next month's newsletter? Reach out at hello@esdprofessionals.org.

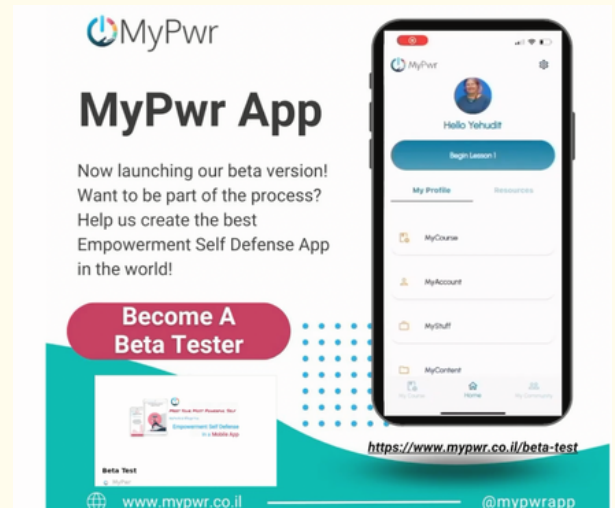


ESD in an App

MyPwr launching beta version!

Congratulations to MyPwr App for launching their beta version for testing! English-speaking women age 18+ are invited to sign up as Beta testers, learn ESD, and help perfect the app.

Want to join MyPwr in making the world safer with the most researched form of self-defense? [Sign up as a beta tester](#).



Want to Minor in ESD?

ESD is coming to campus in a new way!

Stephanie Cyr is in the process of having ESD established as a minor program on a university campus for the first time. Stephanie is a Lecturer of Self Defense at San Francisco State University and the ESD Global Program Manager responsible for the international team developing a University Accredited Minor Degree in Empowerment Self Defense (ESD).

Stephanie is blazing a path for ESD in universities, and so much more. Learn more about her work at her [website](#).

ESD WORLDWIDE



ESD in Kazakhstan

Tools for Empowered Living Make Huge Impact

In September of 2022, the first training in Central Asia ESD Level One was held in Astana, Kazakhstan in the framework of “Tools for Empowered Living” in Kazakhstan to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment to combat gender-based violence” co-funded by the U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan and ESD Global.

Fifteen women from across the country who work with survivors of domestic violence, youth, and underprivileged people learned ESD techniques in order to pass on critical knowledge and skills to their communities.

Between October and December 2022 Kazakhstani Instructors held 44 trainings for 2351 youth, women, men, medical workers, college, and schoolteachers. Currently, the ESD community in Kazakhstan is in the process of registering a Public Fund for ESD Central Asia, which will help to efficiently develop ESD throughout the region, creating a lasting impact.

Congratulations to everyone involved for the incredible, hard work required to make this happen! Stay tuned for more success stories from ESD in Central Asia.

ESD WORLDWIDE

Women's Empowerment Network (WEN) Roundtable

February 10 | South Carolina, U.S.

The Women's Empowerment Network (WEN) is a space for women of color in the victim service field. The WEN roundtable seeks to empower members to reach optimal levels of success in all areas of their lives. This roundtable is committed to helping women of color build positive collaborative relationships with other community leaders, statewide partners, and members within their organization.

A holistic approach to empowering women of color to excel in leadership. [Register here!](#)



Second Annual Summit on Ending Gender-Based Violence

September 01-04 | Toronto, Canada

"The 2nd International Summit on Ending Gender-Based Violence 2023 will showcase the voices of survivors, and the transformative programs that make real differences. Join in to hear the latest updates on violence against women and girls and strategies to end it."

This year's theme will be gender-based violence and intersectionality. Visit the [Center for Social Justice Initiatives website](#) to learn more.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

The Association is growing! We are thrilled to give a warm welcome to all our new members who have joined in the past few months:

- Adanma Nwokoma
- Zie Mirabel Atanga
- Martina Hildegard Gray Bear
- Deb Mier
- Nagin Cox
- Kim Rivers
- Gentiana Susaj
- Allison Hui
- JB Ramos
- MyPwr App (Organization Member)



Curious to know more about how the Association can support you? Reach out to Membership & Operations Lead Modupe Poku at Poku@ESDProfessionals.org to start a conversation.



LET'S STAY CONNECTED!

Don't be a stranger! The Association of ESD Professionals is here for you. Have a comment? Please contact us at [Hello@ESDProfessionals.org](mailto>Hello@ESDProfessionals.org) if you would like to share a celebration about your ESD work, learn more about the Association Credentialing Program, become a member, or explore other opportunities for collaboration. We always love to hear from you! Be sure to stay in touch with us wherever you like to connect virtually, too:

