

Subject: Long-Term Partnerships and Initial Educational Efforts on Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault

In my letter of August 28, I said we would ensure that everyone in the NFL has knowledge of and access to resources – both through and independent of the clubs -- relating to issues of domestic violence and sexual assault. I also said that we recognize that these issues affect our entire society, and that we would work to make a genuine and positive difference in a broader context. Today, I write to update you on some significant steps we are taking as part of our long-term commitment to help people affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

It was brought to our attention that recent events caused The National Domestic Violence Hotline to receive 84 percent more calls during the week of September 8 – 15. According to the organization, more than 50 percent of those calls went unanswered due to lack of staff. That must not continue.

To help address this and other critical and immediate needs, we are entering into long-term partnerships to provide financial, operational and promotional support to two of the leading domestic violence and sexual assault resources: The National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline) and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC). These commitments will enable both The Hotline and NSVRC to help more people affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

The National Domestic Violence Hotline provides domestic violence victims and survivors access to the largest national network of resources and shelters and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in 170 languages. The NFL and The Hotline have initiated an immediate process to make services available by adding expert advocates, training and other resources to respond to the increased volume of calls. The Hotline will add 25 full-time advocates over the next few weeks that will result in an additional 750 calls a day being answered.

The NFL's support also will enable Loveisrespect to service 24-hour-a-day text chats with young adults affected by dating abuse. Loveisrespect, a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and Break the Cycle, is a resource to engage, educate and empower youth and young adults to prevent and end abusive relationships.

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) supports sexual violence coalitions across the United States, including the District of Columbia and U.S. territories that direct resources to local advocates and services helping victims of sexual violence. The NFL's initial support will be directed toward state coalitions to provide additional resources to state and local sexual assault hotlines.

We are also proceeding to implement broad educational programs within our league. Starting within the next 30 days, all league and team personnel -- including executives, coaches, players and staff -- will participate in education sessions on domestic violence and sexual assault. These initial sessions will begin to provide the men and women of the NFL with information and tools to understand and recognize domestic violence and sexual assault. We will work with the NFL Players Association to develop and present this training in the most effective way.

Building on long established NFL Player Engagement programs and services, this is the first in a new set of educational programs for all personnel being developed in conjunction with our recently appointed senior advisors and other leading experts. More programs dedicated to these issues will be established in the coming months.

In addition, tomorrow all clubs (executives, coaches, players and staff) will receive comprehensive information about domestic violence and sexual assault resources in your communities, including local advocacy and support organizations. This will enable teams to connect with those local organizations for both personnel matters and public service. League staff at all locations will also receive domestic violence and sexual assault information.

Starting this season, we will dedicate significant resources to raise awareness on the subjects of domestic violence and sexual assault, including support for victims.

These are by no means final steps. We will continue to work with experts to expand and develop long-term programs that raise awareness, educate, and prevent domestic violence and sexual assault both within the NFL and in our society in general.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.