



Battered Women's Resource Center  
Voices of Women Organizing Project  
PO Box 20181, Greeley Square Station, New York, NY 10001  
phone: 212 696-1481 fax: 212 696-1482  
www.vowbwrc.org info@vowbwrc.org

## Voices of Women Organizing Project – V.O.W

Survivors of Domestic Violence Organizing for Change

### Who We Are:

VOW gives a voice to survivor of domestic violence, so that we can influence, change and improve the many systems battered women and their children turn to for safety and justice. We have been organizing survivors in New York City since 2000. Our members represent the diversity of NYC, including African-American, Caribbean, Latina, White, Asian, Immigrant, Lesbian and Disabled Women.

VOW members are women who survived abuse from our intimate partners and then felt abused by the systems we relied on, such as the courts, ACS (child welfare), the police, welfare, housing and other services. These systems often failed us. We are organizing to ensure that other women don't face these same obstacles.

We preserve an atmosphere in which we feel comfortable enough to speak openly. We work together with respect; we support each other, but we are not a support group. We are an advocacy group, fighting to improve conditions for battered women and their children.

**We speak passionately from our own experiences. It is essential that our voices help shape policy and provide the solutions needed to improve these systems.**

### Issues VOW is currently working on include:

**NYC Family Court:** VOW is working to improve the Family Court system's response to battered women. Through our Battered Mothers' Justice Campaign (BMJC), VOW is fighting to ensure Family Courts in NYC:

- Take allegations of domestic violence seriously;
- Hold batterers accountable;
- Make custody decision that protect children and abused women;
- Hold judges, lawyers and law guardians accountable for their actions.

**Housing:** VOW is working to increase access to affordable, permanent and quality housing for battered women and their children as well as improving shelters. Through our Housing Justice Committee, VOW is fighting to:

- Give more battered women priority access to NYC Housing Authority's apartments and Section 8 vouchers;
- Monitor the City's housing subsidy program to ensure that battered women have options when fleeing abuse and or leaving shelters;
- Improve the application process for getting shelter and housing;
- Improve the way domestic violence shelters operate so they are truly empowering and supportive environments.

**Child Welfare/ACS:** VOW is working on a campaign to stop malicious child abuse and neglect reports by batterers. We are continuing to advocate with the ACS to ensure that domestic violence cases are handled appropriately.

**Community Outreach and Education:** VOW is committed to reaching out to communities with high incidences of domestic violence and creating a public dialogue on the issue through community forums and presentations. Our VOW Community Action Project (V-CAP) is working in several communities to recruit survivors, educate the public about the issues faced by survivors while navigating the systems, and educate service providers about ways to better serve survivors and their children.

### **How We Do Our Work:**

We receive leadership development training in community organizing, political advocacy, public speaking amongst other topics needed to be effective. The support from the project helps us to further develop our skills and to speak confidently and movingly in public about the problems unique to survivors of domestic violence as well as to meet with City officials and policy makers.

To find out more about VOW, to join or to make a contribution, please call our office at: 212-696-1481 or visit our website: [www.vowbwrc.org](http://www.vowbwrc.org) (please have your sound up). We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.