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Growing Up With Domestic Violence: The Online Training Program That Can Help

*Study on efficacy of CDV's new program to be presented at 27th Annual
American Association for Psychological Science Convention*

NEW YORK (May 18, 2015)— Nearly 275 million children worldwide, 15 million in the United States alone, are affected by domestic violence, and more than 40 million adults grew up living with it in their childhood homes – that's 1 in 7 people. But a severe lack of scalable resources and programs allows this global problem to continue through generations. On Thursday, May 21st, at the Association for Psychological Science ([APS](#)) Convention in New York City, one presentation, entitled "Increasing Knowledge and Feelings of Efficacy for Helping Children Exposed to Domestic Violence," will feature the results of an evaluation of a new online program, built by [CDV-the Childhood Domestic Violence Association](#), that has the ability to address this critical issue head-on: the [Change a Life](#) program.

CDV developed the *Change a Life* program over a two-year period with the leading domestic violence research center in the world. Endorsed by the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, this free interactive program can be taken in 30 minutes on the CDV website and provides information about the consequences of growing up living in a home with domestic violence, now known as [Childhood Domestic Violence \(CDV\)](#). It also outlines easy steps to support children affected by it and how this support can foster children's resiliency.

Renee McDonald, Ph.D. and her colleagues at Southern Methodist University have conducted two randomized controlled trials to examine the efficacy of *Change a Life* and compare its effects to those of an unrelated online education program. The results of these studies indicate that participants who complete *Change a Life* have increased knowledge about the effects of domestic violence on children, as well as greater feelings of efficacy for helping children who are growing up living in homes with CDV.

"Childhood Domestic Violence is a global issue with severe negative effects, demonstrating a clear need for resources to help those affected by it," commented Dr. McDonald. "This research shows that an online program, CDV's *Change a Life* in particular, can be a powerful tool to help caring adults positively affect the lives of children who grow up living with domestic violence."

Childhood Domestic Violence has been linked to a number of negative developmental outcomes. UNICEF has gone on to say it is "one of the most pervasive human rights issues of our time," further underscoring the need to raise awareness about the problem and to develop effective intervention solutions.

"Living with adversity in your childhood home negatively impacts a developing brain and the formation of the cognitive belief system, with the effects often lasting well into adulthood. What we've seen is that there is very little awareness of Childhood Domestic Violence and, in turn, few known and widely practiced solutions to help this large population," said CDV Founder and CEO, Brian F. Martin. "We're truly grateful to Dr. McDonald and her team for the work they put into this study. The results are clear: the *Change a Life* program works and can help millions of children who are living in these homes today."

ABOUT THE CHILDHOOD DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ASSOCIATION:

CDV-the Childhood Domestic Violence Association is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that works to help those who grow up living with domestic violence reach their full potential. It was created to build universal awareness and practical, truly scalable solutions accessible with few barriers to all those who are in need. CDV was initially founded in 2007 by [Brian F. Martin](#) as Maker of Memories and later renamed to better reflect its focus, growing mission and scope. Using the leading research and best known practices in the field, CDV develops tools and resources that have never existed before and deploys them through partnerships with leading organizations that directly touch the lives of children and adults impacted by Childhood Domestic Violence to help transform their lives.

ABOUT BRIAN F. MARTIN, FOUNDER & CEO, THE CHILDHOOD DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ASSOCIATION:

Brian is an entrepreneur, as well as Founder & CEO of CDV-the Childhood Domestic Violence Association. He is the author of the *New York Time* Best Seller, *INVINCIBLE: The 10 Lies You Learn Growing Up with Domestic Violence, and the Truths to Set You Free*, as well as a weekly contributor to the Huffington Post. Brian has been featured in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Forbes*. He has testified before Congress, appeared on national television programs including *Dr. Phil*, and the executive-produced award-winning documentary, *The Children Next Door*.

ABOUT RENEE MCDONALD, PH.D.

Renee McDonald received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Houston. She is the Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs in Southern Methodist University's Dedman College of Humanities and Science, as well as a professor at the Department of Psychology. Dr. McDonald has spearheaded efforts to document the prevalence of children's exposure to intimate partner violence, to understand short- and long-term effects of violence on children, and to develop and evaluate treatments for children exposed to violence. Her research has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute of Justice, the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the U.S. Department of Justice. Her research is regularly published in scientific journals, and she is a consultant to academic departments and professional agencies around the world.

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