As a result of recent events involving Ray Rice and the NFL, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) has received requests from courts and communities on how to use these events to bring attention to domestic violence during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The NCJFCJ has learned that in some cases participants will view and discuss the Ray Rice video. While the NCJFCJ encourages courts and communities to engage in activities that increase awareness of and promote solution-seeking to the problem of domestic violence, we also urge courts and communities to:

- avoid re-victimizing the victim;
- include broader social and cultural considerations into these discussions; and
- keep victim safety and batterer accountability at the forefront of these conversations.

In an effort to maintain those principles, the NCJFCJ has developed the following set of questions to guide these discussions.

1. What do you think of the media and public response to domestic violence and this video?

2. What are the public health and safety issues that the release of this video has brought to the forefront?

3. In what ways is the public less tolerant of domestic violence now than in the past? What types of events or messages demonstrate that the public is not less tolerant?

4. How does watching a situation occur while it's enacted differ from information that courts, service providers, or the community receive about a domestic violence incident?

5. Some people think the only solution to an abusive situation is to leave, call the police, or get a divorce. Are these the best options? What are the possible ramifications of reporting domestic violence to the police? (We suggest discussion of this question include a viewing of the "Rachel's Story" video developed by Praxis International.)

6. Why is it hard for women who are victims of domestic violence to report abuse and leave their partners? What are the safety implications of “just leaving”?

7. Does the court system and community do enough to protect victims when they do report abuse?

8. How does our community respond to domestic violence? What more can be done to solve our community challenges around domestic violence?

9. How can we, in our everyday interactions, let the people in our community know that domestic violence is not acceptable?

10. What do you view as the most pressing issue in domestic violence awareness in our area? Do we have the right type of coordinated response in place to respond to it? If not, what can we do to help move us in that direction?

For additional training and technical assistance call 1-800-52-PEACE

Resource Center on Domestic Violence: Child Protection and Custody

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These questions were developed under Grant Number 90EV0415 from the Administration on Children, Family and Youth Services, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Its contents are the responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official view of DHHS or the NCJFCJ.