

Mother/Daughter Tea Offers Glimpse Of Cotillion



The young ladies of the 34th annual Links mother/daughter tea.

Edited by AZI Staff

The Phoenix Chapter of The Links, Incorporated held its 34th Annual Biennial Cotillion Mother-Daughter Tea recently at the Omni Scottsdale Resort & Spa at Monteluccia. The attendees wore beautiful dresses and hats for the Sunday afternoon event.

The Mother/Daughter Tea is a component of the development programming for young ladies who are aspiring debutantes and is a segment of the chapter's Young Leaders' Academy.

Tea Chairperson Joy Johnson provided a heartfelt welcome, and Shirley Mays presented an inspirational reading. After a fun get acquainted activity facilitated by Maria Humphries, Valerye

Boyer-Wells told the history of high tea, appropriate behavior, and offered the invocation. Everyone had the opportunity to engage in high tea with a selection from several flavorful tea options and delectable servings of petite sandwiches, scones, and sweets.

The young ladies were then given a glimpse into upcoming cotillion experience. This included The Beauty of the Crown (hats) presented by Beverly Arrington; "My Cotillion Experience" provided by 2016 debutante Melia Cobb; the purse game by Maria Humphries; and etiquette tips by Martha Stewart. The event concluded with cotillion highlights by the chapter's president Joan Sherwood and closing remarks by Joy Johnson.

Abuse Doesn't Always Scream



By Tahirah Ogletree

"Abuse doesn't always scream. Sometimes it whispers. It's critical that a person remains vigilant in recognizing non-physical, as well as physical, abuse in domestic violence," according to the award-winning book, *Survivors Celebrating Life Beyond Domestic Violence*.

Domestic violence is a topic that is commonly ignored because of the vicious attacks, humiliating anguish, suffering, and shame a victim faces. The brutal scars it leaves behind both physical, and psychological speaks blaring volumes through a victim's silence. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of domestic violence starts with observing the behaviors, gestures, and patterns of both victims and the abuser. The abuser may show signs of abuse by controlling the victims' conversation, or making the victim feel uncomfortable by certain intimidating gestures. Condescending remarks to the victim, is also a sign that emotional abuse is present. This behavior may happen in any setting where the abuser feels they have to exert their power by belittling their partner. The unsettling signs of a victim can be seen in many different ways in how she or he responds to their abuser. Crying, avoiding eye contact, doubtfulness, timidness, and being afraid of speaking are all potential signs of domestic violence. victims go out of their way to ensure they are not offending the abuser. Other outward signs of fear can also be seen by the way the victim seeks permission, apologizes for everything she or he does, including making excuses for the abusers actions. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, battered women syndrome, uncontrollable thoughts, low self esteem, thoughts of suicide are all signs of what a victim faces dealing with domestic violence.

The physical signs of domestic violence may lead to specific injuries that can be vividly seen by physicians, family members, neighbors, friends, and co-workers. Here are several examples of visible physical abuse: severe bruises on or around the eyes, purple or red discoloration marks on the face or neck, involuntary shaking, bruises on the arms, back, and legs changes in eating patterns, chronic fatigue, sprained or broken wrist, abdominal cuts, broken or missing teeth, Tympanic membrane (eardrum) rupture, rectal or genital Injury, cigarette burns, rope bruises and welts from belt buckles. When the obvi-

ous signs of physical traumatic injuries are present they can be immediately recognized by a survivor of domestic violence. For others, the signs could be camouflaged behind the victims hidden shame. This psychological disturbance can prevent the victim to be forthcoming with what is happening to them. They might make excuses or deny how they were injured. Helping a victim reach the point of opening up about their abuse will take time. It's very important to be patient, and understand that the victim is living in mind shattering fear and is entangled in deep rooted emotions. Using forceful tactics or language to get the victim to act or leave their abuser is not recommended. Here are some effective ways to help a person dealing with domestic violence. Ensure the victims is safe, provide them with resources that will get them immediate help, and keep them safe. The National Domestic Violence Hotline number is 1-800-799-7233. There are also local and regional domestic violence advocates, and advocacy programs that support victims of domestic violence. Showing support by listening and being there for a victim is important. In doing so, encouraging them to know the importance of breaking their silence is key. Advising the victim to know the importance of breaking their silence will help end the perpetual abuse.

It is important to remember, a victim must want to leave their abusive relationship on their own. In helping them don't use forceful language or try to force them to leave, because this would be similar to what their abuser has been doing. I believe domestic violence is a growing problem due to the acceleration of many relationships and ignoring of the initial warning signs. Failure to learn of a person or their past can cause a world of surprises after the honeymoon phase. Domestic violence prevention education is such an important part of helping decrease violence within a relationship. The lack of conversation about such a grim topic makes it easier for the psychological influences of our society to perpetuate this deadly cycle. In addition, the years of untreated and undetected pain in an individuals life, play a significant role in how a person responds in a relationship. The shortage of self respect and love towards another person is also a cause for this widely spread epidemic. As my personal belief and experience, I have made it a point in my life to seek God first and inquire with Him before I enter into any relationship. No one is really capable of knowing the heart or purpose of another person; however, if we seek God, who has created all, He will show us things we may have never discovered about a person on our own that will help prevent a lifetime of pain and abuse.

Tahirah Ogletree, a survivor and award winning author, is founder of The O'Tahirah Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides support to those impacted by domestic violence (www.otahirah.org).



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Phoenix Chapter of the Links, Inc.

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