

Donated cell phones help domestic violence victims

Before throwing away your old cell phones, consider donating them to the Mecklenburg County Community Support Services Women's Commission to help victims of domestic violence and raise money for domestic violence prevention programs. Working with Shelter Alliance, the Women's Commission hopes to tap into a portion of the estimated 30 million idle phones sitting in drawers and closets across the country.

More than 200 organizations nationwide collect cell phones for fund-raising purposes. The Women's Commission program is different in that it tries to give the phones to domestic violence victims through the commission's own services, the Shelter for Battered Women, Victim Assistance, the Department of Social Services' Youth & Family Services and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's Youth Crimes & Domestic Violence Unit.



With a donated phone, a domestic violence victim (or a potential victim) can call 911 in an emergency. Most cell phones are programmed to call 911, regardless of whether the user has purchased a service plan or not. The phone simply needs to be fully charged.



The Women's Commission gives Shelter Alliance any donated cell phones that cannot be used because the previous users' account information is still intact. In return, the commission receives a contribution for each cell phone it cannot use and Shelter Alliance refurbishes and distributes the phones elsewhere.

Phones can be dropped off between 9 AM and 4 PM at the Women's Commission in the Hal Marshall Building, 700 North Tryon Street, or they can be shipped to:

**Women's Commission
c/o Mike Sexton
700 North Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202**

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Students now earning community service hours through cell phone collection.

Students nationwide are participating in Shelter Alliance's "community service hours" program to benefit their local domestic violence program and service providers. Through this program, students earn community service hours through the collection and responsible recycling of cell phones. Every five phones collected equals one hour of community service.

Businesses and individuals recycle phones to benefit their local communities.

Through Shelter Alliance's "good community neighbor" program, businesses and individuals nationwide are collecting cell phones to benefit their local domestic violence shelters.



**For more information on this and other outreach programs,
Please call Mike Sexton at 704-432-1568**