

# National Black Church Initiative

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## National Black Church Initiative Speaks Out Against Domestic Violence Citing the Chris Brown Case

*The Black church will not remain silent on this issue.*

**Washington, DC**, -- March 14, 2009: The National Black Church Initiative, a coalition of 34,000 African American churches, has reaffirmed its stance against any and all forms of domestic violence in the wake of the Chris Brown Case. NBCI would like to reach out to those affected by domestic violence and offer its prayers and services to help support those affected by any form of this horrible occurrence, especially our young people. The recent news of Chris Brown and Rihanna recording a duet together after Brown brutally beat Rihanna is both disturbing and concerning to NBCI, who feels that domestic violence should not be turned into a marketing scheme and who will be telling our youth to boycott any album the duet is released on.

The Rev. Anthony Evans, president of the National Black Church Initiative, said, "I will not allow Chris or Rihanna to cheapen this moment to teach our young people the values of non-violence, especially during dating. The purpose of dating is to get to know one another and see if there is any compatibility. It is not for sex, it is not for violence and it certainly is not for creating a marketing scheme. This is almost unthinkable, that a victim of date violence and a perpetrator of violence are trying to demystify as well as use the public and send a message to us that this is not our business. It is the church's business when it becomes public, and let us say that with all sincerity and clarity that date violence is wrong and the church demands a stop to it."

NBCI has a long history of working to educate and enlighten its churches and communities on the issues of domestic violence. Youth in America must be educated on the issue of date violence and learn that it is wrong for any man to hit a woman or child,

or visa versa. The church is saddened by this recent incident because it points to a failure in the ethos of our communities because we have failed to emphasize to our children the importance of non-violence in relationships. What we have here is a teaching moment that everybody can learn from. If a man hits a woman he will hit her again, and Rihanna must understand this and this is why NBCI supports Oprah Winfrey and her declaration to Rihanna.

The Rev. Mark McCleary, chair of NBCI Minister Alliance, states, “I have never seen anything like this before. No matter what they are trying to do NBCI is clear: we will not tolerate domestic violence of any kind, whatsoever.”

### About NBCI

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a coalition of 16,000 African-American and Latino member churches works to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare. In addition to our member churches, we have 18,000 sister churches. NBCI is a faith-based health organization dedicated to providing critical wellness information and preventive health screening to all of its members. The African-American community ranks first in eleven different health risk categories. NBCI’s purpose is to partner with national health officials to provide health education, reduce racial health disparities, and increase access to quality healthcare.