

SAAM EVENT IDEAS

Most of these ideas come from sexual assault programs across Washington State. Sexual assault programs reported that many of these events fostered positive relationships in communities, built awareness, provided resources, and informed the general public about sexual assault and services available. Discover what works for your community! Share your ideas with us!

Engage elected officials. Call and share information about your program with them or invite them to speak at a public forum in your community. For information about elected officials, log on to <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/legislature>.

Distribute news releases and newsletters. A sample news release is included in this guide.

Arrange for newspapers to print articles about sexual assault. Write letters to newspaper editors, highlight a story about the work you are doing to end sexual violence in your community, or contribute a series of articles to your local college newspaper on subjects relevant to students. Other appropriate publications may include newsletters of faith communities and newspapers of diverse communities.

Hold ceremonies to honor special people. Publicly honor volunteers, staff, board members, and public officials who are working to end sexual violence. Consider presenting awards and playing games to make the event fun and celebratory.

Participate in a radio talk show interview. Ask your local radio station to air programs focusing on issues of sexual violence.

Air public service announcements on television or the radio. One radio PSA is already created for you and additional scripts for other PSAs are included in this guide as a reference.

Arrange a televised panel of people discussing issues of child sexual abuse and adults' roles in protecting children.

Place business advertisements. Ask local business owners to pay for advertisements in the newspaper or on billboards during Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Canvass civic groups. Work with local civic groups (such as the Lions Club, Elks Club, Rotary Club, scouting organizations, sororities, fraternities and other various stakeholders in your community) to organize a one-day neighborhood canvas during which they can deliver information to households and businesses and ask for donations.

Invite other organizations and business to place SAAM information on their websites.

Partner with members of communities of faith through local ministerial associations or other groups. Ask them to distribute SAAM materials. Encourage spiritual leaders to focus on the issue of sexual abuse using various methods such as verbal and written announcements, newsletters, and meetings with various committees.

Hold concerts or performances. Invite local musicians to provide a benefit concert during SAAM. At the concert distribute SAAM materials and have the musicians discuss sexual assault during their performance.

Sponsor a teen dance. Involve youth in organizing a teen dance that also raises awareness of sexual assault issues. Arrange to have proceeds donated to your local sexual assault program.

Schedule a movie night. Ask your local movie theater to show a film on sexual violence, such as *Monster* with Charlize Theron, *Iron Jawed Angels* with Hilary Swank, or *North Country* with Charlize Theron. Screen the Awareness Videos before and/or after the movie. Hand out flyers, SAAM handbills and brochures. Facilitate a discussion after the film at the theater.

Host an educational forum. Borrow a video from the WCSAP library to show at your organization during SAAM or screen the Awareness Videos. Invite different communities to attend, facilitate a discussion after the video, and hand out SAAM materials.

Plan a potluck or brown bag lunch. Invite your community to come together to share food and get to know you and your services.

Make presentations in schools. Work with school districts and universities to organize presentations to students during SAAM. See the section of this guide entitled "Working with Schools."

Contact preschools and daycare centers in your community. Ask them to sponsor presentations and/or discussion groups for the families they serve. Ask for their help in distributing pamphlets and displaying posters. Offer to help with an article on child sexual abuse for their newsletter.

Convene a focus group with college students. Discuss sexual violence as it relates to them. Help the group plan one activity to raise awareness for the college/university community.

Hold a fundraising breakfast. Arrange for a brief series of presentations about sexual assault. Include a well-known member of your community as a keynote speaker. Ask for donations from those who attend. Obtain underwriting from a sponsor(s) for the cost of hosting the event.

Collaborate with other service providers (e.g. domestic violence programs, teen parent programs, law enforcement agencies) to host presentations, organize a march, distribute materials, and display posters.

Hold an open house. Invite the community to visit your offices and meet your staff.

Organize a candlelight vigil. Arrange a gathering of people in the evening and light candles in honor of survivors and those working to end sexual violence.

Set up window displays. Ask local libraries, museums, retailers, and other storefronts to display sexual assault resources, statistics, SAAM posters, or the handbills.

Organize a clothesline project to honor survivors and to raise awareness.

Publicly display a wreath or tree and have people add ribbons in honor of survivors they know.

Set up art displays. Many survivors create very powerful artwork. Use the artwork of survivors in a public display at a university, bookstore, mall, bank, or other public gathering place.

Make and display a quilt in recognition of survivors of sexual assault.

Organize a march. Begin with a rally and invite speakers to make a presentation before the march begins; screen the Awareness Videos or play the PSA. Invite other agencies, service providers, or businesses to co-sponsor the event with you.

Partner with local businesses and have them donate a portion of a day's proceeds to a local sexual assault center. Many have daily special boards; request that they list a fact about sexual assault on their board.

Ask a local food bank, library, or grocery store to include brochures or SAAM handbills in every bag of food or book they distribute.

Work with a local youth group to plan an awareness activity. Ask what they would do in the community to raise awareness among their peers. Offer to support youth in writing articles for their school newspapers, giving their peers information about sexual violence, or creating other community activities.

Use Sexual Assault Awareness Month to express your opinions about media messages and violence. Write letters or emails to advertisers or media companies that promote violent or misogynistic imagery. Write letters of thanks to advertisers who promote positive messages.