

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH
APRIL 2010



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This guide and the accompanying campaign materials were produced by the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (WCSAP) in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). The theme for SAAM was chosen with input from SAAM Campaign Committee Members and other representatives from sexual assault programs in Washington. Materials were printed with the support of the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy of the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development.

INTRODUCTION

In the State of Washington and nationally we have selected to recognize Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) for the entire month of April.

The recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month is an annual event in Washington State. It is a time for individuals and communities to come together to raise awareness and to take action against sexual assault.

The history of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) stems from the early 1970s, when survivors of sexual violence came together and began to speak out against the atrocities they suffered. They held rallies and public speak-outs, and as a result created a movement to end sexual violence.

This year's theme intentionally builds on many of the successes of last year's campaign. **Be the Solution** echoes the action orientated message, focus on social change, and targets youth.

What is new about this year's *Be the Solution* campaign is the simplified messaging that really targets the heart of our call to action, while adding an exciting level of interactivity that each program can bring to their community. The intention is to solidify a positive and action oriented focus in our struggle to end sexual violence. We want the people in our communities to know we need their help, because ending sexual violence takes all of us. By facilitating activities and dialogues that inspire individuals to rethink their role in ending sexual violence we can increase the number of allies we have in this movement.

What is especially unique about this year's campaign is the strong focus on social networking. This was introduced as a component to the SAAM campaign last year, and we strive to magnify this effort in 2010. Social networking can be a powerful medium to share one's voice and is an effective way to unite communities, especially youth. We anticipate this will be an effective resource for bringing people together and will help unite the efforts of CSAPs across the state.

The materials WCSAP will be providing are centered on the Campaign Activity that the SAAM Steering Committee developed, which offers each participant the opportunity to contribute their own solutions to ending sexual violence. In turn, they will get to see solutions other people are sharing from across Washington State via social networking. This will unite the efforts of programs and individuals in the whole statewide campaign, giving more power and passion in our voice for change. The Campaign Activity is one programs can take out to a community group, use in a forum, share in a classroom, or

use in coordination with any other SAAM events. While the materials are designed to appeal to teens, they can be adapted to meet the needs of your target audience. Sexual assault is an intolerable crime that affects all of us. It permeates and deteriorates society as a whole. Its impact can be found in our schools, on our playgrounds, campuses, families, workplaces, and threaded throughout our society. Sexual Assault Awareness Month is a continuation of our efforts to bring about change and justice, promote healing, and to create a tomorrow that transcends sexual violence.

Towards that end, we encourage you to use the 2010 materials to build relationships with other social service providers and community stakeholders. Each community sexual assault program in Washington will receive campaign materials, in advance of SAAM, for distribution in their local community. We hope that efforts in this campaign will move us closer in the mission of social change.

Individuals not affiliated with a sexual assault program can get materials by contacting their local Community Sexual Assault Program or downloading the materials from www.wasaam.org. Likewise, community sexual assault programs who wish to procure more materials may use the website to download and/or have additional materials printed at their own cost.

In addition, we hope this guide will be helpful in planning and organizing your local SAAM events. If we can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

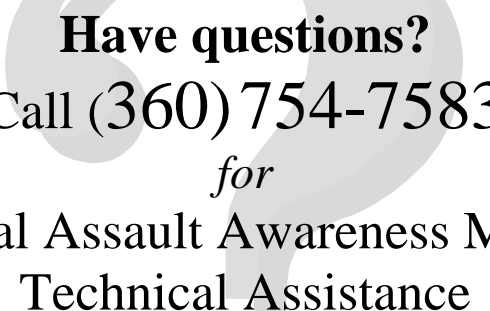
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SUGGESTED AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

- ❑ **Build and strengthen relationships** with other social service organizations and community institutions using SAAM campaign activities and materials.
- ❑ **Use the SAAM campaign activity** with community members. Ask schools, drop-in centers, youth groups, and other youth orientated places if you can come facilitate the activity.
- ❑ **Take pictures** (if safe and appropriate) of participants' solutions to ending sexual violence. In turn, they will get to see solutions other people are sharing from across Washington State via social networking.
- ❑ **Distribute SAAM materials** at community events and presentations during *Sexual Assault Awareness Month*. Place SAAM materials at your local market/mall, doctor's offices, community centers, daycares, and places of worship.
- ❑ **Add www.wasaam.org** to your website and outreach materials. Increase access to information by utilizing the social networking sites affiliated with the campaign.
- ❑ **Provide in-service trainings** about bystander intervention, resources to address sexual violence, and intimate partner sexual violence.
- ❑ **Host a community wide pledge** in which people sign a large SAAM poster/banner declaring "Be the Solution." Kick off the month of April by presenting the signed pledge to a community official.
- ❑ **Invite ALL individuals** in your community to get involved in your activities! Support community members in creating a world free of sexual violence.



Have questions?
Call (360) 754-7583
for
Sexual Assault Awareness Month
Technical Assistance

ADDITIONAL 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 as a reference.

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. Contribute a series of articles to your local college newspaper on subjects relevant to students, such as the issue of acquaintance rape or drug facilitated assault. 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. Schedule a dinner, lunch, or other gathering. 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. Sample 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. Hand out flyers 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. 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 pre-schools 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.

Set up resource tables on college campuses.

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 and volunteers.

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, and/or SAAM posters.

Organize a clothesline project to honor survivors and to raise awareness of the prevalence of sexual assault.

Ring bells. On a specified day and time ask local bell towers (such as those at churches) to ring their bells for a specific period of time.

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. Invite other agencies, service providers, or businesses to co-sponsor the event with you.

Partner with local espresso stands and coffee houses 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 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.

WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

- ❑ **Use relevant times and events to access schools**, such as in response to a crisis situation in the school, during a theme week/month (e.g. SAAM, Child Abuse Awareness Month, Crime Victims' Rights Week, etc.), or in response to related events in the media.
- ❑ **Inform teachers and other school personnel about your program and your approach to the topic of sexual assault.** Put together a packet of information that includes a presentation outline, sample handouts, qualifications of the speaker, and an evaluation form. Develop a reference list so that teachers can learn more about your experience and qualifications. Ensure that your presentations and materials match your high standards.
- ❑ **Follow up on any contacts you have developed in the past.** If you or someone from your program has given presentations in a school before, approach those contact people first. Use each successful contact to find more contacts in the schools.
- ❑ **Approach school counselors, nurses, or students about sexual assault issues in their schools.** Offer to help by making presentations, and/or delivering resource materials.
- ❑ **Talk with teachers through mutual friends.** Find out what limitations and restrictions they face in addressing this topic in their classrooms. Find out what they need, and ask what you can do to help. Focus on collaboration and addressing mutual goals (e.g. concern for students' safety and well being). Take time to build relationships and build trust.
- ❑ **Write letters to the School Board or Superintendent for the district.** Attend board meetings. Make presentations in which you advocate for more sexual assault prevention education in the school.
- ❑ **Approach parent groups and teacher groups and ask for their support.** Ask for support from parents of students who volunteer for your program.
- ❑ **Reach out to students who are part of Peer Helper groups.**
- ❑ **Coordinate with stakeholders who also present in schools** to leverage opportunities get the message out about sexual violence. Stakeholders could include drug prevention educators or other health educators.
- ❑ **Bring SAAM materials and other resources to PTA meetings.** Offer to speak about child sexual abuse and share ways with parents and teachers that can support elimination of sexual violence and protecting children.

- ❑ **Use your other community contacts to gain access to school personnel.** Talk to other important people in the community to see if they know anyone in the schools who will help. Approach groups such as Rotary or Kiwanis.

FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- ❑ **Identify campus and community partners and engage them in planning.** Student organizations, Greek organizations, Student Affairs, residence life, counseling services, women's programs, student health, and athletics are just a few of the on-campus groups who can help.
- ❑ **Coordinate with Student Activities.** Identify excellent programs and speakers related to sexual assault prevention (and especially to this year's theme) and ask if your student activities program can sponsor or co-sponsor them.
- ❑ **Be mindful of the academic and student life calendars when planning activities.** The end of April may be too close to exam time, for example, so you may want to schedule programs for early in the month. Be sure to post your activities on all relevant campus calendars as early as possible.
- ❑ **Involve academic departments in awareness activities.** You might develop a module that instructors could use to address sexual assault issues in class, offer to provide guest lectures, post research links on a website, or make specific suggestions about certain disciplines and professions and the need to increase students' knowledge of sexual assault issues.
- ❑ **Involve Peer Educators and other student leaders.** Any peer education groups focusing on health, safety, and wellness are a great resource. Resident assistants, members of student government, student ambassadors and orientation leaders and other student leadership groups can also take an active role.
- ❑ **Use social networking groups to publicize activities.** Most college students are regular visitors to sites such as MySpace and Facebook.
- ❑ **Do your homework about community resources.** Especially if you have limited resources for survivors on campus, it is important to identify community programs and to ensure that you have updated information about their services posted online and in printed materials.
- ❑ **Make sure you are speaking the language of college students.** Have all outreach materials reviewed by students who are typical of your college population to ensure that you are gearing your information to today's students.
- ❑ **Be sure to have a coordinated and consistent message.** On large campuses in particular, outreach efforts may become fragmented. Strong planning and coordination by all involved groups will result in a more effective campaign.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

The media are important partners in raising communities' awareness of sexual assault issues. Media attention not only raises awareness and educates, it helps influence decision makers, funders, and potential supporters. The following are some tips and ideas about working with the media, and were partially adapted from:

- *Partners for Prevention: The Media*, The National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse
- *Campaign Kit*, California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Sexual Assault Awareness Month 1999
- *News for a Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working with the Media*, by Lawrence Wallack, Katie Woodruff, Lori Dorfman, Iris Diaz; Sage Publications, 1999
- *Strategies for Action*, The National Center for Victims of Crime, 1999 National Crime Victim's Rights Week

Set Goals and Objectives for Your Media Efforts

The first step in planning a media strategy is to identify your goals and objectives. Your goal may be simply to educate the public about the importance of preventing sexual violence or to let the public know about the services you provide.

Define the Audience

Decide whom you really want to reach -- state or local "opinion" leaders, policy makers, or the general public. This will help you determine which news format will work best for your message.

Develop a Relationship with Reporters and Editors

Look within your organization for people who know local reporters, editors, station managers, etc. Ask that person to meet with the reporter/editor they know to discuss *Sexual Assault Awareness Month*. If no relationship already exists, develop one. Discuss what type of coverage may be given to *Sexual Assault Awareness Month*, for example:

- Feature articles on the prevalence of sexual assault, services available in the community, or local events designed to raise awareness about sexual assault.
- Conduct interviews with prominent people about their views on sexual assault or with advocates and board members at your program about the important work they do.
- Include editorial pieces on local legislation, local responses, etc.

Also, ask the media person for advice on how to ensure coverage of *Sexual Assault Awareness Month*. Offer to help the reporter/editor with story ideas and/or in researching information. When the media report on sexual assault issues let them know how you felt about the coverage. Remember to thank reporters and news organizations for a job well done.

Provide the Media with Information

Provide information, but not too much! Make sure the information is clear, concise and includes the name and phone number of a person to contact for more information. Highlight the most important points. Organize according to priority.

Write a News Release

A news release should be limited to one page and printed on your agency's letterhead. Following is a list of all the elements that should be included in a news release (see sample in this guide):

- Date
- Contact name and phone number
- Short headline, all capital letters
- What is happening, who is involved, where and when it is happening
- Why this event is significant — emphasize the local relevance
- Quote from an expert or local official emphasizing the significance of this event
- More details on the event
- Brief (one-sentence) description of the organization involved in the event
- ### at the bottom of the page to indicate the end of the release

Develop Talking Points

Identify the key points you want to make. Take a stand and present a solution. Include relevant factual information and statistics as well as specific action steps you want to encourage people to take. Be concise. Phrase statements in such a way your most important messages can be communicated in less than 15 seconds. Prepare to deliver your talking points verbally by practicing saying them out loud – but avoid memorizing them verbatim. If you do, you run the risk of sounding rehearsed, uninteresting, and unnatural.

Pitch Stories, Not Issues

The media are looking for stories that will catch an audience's attention. Typically they want the "human interest" angle. Point out the personal relevance of your story to their audience. Emphasize the unique and compelling nature of your event. Stories that involve one or more of the following elements may be considered more "newsworthy:"

- Broad interest
- Controversy or conflict
- Injustice
- Irony
- Local relevance
- Personal perspective
- Breakthrough or historical event
- Anniversary or seasonal relevance
- Celebrity involvement
- Eye-catching visuals

Produce Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

PSAs may be recorded for radio or television; or they may be written for print media, including newspapers, newsletters, or bulletins (see sample PSAs in this guide). Attempt to contact local radio and television stations and speak to the public service director or station manager. When you contact the station, try to ask the following questions: Do you accept PSAs? Would you be interested in developing an ongoing public service campaign with our organization?

Prepare Media Kits

Collect a packet of information that you can distribute to the media. Compile materials and place into an easy-to-use file folder or booklet.

Materials should be clear and concise. Typically, a media kit includes:

- News release (see sample in this guide)
- Agency brochure
- Fact sheet on common statistics
- Reproducible pictures or graphics
- Business card and/or rolodex card with name of contact person

Note: A tip for planning: when reporters cover a story, they typically require information immediately in order to keep their coverage newsworthy. Have several media kits on hand that you can distribute to the media on demand as opportunities arise.

Ways to Partner with the Media

- Distribute news releases
- Sponsor a public forum or news conference
- Submit letters to the Editor
- Ask your local newspaper to include a special insert
- Appear on public affairs television or radio programs
- Provide local TV or radio stations with public service announcements

SOCIAL NETWORKING

SAAM 2010 continues the success of last year's Internet efforts in order to add richness and connect individuals and programs across the state with the campaign.

The campaign's website is **wasaam.org**.

Our intention is to get website content from you. Your events. Your community.

The statewide SAAM campaign will use several Internet services to communicate our message. Below is a brief description of the kinds of technologies we will be using.

Micro-blogging

Micro-blogging is a relatively new technology aimed at short and quick postings. People can access the postings through their phone, computer, or mobile Internet device. There are several Internet micro-blogging services. SAAM will be using Twitter for a micro-blogging tool. A useful feature of Twitter is being able to "embed" Twitter updates on your own website—so for SAAM, your organization's website can have fresh tips and SAAM related material without any additional work of yours!

Photo and video

We hope organizations will send us photos or videos of their events or their SAAM spirit. The photos might be of a hung poster, or of something else in your community that contributes to the awareness campaign. We will be collecting the photos and videos displaying them (almost as soon as we get them) on wasaam.org. We will make available slideshows for your organization's website of statewide activity.

Social Networking

Social networking services allow users to create a unique page that serves as a sort of hub for their online identity. There is biographical information (like hobbies, favorite music) and even personal contact information if desired. The networking portion relates to connecting to others based on offline relationships, shared interests, shared values, or other axes of similarity. Connected groups can then be used to share information, organize events, or rally for a cause. SAAM will have a FaceBook and MySpace page which people can become fans of or friends with, and share with their network. We will be relying on advocates within your organizations with FaceBook or MySpace profiles to get the word out.

What do I need to do?

- Grab photos or video whenever you can!
 - Participant posters and flags from the campaign activity
 - Events in your community*
 - People wearing or holding SAAM material
 - Proclamations

- Follow Washington State Sexual Assault Awareness Month on Twitter @wasaam
- Tweet solutions to ending sexual violence to #iampro
- Send in descriptions or dates for your events and we will feature them on wasaam.org
- Do you have a story* that illustrates the importance of SAAM? Send it in!
- Become of a fan of the SAAM page on FaceBook

Visit **wasaam.org** for instructions on how to participate and where to send materials

* In an effort to be respectful of privacy considerations, we will be publishing a set of guidelines on digital boundaries on wasaam.org. Nothing will be posted without first being examined through the guidelines.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR SAAM

- ❑ *Sexual Assault Awareness Month* is a time for us to reflect on how sexual assault affects every person in our communities, and to take action to stop sexual assault.
- ❑ Approximately 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually assaulted before the age of 18.¹ As adults it is our responsibility to protect children – it is time for us to stop the abuse before it happens.
- ❑ In up to 90% of all child sexual abuse cases, the child knew the offender. Preventing child sexual abuse is not just teaching children the danger of strangers.² Because you'd do anything to protect your child, start the conversation – talk to your child about sexual abuse.
- ❑ Sexual assault affects every part of our communities. Studies show that an estimated 12.1 million women have been raped in the US.³ Sexual assault permeates and deteriorates society as a whole. The impact of its deterioration can be found in our schools, on our playgrounds, campuses, families, workplace, and threaded throughout our culture. *Sexual Assault Awareness Month* is a continuum of our efforts to bring about change, promote healing, justice, and to create a tomorrow free of sexual violence.
- ❑ More than one-third of all women in Washington State have been sexually assaulted in their lifetime.³ As a community, we can no longer afford to remain silent about this devastating and harmful crime. It is time to end the silence about sexual violence and create safe, healthy communities.
- ❑ According to a recent study, 69% of rape victims reported feeling at least somewhat or extremely concerned that others would blame them or hold them responsible for the rape.³ A significant part of the trauma that sexual assault victims face is the shame and stigma associated with the crime. It is our responsibility to show survivors that we hold offenders, not victims, accountable for sexual assault.
- ❑ Most media coverage of sexual assault examines the victims, and what individual victims could have done to avoid the assault. No amount of individual precaution is going to stop sexual assault from happening. Instead of thinking about avoidance strategies we need to be thinking about prevention strategies.

¹ Russell, Diana E.H. "The Incidence and Prevalence of Intrafamilial and Extrafamilial Sexual Abuse of Female Children," in *Handbook on Sexual Abuse of Children*, edited by Lenore E.A. Walker. Springer Publishing Co., 1988.

² Greenfeld, L. *Sex Offenses and Offenders: An Analysis of Data on Rape and Sexual Assault*. Bureau of Justice Statistics. 1997.

³ "Rape in America: A Report to the Nation," National Victim Center and the Crime Victims Research & Treatment Center, 1992.

SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Public service announcements may be recorded for radio or television or they may be written for print media, including newspapers, newsletters, or bulletins. If you plan to record a PSA for radio or television ask a local celebrity to do the recording for you. This may increase the chances that your PSA will be aired, heard, and remembered!

Consider including this year's campaign slogan: **Be the Solution** in each PSA you produce in order to link it with the statewide campaign.

1. TOPIC: Sexual Assault Awareness Month

LENGTH: 15 seconds

You have the power to create change and can make a difference toward ending sexual violence. It all starts with you deciding to be part of the solution, to take action and offer your voice to the cause. To learn more about ways to end sexual violence call [*local sexual assault program*] at [*phone number*].

2. TOPIC: Services

LENGTH: 20 seconds

April is sexual assault awareness month. Did you know last year sexual assault programs in [*local community*] helped over [#] victims of sexual assault? If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual assault, help is only a phone call away. Contact [*local sexual assault program*] at [*phone number*].

4. TOPIC: Services

LENGTH: 30 seconds

Did you know that in [*local community*] the [*local sexual assault program*] provides services to victims of sexual assault and their families? [*Local sexual assault program*] has been providing services for over [#] years in [*county*]. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month; to seek help, learn more, or join us in efforts to prevent violence call [*phone number*].

5. TOPIC: What You Can Do

LENGTH: 60 seconds

Did you know: One in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused by their 18th birthday? Or that a rape occurs every two minutes?

Now imagine a world where children aren't hurt, where no one is assaulted, where everyone is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. What would that look like, what would you do to make that vision a reality?

Every person has power to create change and can make a difference towards ending sexual violence.

It all starts with you. It starts by deciding to become part of the solution. Learn the facts and know that every proactive action, big and small, will make a difference.

To end violence we must acknowledge the reality, step up and unite our voices.

We must proceed with compassion and believe those who tell.
We must not be silent.
We must not be still.
What will you do?

April is sexual assault awareness month. To learn more about ways to end sexual violence or find support call [*local sexual assault program*] at [*phone number*].

Be the solution.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE MEDIA

Date

Name/Title Organization

Address

Phone/Fax

Dear [*Name of Editor, Reporter*]

April is **Sexual Assault Awareness Month** in Washington State. Locally and around the state, individuals, youth, communities, schools, and agencies will be taking action to increase awareness about sexual assault and to end sexual violence. I am writing to ask for your help in this work.

The issue is pressing. One out of every four girls and one out of every six boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18. A recent survey conducted by the Washington State Office of Crime Victims Advocacy found that one third of all women in Washington state have experienced some form of sexual assault. To address these startling statistics, [*local community*] is organizing several community events and activities, including:

- [*Event, Date*]
- [*Event, Date*]

The theme of this year's Awareness Month is **Be the Solution**. By discovering and rethinking the ways that people can be solution, the campaign seeks to make a meaningful impact on sexual violence. You can help us in this endeavor by reporting on local **Sexual Assault Awareness Month** events. We also hope you will consider reporting on some of the following:

- Highlight [*local sexual assault program*] and its work in the community
- Provide information about the prevalence of sexual assault
- Discuss common misconceptions about sexual assault and provide accurate information about sexual violence
- Highlight the sexual assault prevention efforts of a community group or of youth
- Explore connections between media messages that support rape or violence

I can assist you in getting additional information about local events and about issues surrounding sexual assault. Your assistance in reporting on the issue of sexual assault is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [Name]
[Agency] [Phone Number]

[Today's Date]

COMMUNITIES UNITE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

[City, State] — In honor of Washington State's annual **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**, members of the [name of community] community are joining together to raise awareness about sexual violence. During the month of April, Sexual Assault Awareness Month organizers invite all local community members to participate in taking a stand against sexual assault.

The Awareness Month's events include [names, dates and locations of events]. In accordance with their message, **Be the Solution**, Sexual Assault Awareness Month organizers highlight that all individuals have important contributions to make in creating a world free of sexual violence. Organizers hope that community members will turn out in force to lend their voices to the effort. At all events, informational materials and posters will be available that share how individuals and communities can take action.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month is a specific time we target in order to focus on the issues of sexual assault, but every day provides a new opportunity for communities to stop sexual assault.

For more information, please contact [sexual assault program and contact information]. [Sexual assault program] is a community sexual assault program that provides [brief list of available services.]

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WCSAP LIBRARY MATERIALS

The following is a selection of materials available from the WCSAP Library. You may find these helpful in planning the events you organize during SAAM. The WCSAP library has more than 6,000 books, videos, articles, and curricula. For information about our resources, or to request these materials, please contact WCSAP Library at (360) 754-7583 or library@wcsap.org.

WCSAP Library materials can only be loaned to WCSAP members. Both members and non-members are welcome to visit the WCSAP Library by appointment and review materials on site, or search the catalog through our Web site at www.wcsap.org. To become a member of WCSAP, visit <http://www.wcsap.org/join.htm> or call (360) 754-7583.

BOOKS

Response Ability: A Complete Guide on Bystander Intervention

Alan Berkowitz

[Shelf #: 50.BER.RESP0]

This book looks at why bystanders don't intervene, even when most people want to "do the right thing". It offers practical advice, tips, and an analysis on how to start engaging bystanders.

Men Speak Out: Views on Gender, Sex, and Power

Tarrant, Shira

Routledge 2008

[Shelf #: 221.TAR.MENSP]

Men Speak Out is a collection of essays written by and about pro-feminist men. In the essays, which feature original, lively, and accessible prose, anti-sexist men make sense of their gendered experiences in today's culture. And since the interrelations.

An Advocate's Guide to the Media

Duncan Claude et al

Children's Defense Fund 1990

[Shelf #: 67.WAL.NEWSF]

A guide for those wanting to increase the power and effectiveness of their social change efforts. Each chapter includes principles, suggestions, examples, and tips to help advocates use the news media effectively in their work for social change.

News for a Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working with the Media

Lawrence Wallack, Katie Woodruff, Lori Dorfman, Iris Diaz

Sage Publications 1999

[Shelf #: 67.WAL.NEWSF]

A guide for those wanting to increase the power and effectiveness of their social change efforts. Each chapter includes principles, suggestions, examples, and tips to help advocates use the news media effectively in their work for social change.

Transforming A Rape Culture

Emilie Buchwald

Milkweed Editions 1993

[Shelf #: 130.BUC.TRANS]

Thirty-seven extraordinary writers unite to create a sourcebook of visions for a future without rape, strategies to get us there, and programs for action to end sexual violence.

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

The Anti-Violence Project

www.avp.org

This is the campaign that inspired our own 2010 SAAM campaign. They have a number of public awareness campaigns that address hate violence, domestic violence, and sexual violence.

CalCASA Rape Prevention Action Kit

CalCASA 1999

[Shelf #: 55.Cal.Rape]

Targeting common misconceptions about rape and sexual assault, this campaign kit includes an overview of common myths about sexual assault, a quiz to gauge one's commitment to ending sexual violence, a list of "15 Ways You Can Begin To Stop Rape Today," and stickers with messages intended to raise awareness about rape.

Strategies for Action

The National Center for Victims of Crime 1998

[Shelf #: 67.NCV.VICTI]

This kit includes strategies for organizing national crime victims' rights week activities and camera-ready artwork for the 1999 victims' voices: Silent no more campaign. Much of the kit is devoted to media strategies, including sample letters, news releases, and PSAs.

CURRICULA

Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media

Center for Media Literacy 1995

[Shelf #: 55.CML.BEYON.INTR]

Designed as a media literacy program for community education, this curriculum encourages viewers to recognize the impact of media violence and to consider ways to deconstruct media's harmful effects.

Young Men's Work: Stopping Violence and Building Community

Allan Creighton and Paul Kivel from the Oakland Men's Project

[Shelf #: 52.CRE.YOUNG]

A curriculum for violence prevention and education that includes videos, a facilitator's guide, and workbooks for participants; focus is on working with young men in your community.

The Project Action Curriculum: Sexual Assault Awareness for People with Disabilities

Carolyn Paige

Seattle Rape Relief 1991

[Shelf #: 171.PAI.PROJE]

The Project Action Curriculum focuses on decision-making and choice-making skills rather than a more traditional focus of prevention.

VIDEOS

Straightlaced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up

Debra Chasnoff

Groundspark 2009

[Shelf #: 221.CHA.STRAI]

Meet 50 incredibly diverse students who take us on a powerful, intimate journey to see how popular pressures around gender and sexuality are shaping the lives of today's American teens.

Generation M: Misogyny in Media & Culture

Thomas Keith

Media Education Foundation 2008

[Shelf #: 58.MEN.GENER]

Generation M evaluates misogyny and masculinity in popular media, including advertising and entertainment.

DreamWorlds II: Desire, Sex and Power in Music Videos

Sut Jhally

Media Education Foundation

[Shelf #: 67.JHA.DREAM]

DreamWorlds II illustrates the systematic representations of women in music videos, and how these representations tell a dangerous and narrow set of stories about what it means to be female or male; stories which impact how women think about themselves sexually, and how men think sexually about women. DreamWorlds II gives a critical distance from images which have become so ubiquitous, and normal, they are almost invisible.

Culture, Politics, and Pedagogy

Giroux, Henry

Media Education Foundation 2006

[Shelf #: 170.GIR.CULTU]

An active citizen, says the prolific and influential Henry Giroux, is somebody who has the capacity not only to understand and engage the world but to transform it when necessary, and to believe that he or she can do that.

No! Confronting Sexual Assault in Our Community (DVD)

Aishah Shahidah Simmons

California Newsreel 2006

[Shelf #: 173.SIM.NO]

Examines the impact of sexual violence on African American women and girls.

Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes (DVD)

Byron Hurst

Media Education Foundation 2006

[Shelf #: 173.HUR.HIPHO]

From the Sundance Film Festival this film examines manhood in the hip-hop culture.

La Confianza Perdida

Intermedia, Inc. 1999

[Shelf #: 130.INT.CONFI]

This Spanish language video combines reenactments with first person testimony from rape survivors, and interviews with lawyers, forensic medical personnel, counselors, social workers, and activists to bring diverse perspectives to the subject of rape. Examining sexual assault, date rape, and sexual harassment, this video gives viewers an opportunity to discuss feelings about both the loss of self-confidence and the loss of trust.

Latinos Speak Out! Sexual Assault in the Latino Community

Women Organized Against Rape

[Shelf #: 179.WOA.LATIN]

A 20-minute educational video that gives voice to Latinas' experiences with sexual assault.

Tough Guise

Jackson Katz

Media Education Foundation 1999

[Shelf #: 50.KAT.TOUGH]

Tough Guise is geared toward college and high school students to systematically examine the relationship between images of pop culture and the social construction of masculine identities in the U.S.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Web Sites for Statistics and other Resources

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

www.ncjrs.org

National Center for Victims of Crime

www.ncvc.org

National Sexual Violence Resource Center

www.nsvrc.org

Stop It Now!

<http://www.stopitnow.org/>

Darkness to Light

<http://www.darkness2light.org/>

Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN)

<http://www.rainn.org/>

Washington State Information

Washington State Sexual Assault Awareness Month

www.wasaam.org

Office of Crime Victims Advocacy

www.ocva.wa.gov

Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs

www.wcsap.org

Washington Violence Against Women Network

<http://wavawnet.org/>