

SAAM 2009

Planning Events and Activities

Scheduling Your Activities

You may be planning a series of activities or perhaps one special event to commemorate Sexual Assault Awareness Month. CALCASA encourages you to consider scheduling one of your events/activities to coincide with Sexual Assault Awareness Month efforts of rape crisis intervention and prevention programs throughout California.

When selecting a date for your event, it is important to be cognizant of the holidays and various days of observance in April, such as April Fool's Day (the 1st of April) and Holocaust Remembrance Day (April 15th, 2008). Passover begins Wednesday April 8, 2009. Check with your local school district to determine spring break dates. Some communities have sponsored SAAM events in conjunction with Earth Day, such as having a booth at their local Earth Day fair. Lastly, state legislators often are back in their districts on Fridays, so be sure to contact them several months prior to your event to check their availability and get on their schedule.

In order for CALCASA to refer the media and members of the public to your center during April, please notify us about your event plans by clicking on the following link and filling out a brief info form:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=XgBDlrUMgTnEi5SleA_2fIkA_3d_3d

The document, *SAAM Events Materials*, has sample press releases, thank you letters, and flyers to use for your events.

Event/Activity Ideas

CALCASA encourages you to sponsor an event related to the “Decide to End Sexual Violence” theme. Some suggestions follow:

- Hold a rally in your community, such as “Take Back the Night” and provide the opportunity for people to literally Decide to End Sexual Violence. Include a self-defense demonstration and a display of the Clothesline Project. Have volunteers and officials at the event wear Decide to End Sexual Violence T-shirts, teal ribbons and/or lapel pins. Sell lapel pins to attendees as a fundraiser. Encourage people from the podium to sign up their place of business, school, or organization for a presentation to help them continue speaking out against sexual violence throughout the year.
- Organize local places of worship to “get involved” in ending sexual violence by identifying one weekend in April to Decide to End Sexual Violence. Sermons, prayers, collections, and information are all ways to create a climate of intolerance for sexual violence.
- Ask local musicians to write anti-sexual violence songs and/or rap around the theme of Decide to End Sexual Violence. Hold a benefit concert and unveil the new music. Include a sing-a-long of at least the portion of the song that mentions the theme.
- Hold a Decide to End Sexual Violence poetry-writing contest at high schools and universities. Coordinate the contest with a local bookstore, like Barnes and Noble, or a popular coffeehouse, and schedule a poetry reading for the winners. Give winners a Decide to End Sexual Violence T-shirt and lapel pin as part of their prize. Distribute literature, recruit volunteers, and sign up businesses for prevention seminars at the event.
- Hold a candlelight vigil. The power of silence is a dramatic way to expose the brutality of sexual violence. Include campaign messages on cards distributed to attendees. Ask participants to discuss issues at home, and to sign up their place of work, school or other organization for a presentation with you before they leave the event.
- Encourage young men to participate in a Decide to End Sexual Violence event or activity part of the MyStrength Campaign. Young men could distribute MyStrength and SAAM materials at their school or community centers, get announcements made at local high schools or include messages at men’s sporting events, such as high school baseball games.

- Work with college or university students to schedule an Education Day around the theme of Decide to End Sexual Violence on their campus. Incorporate a wide variety of activities, including:
 - a Clothesline display with professors signing their classes up for viewing;
 - a Speak Out;
 - a Minute Without Silence—at a designated time, students gather at selected locations all over campus and shout anti–sexual violence slogans for exactly one minute. This can precede other Education Day activities;
 - a Speaker series or workshop on how sexual violence impacts students, faculty and staff;
 - give presentations to faculty, staff and alumni associations. Make sure that a representative of your agency is on the panel;
 - ask the school newspaper to write an article on your event, incorporating the latest campus statistics and estimates based on projections of sexual violence against female students from the U.S. Department of Justice report, Sexual Victimization of College Women, published in 2000;
 - incorporate T-shirts, bookmarks, and pins into your campus campaign;
- Add a poetry contest, such as that described above, and host a reading at a central campus location with a reception for school officials and local elected officials. Ask elected officials, or their representative, to provide Certificates of Recognition for contest winners for speaking out against sexual violence;
- Host a sober “Shout-In” party. Invite the media to attend a sober party with mocktails and lots of good food and great music. Demonstrate positive relationship skills at the party.
- Host a “Breakfast With” event. Invite local legislators who have sponsored legislation that addresses our issues to talk about contemporary trends in anti–sexual violence law. Invite local business leaders, law enforcement, attorneys, and any other groups that would be impacted by pending or recently passed legislation. Make sure that your center’s services are highlighted during the presentation. Have volunteers wear Decide to End Sexual Violence T-shirts. Give each participant a ribbon and encourage the purchase of lapel pins for staff, employees, etc. as a small fundraiser. Give legislators a campaign T-shirt and lapel pin as a gift for speaking at the event.
- Sponsor a Self-Defense workshop in conjunction with a local elementary school, high school, or college campus. Other organizations to co-sponsor self-defense training with your local Girl Scouts Council or a local fitness center.

- Hold a weight lifting competition to raise money for your agency. During SAAM 2006, the Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Center of Yolo County received proceeds from a gym's bench press competition as part of the statewide MyStrength Campaign.
- Work with a local organization/business, such as your local Chamber of Commerce, to co-host or sponsor an event, with full or partial proceeds going to your center. Valley Trauma Center worked with the Encino Chamber of Commerce in 2004 to put on a benefit Fashion Show.
- Women's Crisis Support of Santa Cruz recommends conducting presentations at local beauty salons on sexual assault and seeking help. Salon employees were given stickers with the rape crisis center's hotline number, which they could affix on the back of their appointment cards.
- Arrange a display, such as a shoe display or a candle/luminary display, in a community park or other public location. The number of shoes or candles/luminaries can represent the number of cases your center handled the previous year.
- Hold a movie night at your center or at a local community center. Show films that deal with the issue of sexual violence. Allow time for discussion after the viewing.
- Put on a benefit production of the "Vagina Monologues," with full or partial proceeds going to your center. You may want to contact your local community college or university campus' theatre department to recruit actors and theater space.
- Think of your event as a possible fundraising tool. Project SISTER's Healing the Heart benefit dinner and The Volunteer Center of Napa Valley's Sky Fly Sonoma have both been fundraising successes that raise awareness of sexual assault and raise money for the center.