



# SUGGESTIONS FOR EVENTS OR PROJECTS (in brief)

www.kasap.org  
24-Hour Hotline  
1-800-656-HOPE

## Events

- Have bookstores/libraries host displays/reading of pertinent books
- Create window displays in storefronts or restaurants
- Host a workshop for groups of professionals or community groups
- Hold an open forum meeting or speak-out and continue these throughout the year
- Sponsor a movie or film festival with discussions following each film
- Hold an open house or neighborhood block event
- Host a run/walk to raise money for the local Rape Crisis Center
- Host a workshop about laws related to sexual violence and how they are changing
- Host a breakfast/luncheon/dinner to (re)introduce your organization and board, mission, and programs to the community and invite individuals with whom you'd like to work and/or the media
- Hold a candlelight vigil
- Stuff shopping bags at popular retailers with flyers and/or bookmarks
- Organize a coin drop to be donated to your local rape crisis center
- Write letters or hold press conferences
- Plant trees in a public space and dedicate them to survivors of sexual violence

## Projects

- Provide speakers for radio or TV talk shows
- Ask local officials to fly flags at half mast for sexual assault victims who were killed during 2006
- Provide self-defense/assertiveness workshops for the public
- Work with sexuality/health educators from schools and community clinics (i.e. Planned Parenthood, local health department, etc.) to focus on healthy sexuality as a positive approach to prevention
- Contact a local celebrity to endorse Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- Create and display a banner or artwork created by survivors
- Encourage continuing year-round participation from your community in the effort to end sexual violence
- Create a mask or mosaic project that honors survivors and display project in a public location such as a library, church, school, mall, etc.

## Ribbon & Poster Campaign

- Distribute information everywhere you can – ribbons, information, newsletters, etc.
- Display posters in public places such as restroom stall doors, schools, stores, restaurants, bars, university gathering places, nail salons, and libraries, gynecologists offices
- Furnish statistics, contact KASAP for copies of *"Responding To Sexual Violence: A Guide for Professionals in the Commonwealth"* or visit [www.kasap.org](http://www.kasap.org)
- Place teal ribbons throughout the campaign in your community, along with information about what the ribbons symbolize (see Resource Packet)





# VARIOUS AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

## **Tree/Flower Planting Ceremony**

Tree and flower planting ceremonies during Sexual Assault Awareness Month serve a dual purpose. They give recognition to those who have been sexually assaulted in our communities and counter pollution in our environment. These events provide the community an opportunity to honor a relative, friend, or other victim and/or survivor with the new life of a tree or plant. These ceremonies may be held in conjunction with Arbor Week, Earth Day or Arbor Day, and provide excellent opportunities for you to partner with local home improvement businesses and greenhouses. You may consider asking these companies to donate trees or flowers to plant during your event.

We encourage you to begin planning at least three months prior to the event date. These events may take place in local parks, on college campuses, or in communities. You may need to contact local officials or campus administrators to find out what their procedure is for approving such events in your area. Finally, inviting public officials and knowledgeable speakers may bring more media attention to your event.

## **Partner with a Local Restaurant**

There is a range of ways you can incorporate a local restaurant into your SAAM activities. Find a local restaurant that will provide an organizational discount and then host a corporate/legislative breakfast to (re)introduce your agency and board to the community. Another possibility is to ask for a small percent of the profits on "A Day to End Sexual Violence" as a charitable donation. Or, ask if you may put brochures or teal awareness ribbon pins near the cash register. You may want to produce a napkin or placemat with awareness information and ask the restaurant to use them on "A Day to End Sexual Violence." Finally, it is always good to ask if you may hang awareness posters in a public area of the restaurant.

## **Open House**

Having an open house reception can be a simple but very effective way to raise awareness of sexual assault and of your agency/program's role in the community. An open house provides an opportunity for you to raise your profile in the community and to provide valuable information. You can place brochures, signs and educational information on a table as well as provide information about volunteer opportunities.

The open house can be as simple or elaborate as you wish. Your staff may decide to provide snacks and refreshments. Or if your budget permits, you may choose to have a catered reception. Invite your board members and local public officials and of course, find some way to get the word out to the public. See the section below about radio and television for ideas. You may also want to invite school administrators, and guidance counselors, as well as local businesses and chamber of commerce. If possible, send out invitations in addition to a general public announcement on the radio and community bulletin. Finally, you may want to include some high profile officials and speakers. Just remember, even a small open house will provide a large opportunity of raising awareness.





# VARIOUS AWARENESS ACTIVITIES (continued)

## **Using Public Fountains**

There may be a number of public fountains in your community, especially if you live in a larger city. You may consider contacting your local officials to ask if the water in the fountains can be colored teal during the month of March. This will raise many questions throughout your community. The fountains provide a unique opportunity for individuals to reflect on how they can prevent sexual violence in their community. You can also ask that all changed tossed into the fountain be donated to the local rape crisis center.

We encourage organizers to begin planning at least four months prior to the event date. You may wish to invite public officials to a ceremony, where they may present the fountains, proclamations, and/or awards. You may also consider having your local media and government's website post an article on the fountains and Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

## **Library Events**

Partnering with your local library can provide you with several low-cost, yet high-value, opportunities. Set up a display with relevant books, brochures and other materials. Focus both on the issue and your organization's services. Or, consider hosting an author or poet's reading of her/his sexual violence-related work(s). Offer prevention education programming to children by reading books on and discussing good and bad touches and self-esteem. Develop bookmarks for distribution in the library. All of these options will educate your community members and increase awareness of your organization.

## **Mock Trial**

Mock Sexual Assault Trials are used across the country to educate communities about the legal process and address myths and facts about sexual assault. Mock Trials are condensed re-creations of actual or imaginary trials. This dramatic style of presentation enables an organization to pull in judicial representatives, theater groups, students, and a wide variety of community members. Mock trials have been used to train first responders about their role in the criminal justice process and inform survivors of what might be involved in pursuing criminal charges. Some communities have adapted the mock trial to explore the campus judicial hearing process.

Developing a mock trial takes time; we suggest allowing at least three months for planning. Mock trials rely on a script, actors/community members and good marketing. If you do not have the time to develop your own script, videos and scripts are available from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center for adaptation. Local service providers such as police, judges, attorneys and forensic examiners, make for great actors. You may be able to hold the mock trial in your area courthouse, town hall or educational institution. Mock juries often struggle with the same issues as actual jury members. Some organizations have included a video, script or scene to depict the events leading up the sexual assault as a way to close the presentation no matter what decision the jury reaches.



# VARIOUS AWARENESS ACTIVITIES (continued)

## **Grandparent Awareness**

Place brochures, hang posters, and host discussion sessions in senior centers on elder abuse and/or the warning signs of child sexual abuse and what people can do if they are concerned about the safety of a grandchild. Check out [Stopitnow.org](http://Stopitnow.org) for additional information and suggestions.

## **Men's Pledge Drive**

Organize a "Men Against Sexual Violence" pledge drive to encourage men to visibly take a stand against sexual violence. Invite local leaders to sign the pledge and be sure to publicize the event. Check out [whiteribbon.ca](http://whiteribbon.ca) and [men-canstoprape.org](http://men-canstoprape.org) for more suggestions.

## **Engage Faith Communities**

Ask faith leaders from the traditions represented in your community to help plan and lead an interfaith service or vigil. Arrange to set up informational tables at local church events. Offer lunch-and-learn information sessions to church leaders. Provide them with sample statements (ie: The community and pastoral staff of \_\_\_\_\_ are committed to providing a safe environment. This community believes that it is vitally important to take decisive steps to ensure that all ministries are safe and provide a joyful experience for youth, etc.). Give them brochures and teal ribbons to hand out to the members. See sample church bulletin insert in the Appendix.

## **Films and Books**

Sponsor a film festival and hold a discussion afterwards, or collaborate with book clubs registered with the library or local book stores. Suggest a book with a sexual assault theme and attend the meeting to discuss the book and provide information about sexual assault issues.

## **Engaging Youth**

Work with a local sporting-goods business to sponsor a basketball tournament or skateboarding contest with a theme of athletes against violence. Host a media breakfast to encourage journalism students to publish articles in the school newspaper. Provide food, discussion, and packets of information they can use in their writing. Work with the drama club/class to create a skit to be performed at a school assembly. Have a Battle of the Bands concert. Invite youth to write and perform a song about sexual assault awareness. Offer prizes as an additional incentive. Have students prepare and read information for the morning announcements (antiviolence statements, safety tips, etc.).





# VARIOUS AWARENESS ACTIVITIES (continued)

## **Cup of Prevention**

Ask local coffee shops, book stores, and other small restaurants to donate a percentage of their coffee and tea sales to the local rape crisis center. (See enclosed flyer in the Appendix)

## **Denim Day**

The Denim Day campaign began in 1999 with CALCASA and LACAAW, the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women, as part of an international protest of an Italian Supreme Court decision to overturn a rape conviction because the victim was wearing jeans. The Italian Supreme Court dismissed charges against a 45-year old rape suspect because his 18-year-old victim was wearing jeans at the time of the attack. The Court stated in its decision that "It is common knowledge...that jeans cannot even be partly removed without the effective help of the person wearing them...and it is impossible if the victim is struggling with all her might." The judgment sparked a worldwide outcry from those who understand coercion, threats and violence go along with the act of rape. The unpopular verdict became an international symbol of myth-based injustice for sexual assault victims.

## **Shine the Light**

Shine the Light can be as simple as encouraging the community to use car headlights, candles, lamps, or flashlights to develop awareness about sexual violence. You may also choose to coordinate a community event such as a candlelight vigil at dusk, for which you designate a time and place for the community to gather. Remember to disseminate flyers with the event information, including location and time, before the date in order to increase community participation. (see enclosed flyer in the Appendix.)

## **A Minute Without Silence**

At a designated time, orchestrate a gathering at selected locations all over the city or campus and shout anti-sexual violence slogans for exactly one minute. This can precede other educational activities.

## **Bag Stuffers**

Bag stuffers project (done by Bluegrass Rape Crisis Center): informational flyers are given to campus bookstores to be "pre-stuffed" into shopping bags so that everyone making a purchase is receiving information related to rape, services and volunteer opportunities. Staff picked up the bags and volunteers helped stuff them. They were then returned to the store.





# VARIOUS AWARENESS ACTIVITIES (continued)

## **Kick-off ceremony for SAAM month**

Intertwine a sexual abuse story line depicting various survivors. Have representation of those age groups with musical/dance performances such as a children's hand bell choir, dancers, senior's kitchen band and other local artists. (contact Purchase Area Sexual Assault Center for more information).

## **The Art of Surviving**

Have survivors do art projects as a part of a support or therapy group to express their healing. Some centers have produced shadow boxes, quilts, handmade dresses, collages, and jewelry. Display the art at a public space and have local musicians and other artists to perform.

## **Human Ribbon**

Get a large length of teal fabric and arrange it as an awareness ribbon around a person standing so that the ends of the ribbon flow out on the ground. The person with the ribbon around them would not speak to others, but an advocate would accompany that person and they could engage others who come to look at the "human ribbon". Local dignitaries could be recruited to be the "human ribbon". Have small ribbons available for observers to put on their lapel. Also have other educational information available.



## **"Flush" Away Sexual Assault Campaign**

Part of the goal of Sexual Assault Awareness Month is to get information in locations which are accessible and safe. A public restroom is the perfect place. The "Flush" away sexual assault campaign involves posting flyers on the back of bathroom stall doors. Place flyers, with the permission of the business owner, in bars, restaurants, clubs, beauty shops, barber shops, physical fitness centers, colleges, parks, etc. A flyer to duplicate is included in the Appendix.