

## **SAAM 2003**

### ***Guidelines for An April 9, 2003 SAAM Shout Out***

#### ***A National Shout Out – A day for raising our voices against sexual violence!***

As part of this year's campaign, the NSVRC encourages centers and programs across the country to plan a public event on April 9, 2003, to raise a collective voice against sexual violence. The idea of a simultaneous "Shout Out" expresses the power of many voices raised together and the impact of a unified message.

Whether such an event is called a Speak Out or a Shout Out, the notion is the same: Voice the truth about sexual violence; don't allow it to be ignored any longer! With one event here, and another there, one becomes many! As simultaneous events occur across the country, our voices become louder, and we will be heard.

There is no single prescription for a successful event. Basically it means selecting a location in a public building, choosing a theme and developing some visual elements, and most of all inviting a few dynamic speakers to take part. The specifics of the place, theme and invited speakers will vary from place to place, and according to the characteristics and history of each area. The NSVRC offers some general guidelines for planning the event and promoting its success, but encourages each center and program to think about what makes the most sense in each particular community and what will have the greatest impact.

#### ***Planning & Pre Event Activities***

The planning and pre-event activities should be done in the months prior to the event. You should begin the planning at least six to eight weeks prior to the event. The timing, steps and details of the planning may vary significantly from place to place. The following are basic guidelines and may vary significantly by your location and situation.

#### ***February and March***

**Decide on whether to plan an event separately in your area or to work in collaboration with a sister program (s).** Depending on the size and resources of your program, you may want to plan a "Shout Out" event with one or several other programs in your region of the state. In some states, the coalition may choose to have a central event. Step one: Consider your time, resources and specifics of your location. Decide on the feasibility and impact for a "Shout Out" in your area. Step Two: Contact one or several other programs in your region of the state and see if they are proceeding with such an event and whether they would like to collaborate. If you decide on a joint event, discuss location, ideas and resources so that each of you can bring something to the event.

Collaborations can be good but remember that it is very important that these shout outs happen in areas that are accessible to many people and for those who may not be able to drive long

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distances. Remember that small events can be equally successful. In a small town or rural area, there may be light public involvement, but the success is not necessarily connected to size. Raising awareness is difficult work that may often have limited immediate impact. Often the greatest impact comes from first time exposure to information or an issue. The NSVRC encourages even very small programs to try a local shout out. Even small events can significantly impact public awareness. The most immediate benefit for even a small event is that it lets the public know about your program or center, which ultimately would be reaching-out to victims.

**Select a location.** In general, we suggest that you select a public building that is easily accessible. The town hall, school, courthouse, park, fire hall or other public meeting place are generally well known and have public parking. Very often the use of such public places is free or at a minimal cost. Contact the administrator of the building regarding their availability at least six weeks prior to the event. Generally the earlier you do this the more likely you will be able to schedule the room. The size of the space you book should not be significantly larger than the size of the audience you anticipate. A very large room with a small gathering can make the event look less important and not well attended. If you do have a large room to work with be sure that your seating, visual effects and orientations are designed to promote an intimate environment. Finally when booking the room, ask about the lighting, sound and accessibility to the public.

**Select a theme or focus.** A theme or focus gives power to the event. Such a theme could be about perpetrator accountability, or safety, or learning facts about sexual assault. It would be good to tie it to the national slogan “Decide To End Sexual Violence” such “Decide to End Sexual Violence, hold perpetrators accountable!” or “Decide to End Sexual Violence, learn the facts!” Your focus can also be first, or stand alone, such as “Make campus safety a priority, decide to end sexual violence!” A theme or focus that incorporates a natural visual effect carries great impact. For example, “Give your hand and support to victims.” You then can use an out-stretched hand for a visual. You can give cardboard hands to attendees.

**Contact potential speakers.** Select a small group of individuals to speak on the subject of sexual assault – specifically related to the theme or focus. In some cases this may be difficult, in other cases you may already know whom to ask. Plan for approximately three to five speakers, asking each to speak only for about three minutes. You do not want any long-winded recitations that will lose the audience.

Speakers to consider:

Recognizable positive community leaders - You may find that certain public figures draw attention and can truly help to raise awareness such as a mayor, chief of police, or someone from the state legislature representing your area.

Survivor - You may want to have a survivor speak briefly. Such speakers can be very powerful. Remember this must be voluntary and the survivor must understand that there may be a crowd and media coverage.

Advocate or someone from victim services schools or area hospital - Such speakers can provide compelling testimony, and be particularly effective in advocating for victims’ rights, public policy issues and service needs.

When approaching a potential speaker, do not necessarily expect them to agree immediately. Ask them to consider it and then give them a call back later in the week. When they agree,

send a confirmation letter; you may wish to include some suggested talking points. Additionally let them know the tentative order of scheduled speakers. You may want to request that certain speakers be flexible in their placement on the agenda and indicate that they may be asked to adjust the length of speech slightly. For example, you may want to ask the Executive Director of a coalition to be prepared to speak at the end of the program and be ready to adjust her comments depending on the availability of time. Be sure to explain the focus of the event, the time and place. Ask speakers if they would like to have a reminder call, closer to the time of the event. In this way you will get confirmation and underscore the importance of the event.

**Agenda items other than speakers.** You may have other types of presentations such as a skit, short video or singers. Remember that these presentations should be short – preferably under 4 or 5 minutes and clearly relevant to the focus of the shout out. An example of an effective video is “Gonna Make It.” It is about 4 minutes in length and can be purchased by calling 717-728-9740, extension 134.

**Notify local radio, television and newspapers of the April event.** Early in the planning stages notify local media of the upcoming event. This will not ensure the participation of the media, but may serve to place the event on a list of the day’s happenings. Often coverage of such events depends on last minute scheduling and on the occurrence of other newsworthy events the same day. It will be necessary to call again a few days before the event.

In many areas, small community papers publish a calendar of local community events. These papers will often run feature stories at no cost. Also check into the possibility of getting on the calendar of events that run on public access television. Frequently, public access channels will have feature spots regarding upcoming events.

**Develop printed material such as flyers and handouts.** It is good to create signage and or visual material for the event. Work out ideas for handouts and materials – develop a visual that relates to your focus or theme. You will want to include some of these materials in your media packages as well. Contact your state coalition for brochures, fact sheets or other materials that you could include in your media packets.

**Pass out flyers and place notices on public bulletin boards.** Many grocery stores, laundromats, hospitals, schools and campuses have general public bulletin boards.

### ***April 1<sup>st</sup> thru April 8<sup>th</sup>***

Reconfirm the attendance of speakers.

Develop the agenda with the speakers and any other activities you want to include.

Develop media packet. This should include agenda of the event, any handouts, fact sheets or flyers for the event, contact information and available services.

Contact the media again. This is often best done the day prior to the event.

Give second notice to public via media and flyers.

Prepare to talk with the media by preparing talking points related to the focus of your event.

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Make certain that a sexual assault counselor is present at the event in case a person in attendance is emotionally impacted by the subject matter.

Be sure to schedule someone to take pictures.

### ***April 9<sup>th</sup> Shout Out***

Arrive early to welcome public and media. Present handouts and any visual elements for the attendees.

Have media packet prepared and available on a media table. Provide signage that easily identifies the availability of media packets.

Have a table for event handouts and other materials you may wish to distribute or sell. Hand out business cards and awareness promotional items. This would be a good time to distribute decals, pins and posters.

Ask speakers if they would like to be signaled or cued concerning their speaking time.

Take photographs.

### ***April 10<sup>th</sup> thru 15<sup>th</sup>***

Send thank you notes to speakers and others who assisted in the event.

If no media was present, submit a letter to the Editor of the local paper commenting on the event.

Complete and return the ***Feedback Form for 2003***. Send a summary of your event, with photographs, when possible, to the NSVRC and to others in your state who may be interested.

Inform the NSVRC of the types of information, products and support you would like to see for a successful SAAM 2004 Campaign.

*We wish you a successful event. Together we can make difference!*

