

SAAM 2004 Campaign Document

Plan A Day to End Sexual Violence

This year the NSVRC encourages all agencies, programs and coalitions to plan a SAAM event or some awareness-raising activities for April 20, 2004. The important aspect of planning for this day is that we all do “something” on the same day, no matter how small or unique. The NSVRC believes that the more events that occur on this day, the more impact we can have in raising awareness of sexual assault.

The NSVRC realizes that many of you have events all through the month of April, and you may decide to plan larger events for other days, particularly in the beginning of the month. April 20th, “A Day to End Sexual Violence,” should be thought of as a day to do something that will be part of the national impact; we do not expect that it will necessarily be the central focus of your SAAM campaign.

To assist you in planning an event, the NSVRC provides a variety of ideas below. Some are relatively easy to plan and may not require a lot of time or resources; others require more lead-time, planning and resources. All of the ideas are general suggestions and may be implemented in a broad range of ways. The scale of each event may be adjusted to fit your needs and the size of your community.

We offer the follow six ideas merely as suggestions. We encourage you to visit the SAAM calendar on the NSVRC website (www.nsvrc.org) for a review of planned activities from across the nation. We have a new feature that allows you to add your activity to the national calendar. **As always, we suggest that you check with your state coalition to see if they are coordinating any statewide events.**

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.

Recruit Assistance of 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 of April 20, 2004 as a charitable donation. Or ask if you may put out 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 April 20th. Finally, it is always good to ask if you may hang a poster in a public area of the restaurant.

Radio and Television

Raise awareness of your organization by posting event announcements on your local public access television station. Also consider contacting your local radio station—don't forget about college radio stations—to ask for free or reduced cost creation and/or airing of public service announcements. Another option is to secure time on a public affairs show to discuss the issues and your organization's services. Reaching community members through radio and television stations does not need to be expensive to create awareness and provide publicity.

Library

Partnering with your local library can also 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). Another option is to offer prevention education programming to children by reading books on and discussing good and bad touches and self-esteem. You wish to develop bookmarkers 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 recreations 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 also 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 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 (in the NSVRC library) 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 to presentation no matter what the decision the jury arrives at.

Take Back the Night

Take Back the Night (TBTN) is an international phenomenon that began in the early 1970's in Germany in response to a series of sexual assaults and murders. TBTN rallies and marches have been held throughout the United States since the late 1970's. Local communities in the United States, Canada, Latin America, India and Europe have been organizing TBTN marches and rallies to unify individuals to stand against violence in their communities. It serves as an empowering educational process.

As activism has grown over the years, this public event has been adapted to meet individual community needs. Consider your unique community priorities when encouraging participants and planning this event. While these events can be large or small, we encourage organizers to begin planning at least six months prior to the event date. TBTN can include a candlelight vigil, a rally, a survivor speakout, and a large-scale public march. Many organizations have incorporated the arts into their event with banner making contests, musical performances, poetry and exhibits like the Clothesline Project that presents t-shirts that display the feelings and stories of survivors. Be you to check with your local law enforcement official regarding legal status of your event and safety issues.

The NSVRC hopes that you will find these six ideas helpful. Remember that they are only suggestions. If you are interested in doing a "speak out" for your activity, see the NSVRC's Guidelines for a "Shout Out" under **NSVRC 2003 SAAM Campaign** on our website. If you want more information on any of these, contact the NSVRC 877-739-3895 or visit our website, www.nsvrc.org.