



Event Ideas

Below you will find a few event ideas for this April. Before deciding on what events you want to hold during SAAPM this year, it's important to first consider your goal, and then your audience. After you've determined those two things, you should think about what type of event(s) will meet your goal and appeal to your intended audience. For example, if you want to increase the number of volunteers at your agency (goal), and you decide to target people age 50 and older in your community (audience), then you might consider the "Burma-ads" since they may be nostalgic for those that remember the ad campaign. Remember, these ideas are only suggestions, and you're encouraged to personalize them to best serve your community. If you need any help with event ideas or just want to bounce some ideas off of someone, contact Sherry Hostetter, Technical Assistance Coordinator, at shostetter@taasa.org.

Community-Building Events

Community Picnic

In addition to traditional awareness-raising activities, April is also a good time to host special events that get your community thinking about the prevention of sexual violence or that lay a groundwork for the kind of changes you are trying to make. During an activity at the 2008 Primary Prevention Institute, one group came up with the idea of having a community picnic as an event that could both reach out to the community and also help support the type of healthy, non-violent behaviors and norms we try to support in prevention work. Some of the possible components of this community picnic include:

- Booths with games or activities that support such factors as cooperation, teamwork, healthy communication, etc. Participants can even carry a card that gets stamped for each activity they participate in. Anyone who completes all of the activities is entered into a drawing to receive prizes. Encourage activities that allow for all ages to participate so that people can bring their children and make it a family event.
- Showing a film or portion of a film is shown (see list starting on page 14) and attendees have an opportunity to discuss the issues presented in the film and their impact on the community.
- Allowing other organizations working toward similar goals to co-sponsor the activity and have tables for information.
- Having other activities, movie screenings or similar gatherings scheduled so that you can offer those opportunities to attendees as a follow-up to the picnic.
- Inviting local bands with a positive, community-

based message to perform or having local acting troupes or high school drama clubs put together a series of skits on issues relevant to safe, healthy communities and relationships.

Art Exhibit/Auction

For a fundraising and community-building event, hold an art exhibit for people to express their feelings about sexual violence (or violence in general). The theme could also focus on healthy sexuality, respect and equality. The art can be solicited from survivors as well as advocates and activists – anyone who is willing and wants to express their creativity. The art can be sold or auctioned as a fundraiser if artists are willing to donate it, or you can charge admission to the gallery. If the budget allows, you can serve hors d'oeuvres and wine or sparkling cider.

Instead of, or in addition to, more traditional artwork, recruit survivors to decorate shoes for an "in their shoes" exhibit. Artists can decorate their shoes to illustrate their journey from victim to survivor.

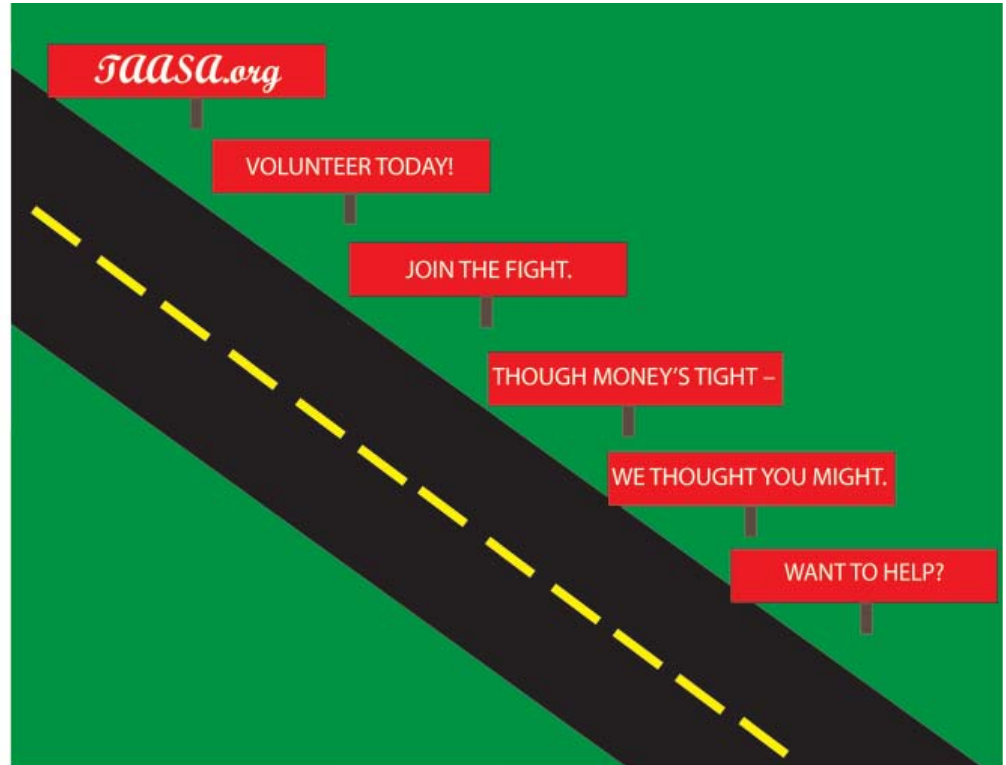
Community Theatre

Get a group of volunteer actors together to stage a play about sexual violence. Some suggested themes include victim-blaming attitudes, bystander intervention, identifying unhealthy behavior, attitudes that support sexual violence and healing after victimization. Recruit local high school or college theatre members to write, act in and direct the play. Remember to keep in mind your audience when selecting material, and make sure to have counselors available at screenings of the play in case anyone in the audience is triggered and needs to talk to someone.

Marketing Events

“Burma-Ads”

Remember Burma-Shave, the shaving cream company that used groups of rhyming road signs to advertise their product? (If you don't, Google search “Burma-Shave” for examples.) Several signs were placed consecutively along the road so that passing cars could read them. In addition to extolling the virtues of their product, the company also frequently ran public service announcement-style ads encouraging drivers not to speed or drink and drive, always with a cheeky tone. Along these same lines, your organization can develop signs to advertise your events or fundraisers, encourage volunteering or donating, or even to send out positive messages. Be careful, however,



about using this method for sexual assault statistics, hotline advertising or similarly serious messages, since that may seem trivializing. For the most authentic look, you should design five or six red signs with white letters (all capital letters), but you can also make the signs consistent with your agency's branding. In the Burma-Shave ads, the very last sign in the series was always the company name, so you can imitate that by having your agency name and logo on the last sign. In addition to posting near the road, you can also post your signs along walking/jogging paths in your community. Feel free to use the Burma-Taasa example above, but don't be afraid to have some fun and be creative!

Poster/PSA Contest

Looking for a way to raise awareness about sexual assault and abuse of teens? Sponsor a poster or public service announcement contest for area middle and high school students. This engages young people and gets them interested in learning about sexual assault because you are including them as part of the process rather than talking at them. To ensure success, carefully plan the parameters of the submissions – think about your community and agency needs. In order for your contest to draw a lot of talent, you will need at least one prize. This will cost your agency some money, but it will be worth it in the end. Consider having a panel choose the winner(s) and include some local teens (perhaps local Students Taking Action for Respect [STAR] team members if your community has one). Suggested prizes include an iPod, a Wii (or other video game system), concert tickets or gift cards. Speak with schools, community centers and businesses in your community about displaying the winning poster. If you do a PSA contest, approach local news stations in advance about playing it. Also, you can post the poster and/or PSA on your website or social networking page (e.g., MySpace, Facebook) if you have one. Additionally, you can hold an art show to display the submissions and open it to the public (see art exhibit idea).