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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **MOVIE "PRECIOUS" MAY CAUSE SURVIVORS TO RELIVE THEIR CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ASSAULT**

Recently, there has been a lot of buzz around the new movie "Precious", which opened across the country late-November and is already being mentioned as an Oscar contender. The story centers on a young Black woman who is a victim of many forms of abuse, including incest; finding her own strength in a society that offers little support, she works to become the person nobody thought she could be.

The National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault (SCESA) wants to remind our communities that survivors of incest and other forms of sexual abuse may have a complex range of emotions about this film.

"We encourage survivors to take care of themselves and remind family and friends to be sensitive to the fact that seeing the film, or even talking about it in some cases, could be traumatic for survivors", says Condencia Brade, SCESA Executive Director.

"The gift of "Precious" is that it exposes and provides opportunities for dialogue around odious issues of abuse that we do not talk about in our communities," says Oliver Williams, Executive Director of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community. "The consequences for those who have suffered abuse is that it can trigger memories of painful events and experiences of past abuse," he adds.

Additionally, the timing of the movie may create stressors for abuse victims. "Traditionally, the holiday season is filled with family gatherings which can be difficult for many survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Coming face-to-face with their abusers, who may be family members and others who may have turned a blind eye to their abuse situation is often difficult and sometimes unavoidable during this time of year. The stress of family gatherings, combined with the viewing of the movie "Precious", could cause a survivor to relive their own story of abuse or may trigger traumatic memories for that survivor," says Andrea Garwood, Licensed Mental Health Therapist/Executive Director of Living Well, Inc,

If you are a survivor of incest or other forms of sexual assault, please know that:

You are not to blame – no matter what the situation.  
You are not alone – there are people who care and want to help.  
You are precious and deserve to be happy.

We remind survivors to take care of themselves, talk to someone – a friend, co-worker – or call their local sexual assault hotline. (It's free, confidential and no one needs to know who you are.)

If someone tells you of their abuse story, please just listen, don't judge or make this about your disbelief and anger. Remember that this person is sharing a precious gift with you – they are trusting you when they have often lost trust in everyone else.

SCESA urges our communities to be sensitive to the needs of survivors of sexual assault and incest as well as their loved ones.

To find your local sexual assault crisis center or hotline, you can follow this link:

[www.nsvrc.org/organizations/state-and-territory-coalitions](http://www.nsvrc.org/organizations/state-and-territory-coalitions) or contact SCESA at 860-693 2031.

For teens, please contact: [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org) or call their national hotline at 866-331-9474.

Please know that some of these crisis services may not have culturally specific programs. If you are interested in culturally specific services, please contact us.

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