


# SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH CAMPAIGN GUIDE



## *CAMPAIGN THEME*

### EMBRACE YOUR VOICE

How we talk about sexual violence matters. When we reflect on and change how we think and talk about the issue, we can create a culture of respect, equality, and safety.

There are many ways to embrace one's voice, from voicing your support for survivors to speaking out against victim blaming.


This campaign provides the resources needed for individuals to take actionable steps toward ending sexual violence. **And it starts with recognizing the power of one's voice.**

## *DAY OF ACTION*

### TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2018

On this day we're calling on everyone to take action to end sexual violence. Through coordinated planning of special events, advocates across the country can raise awareness and harness media attention around sexual violence prevention.

Learn more ways to get involved on the Day of Action  
at [www.nsvrc.org/saam/about/day-of-action](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam/about/day-of-action)





## CAMPAIGN RESOURCES AND MERCHANDISE

Visit [bit.ly/NSVRCstore](http://bit.ly/NSVRCstore) to order palm cards and other SAAM merchandise

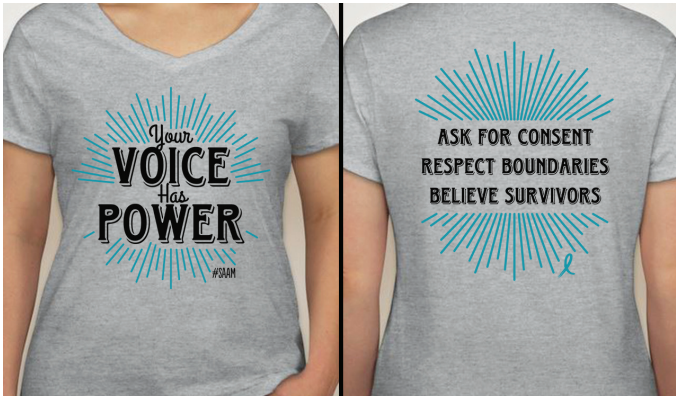
**Embrace Your Voice palm card:** This four-panel, fold-up palm card provides concrete examples of things you can say to show that you believe and support survivors.

**Everyday Consent palm card:** This four-panel, fold-up palm card includes examples of ways you can practice consent in everyday situations.

**Healthy Communication with Kids palm card:** This four-panel, fold-up palm card describes how you can respect the choices and boundaries of children in your life.

**Understanding Sexual Violence palm card:** This four-panel, fold-up palm card covers the basics, including definitions, statistics, and common victim reactions.

Free resources are available online at [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam) such as a campaign and event planning guide, a printable poster, sample letters to the editor, and more!



**T-shirt:** This gray, cotton-polyester blend shirt is available in a V-neck cut in sizes XS - 2XL and crew neck in sizes XS - 4XL.



**Tote bag:** This sturdy canvas bag's floral design encourages others to "Believe Survivors."



**Sticker:** Show the world you're on a mission to end victim blaming with this high-quality sticker.



**Temporary Tattoos:** Available in both the teal ribbon "Believe Survivors" design and an LGBTQ+ rainbow design.

# SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Social media is a great way to embrace and amplify your voice this April and encourage others to do the same.

## GRAPHICS

NSVRC has free graphics available to use on your social media platforms such as:

- Shareable graphics
- Profile pictures
- Cover photos
- Infographics

## TWITTER

Twitter is an ideal platform to post a high volume of educational and awareness messages about SAAM throughout the month.

**TIP:** Use a scheduling tool like Buffer or Hootsuite to schedule posts ahead of time to keep the message of SAAM going throughout the month.

## #SAAM

Use #SAAM in all SAAM-related posts and search the hashtag to retweet and amplify other coalitions, centers, or individual efforts.

## TWITTER CHATS

Host your own Twitter chat to engage and educate your followers. Here's how:

- Pick a day and time to hold your chat and promote it.
- Allot about an hour for the chat.
- Create a list of 5-10 questions, such as, "*What does enthusiastic consent look like to you?*"
- Use a specific hashtag for your chat and include it with your questions and have participants include it with their answers.
- Start questions off with Q1., Q2., etc. to keep the chat organized.
- Retweet answers to your questions to amplify the voices of those participating.

## FACEBOOK

Think of ways you can ask your Facebook audience to get engaged in person or online. For instance, you could encourage your online audience to share your message supporting survivors on the Day of Action.

## FACEBOOK EVENTS

Create a Facebook event to promote interest in your SAAM events.

**TIP:** Brainstorm ways to engage attendees before the event by posting articles, questions, and share graphics in the discussion portion of the event page.

## FACEBOOK LIVE

Utilize the Facebook Live feature by streaming your SAAM event to your Facebook audience as it's happening.

## INSTAGRAM - #30DAYSOFSAAM CONTEST

The 30 Days of SAAM photo contest on Instagram engages individuals and organizations in a fun and creative way.

How to participate:

- Follow @NSVRC on Instagram to get daily prompts.
- Respond to the prompt with a photo using #30DaysofSAAM and tag @NSVRC.
- Check NSVRC's account at the end of each week in April to see if you've been chosen as a finalist or winner.
- Winners will receive a prize pack of SAAM merch.



## SAMPLE POSTS

### General

- April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This year, we're focusing on how everyone can embrace their voice to become agents of change. Learn more: [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam) #SAAM

### Embrace Your Voice

- Learn how you can embrace your voice this April to help prevent sexual violence: [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam) #SAAM
- How you talk about sexual violence matters. Find out how you can embrace your voice and send the message that you believe and support survivors: [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam) #SAAM
- Chances are someone in your life has experienced sexual violence. The way you speak about the issue can make a big difference to them. #SAAM

### Everyday Consent

- Consent isn't just a crucial part of sexual interactions – you can practice consent in everyday situations. #SAAM
- Practice everyday consent by demonstrating that you respect personal and emotional boundaries. For instance, ask for permission before sharing photos of someone online. #SAAM

### Healthy Communication with Kids

- Help the children in your life feel safe by letting them embrace their own voices and make choices about their bodies. #SAAM
- Kids shouldn't be forced to hug an adult. Talk with family members and friends about other ways to greet or say goodbye that respect children's boundaries. #SAAM

### Understanding Sexual Violence

- Use your voice to set the record straight on sexual violence. Learn the facts here: [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam) #SAAM
- People of any age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or social status can experience sexual violence: [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam) #SAAM

## BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SAAM EVENT PLANNING BLOG SERIES

This blog series, intended for first-time planners, is full of tips and tricks for planners of all experience levels.

### Topics covered include:

- Sexual Assault Awareness Month Event Planning 101
- 6 SAAM Events to Inspire Your Planning Efforts
- Planning a SAAM Event on a Budget
- Embrace Your Voice as a Leader This SAAM
- SAAM Event Ideas for Your Community
- How to Engage Your Campus in SAAM
- Movies to Screen During SAAM
- How Social Media Can Amplify Your SAAM Message
- Using “Embrace Your Voice” In Your SAAM Event Planning
- Overview of SAAM Campaign Resources

Check out the blog series at [bit.ly/SAAMBlogSeries](http://bit.ly/SAAMBlogSeries)

## SPANISH LANGUAGE SAAM CAMPAIGN

Coming soon: Our first-ever prevention campaign materials created in Spanish for and by the Latin@ community.

Proximamente: Materiales de nuestra primera campaña de prevención creado por Latin@s en español para nuestra comunidad Latin@ y Latinx.



# EMBRACE YOUR VOICE

## HOW YOU TALK ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE MATTERS.

The things you say every day send a message about your beliefs and values. When you stand up for survivors of sexual violence, you send a powerful message that you believe and support them.

## WHAT INFLUENCES YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

- Your ideas about sexual violence – including portrayals of what a victim looks like, who perpetrates sexual assault, and more – might be informed by TV shows, movies, news reporting, and other forms of media.
- The reality is that sexual assault in the media is often inaccurate and doesn't tell the whole story.
- Reflect on where you've seen sexual violence shown or talked about. How might that have impacted your views or led to assumptions you make about sexual assault?

## HOW YOUR WORDS AFFECT OTHERS

- Chances are someone you know is a survivor of sexual violence. They might not have told anyone out of fear of being blamed or judged.
- If someone in your life is considering sharing something personal with you, they are likely listening to your opinions or attitudes for clues on how you will respond.
- A comment or joke based on assumptions or stereotypes might not seem like a big deal, but it could make someone feel unsafe about sharing personal or painful things with you.

*For example: "I could never tell her what happened to me. She said if victims of sexual assault don't go to the police, then it wasn't serious."*



## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Don't wait for a critical moment to say the right things. The words you choose every day communicate your values.
- When you hear comments that blame victims or make light of sexual violence, speak up so others know you don't agree. Even if you don't have a perfect response, this shows you do not believe in stereotypes, you believe survivors, and you're a safe person to talk to.

*For example: "That commercial made me uncomfortable. I don't know exactly why, but I think everyone should be treated with respect." or, "I don't think that's true – I believe people when they say that someone has hurt them."*

## YOU CAN BECOME AN AGENT OF CHANGE

- Our words shape the world around us.
- Whether you are showing your support for a survivor or helping someone better understand these issues, your voice is powerful and necessary in this conversation.



# EVERYDAY CONSENT

## PEOPLE OFTEN THINK CONSENT IS ONLY IMPORTANT WHEN IT COMES TO SEX.

Really, consent is about always choosing to respect personal and emotional boundaries. By practicing consent in everyday situations, you show that you value the choices of others.

### ASK FOR CONSENT WHEN TOUCHING

- It's important to ask for consent before hugging, tickling, or other kinds of touch.
- Ask sincerely so others understand it's okay to say no.
- For people who have experienced sexual abuse, any unexpected touch can be scary and traumatic. Others may just prefer more personal space.

*For example: "Is it okay if I put my arm around you?" or, "Want to hug or wave goodbye?"*

### RESPECT PRIVACY

- Everyone has boundaries. Some people like to keep things about themselves private, while others are more open.
- If someone shares personal information with you, it's important to ask what their boundaries are.

*For example: "My cousin was assaulted and is afraid they will never feel okay again. Is it okay if I tell them that you're a survivor, too? It's all right if you're not comfortable with that."*

### ASK PERMISSION

- Just like everyone has different boundaries about touch, everyone has different levels of comfort about sharing things online, like photos.
- It is important to always ask before posting or tagging photos of someone on social media.

*For example: "This is a great photo of all of us! Is it okay if I share it online, or should I take another one without the kids in it? I know you don't often post photos of them."*



### SEX AND CONSENT

- Sex without consent isn't sex. It's sexual assault.
- Consent must be freely given. A person must understand what they are agreeing to, and they can change their mind at any time.
- Consent needs to be clear and enthusiastic. The absence of "no" or silence does not mean "yes."
- Past consent does not mean current or future consent.
- When drugs and alcohol are involved, clear consent is not possible. A person who is intoxicated or impaired cannot give consent.

### HOW TO HANDLE THE "NO"

- Whenever you're asking for someone's consent, they could say "no."
- Accept the answer and move on. Don't pressure someone to change their mind.
- It's okay to feel disappointed with a "no" answer. But always remember that respecting boundaries is the right thing to do.

# HEALTHY COMMUNICATIONS WITH KIDS

## THINK ABOUT THE CHILDREN IN YOUR LIFE.

Whether you're thinking of your child, grandchild, niece, nephew, or friend's child, you want them to always feel safe and secure. Help kids feel safe by teaching them that the choices they make about their bodies deserve to be respected.

## WHAT IS CONSENT?

- Consent means giving someone a choice about touch or actions and respecting the answer they give.
- Practicing consent in how you interact with kids teaches healthy communication and that their body belongs to them.

## ASK FOR CONSENT

- Ask for consent in everyday interactions.

*For example: "Do you want a hug goodbye today? We could also wave or high five." or, "Can I sit beside you while we read this book?"*

- Model that asking for consent is an ongoing process.

*For example: "Do you need a break from tickling, or are tickles still okay with you?"*

## LISTEN TO THE ANSWER

- Nonverbal cues can be hard for young children to understand.
- Modeling consent helps kids grow up knowing the absence of a verbal "no" does not mean "yes."

*For example: "You're hiding behind your mom. It looks like you would rather wave goodbye to me today."*

## ACCEPT "NO"

- If you ask a child for a hug or kiss and they say "no," accept their answer cheerfully, even if you are disappointed.
- Don't show anger or pout, even playfully – this sends mixed messages.

*For example: "Okay, no kiss today. See you later!"*



## RELATIONSHIPS AND CONSENT

- A child should never be forced to show physical affection to an adult, even if they're a relative or family friend.

*For example: "It's time to leave. How do you want to say goodbye?"*

- This idea could go against your family or cultural norms or be different from what you experienced as a child.
- Think about ways you can uphold your values while also incorporating consent.

*For example: "Some people in our family give hugs and kisses to show their love, but you can show your love in other ways if you want to, like a smile or kind words."*

# UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE HAPPENS IN EVERY COMMUNITY.

How you understand and talk about it matters. Become an agent for change by using your voice to shift how others think about and react to this critical issue.

### WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

- Sexual violence is any type of unwanted sexual contact - including sexual assault and rape.
- This can include words and actions like sexual harassment, catcalling, and nonconsensual sharing of private images such as "revenge porn."

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE IMPACTS EVERYONE

- Nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 67 men in the U.S. have experienced rape or attempted rape some time in their lives (Smith et al., 2017).
- Anyone can experience sexual violence, including children, teens, adults, and seniors.

### VICTIMS OFTEN KNOW THE PERSON WHO SEXUALLY ASSAULTED THEM

- People who sexually abuse can be family members, friends, romantic partners, or other trusted individuals.
- They may use coercion, manipulation, threats, or force to commit sexual violence.

### VICTIMS ARE NEVER TO BLAME

- It doesn't matter what someone was wearing, how they were acting, if they were drinking, or what type of relationship they had with the person who abused them.

### SEXUAL ASSAULT IS OFTEN NOT REPORTED

- A person may not report what happened for many reasons, including:
  - Concern they won't be believed
  - Shame or fear of being blamed
  - Fear of retaliation
  - Pressure from others
  - Distrust of law enforcement



### HEALING AND JUSTICE LOOK DIFFERENT FOR EVERY SURVIVOR

- A survivor may or may not choose to move forward with the criminal justice system.
- Healing is an ongoing process. Everyone heals in their own time and their own way.

### YOU CAN SUPPORT SURVIVORS

- Chances are you know someone who has experienced sexual violence even if they haven't told you.
- They are listening to how you talk about the issue, and hearing that you understand and believe survivors may help them feel safe.

### EMBRACE YOUR VOICE

- Sexual violence thrives when it is not taken seriously and victim blaming goes unchecked.
- Your voice is essential in setting the record straight on sexual violence.

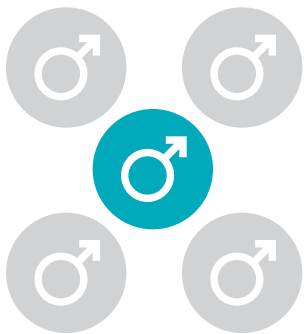
Smith, S. G., Chen, J., Basile, K. C., Gilbert, L. K., Merrick, M. T., Patel, N., ... Jain, A. (2017). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 state report*. Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>

# LEARN THE FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE



**1 IN 2 WOMEN**

have experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>



**1 IN 5 MEN**

have experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

**FEWER THAN 5%**

of completed or attempted rapes against college women were reported to law enforcement.<sup>2</sup>



**1 IN 5 WOMEN**

have experienced completed or attempted rape in their lives.<sup>1</sup>



**41% OF WOMEN**

reported experiencing physically aggressive street harassment.<sup>4</sup>



**1 IN 3 WOMEN**

experience physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner.<sup>3</sup>

Women have a **50% TO 95%** chance of developing post-traumatic stress disorder after being raped.<sup>5</sup>



**1 IN 6 BOYS**

are sexually abused before age 16.<sup>6</sup>



Only **26.2% OF MEN**

who experienced childhood sexual abuse disclosed at the time of the abuse.<sup>7</sup>



**18% OF MEN**

reported experiencing verbal street harassment.<sup>4</sup>

Nearly **1 IN 67** men in the United States have experienced rape or attempted rape.<sup>1</sup>



**67.5% OF INSTANCES OF RAPE ARE ESTIMATED TO GO UNREPORTED.**<sup>8</sup>

Among college women, **9 OUT OF 10** victims of sexual assault knew the person who sexually assaulted them.<sup>2</sup>



**SEXUAL VIOLENCE THRIVES WHEN IT IS NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY AND VICTIM BLAMING GOES UNCHECKED.**

## USE YOUR VOICE TO PREVENT IT

♥ BELIEVE SURVIVORS   ✎ CHALLENGE VICTIM BLAMING   ✓ RESPECT BOUNDARIES



[WWW.NSVRC.ORG](http://WWW.NSVRC.ORG)

<sup>1</sup>Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Walters, M. L., Merrick, M. T., ... Stevens, M. R. (2011). *National Intimate Partner And Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 summary report*. Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Fisher, B. S., Cullen, F. T., & Turner, M. G. (2000). *The sexual victimization of college women* (NCJ 182369). Retrieved from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/182369.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>World Health Organization. (2014). *Global status report on violence prevention 2014*. Retrieved from [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/status\\_report/2014/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/en/)

<sup>4</sup>Kearl, H. (2014). *Unsafe and harassed in public spaces: A national street harassment report*. Retrieved from Stop Street Harassment: <http://www.stopstreetharassment.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/2014-National-SSH-Street-Harassment-Report.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Heise, L., Ellsberg, M., & Gottemoeller, M. (1999). Ending violence against women. *Population Reports*, L(11), 1-43. Retrieved from VAWnet: <https://vawnet.org/sites/default/files/assets/files/2016-10/PopulationReports.pdf>

<sup>6</sup>Hopper, J. (n.d.). *Statistics on sexual abuse of boys*. Retrieved from <https://www.jimhopper.com/child-abuse/sexual-abuse-of-boys/statistics/>

<sup>7</sup>O'Leary, P. J., & Barber, J. (2008). Gender differences in silencing following childhood sexual abuse. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 17, 133-143. doi:10.1080/10538710801916416

<sup>8</sup>Truman, J. L., & Morgan, R. E. (2016). *Criminal victimization, 2015* (NCJ 250180). Retrieved from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv15.pdf>

**YOUR  
VOICE  
HAS  
POWER.**

**BELIEVE SURVIVORS. END VICTIM BLAMING.  
ASK FOR CONSENT. RESPECT BOUNDARIES.**

[WWW.NSVRC.ORG/SAAM](http://WWW.NSVRC.ORG/SAAM)

[#SAAM](https://twitter.com/NSVRC)



**Sexual Assault**  
Awareness Month



# SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH OVERVIEW

## SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH AT A GLANCE

- In the United States, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM).
- The goal of SAAM is to raise public awareness about sexual violence and educate communities on how to prevent it.
- This year, SAAM is celebrating its 17th anniversary with the theme “Embrace Your Voice” to inform individuals on how they can use their words to promote safety, respect, and equality to stop sexual violence before it happens.
- Individuals can embrace their voices to show their support for survivors, stand up to victim blaming, shut down rape jokes, correct harmful misconceptions, promote everyday consent, and practice healthy communications with children.
- We know that one month isn’t enough to solve the serious and widespread issue of sexual violence. However, the attention April generates is an opportunity to energize and expand prevention efforts throughout the year.

## WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

- Sexual violence is a broad term and includes: rape, incest, child sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, unwanted sexual contact, sexual harassment, exposure, and voyeurism.
- Sexual assault is a serious and widespread problem.
  - Nearly 1 in 5 women in the United States have experienced rape or attempted rape some time in their lives, and 1 in 67 American men have experienced rape or attempted rape.<sup>1</sup>
- Sexual violence occurs when someone is forced or manipulated into unwanted sexual activity without their consent.
  - Consent means permission for something to happen or agreement to do something.
  - Reasons someone might not consent to sexual activity include fear, age, illness, disability, and/or influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Anyone can experience sexual violence, including children, teens, adults, and seniors.
- Those who sexually abuse can be acquaintances, family, trusted individuals, or strangers; of these, the first three are most common.

## ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE + PREVENTION

- The good news is that prevention is possible, and it’s happening.
  - Individuals, communities, and the private sector are already successfully combating the risk of sexual violence through conversations, programs, policies, and research-based tools that promote safety, respect, and equality.
  - By promoting safe behaviors, thoughtful policies, and healthy relationships, we can create safe and equitable communities where every person is treated with respect.
- We are in a watershed moment.
  - With the country focused on this very important issue, we have an unprecedented opportunity to improve understanding and change behaviors. The time to rally communities and the broader public is now.



# SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH OVERVIEW

## SAAM FAQ

### What is the hashtag?

#SAAM

### What is the official color of SAAM?

Teal is the official color of SAAM. The teal ribbon is the symbol of sexual violence prevention.

### How do I order SAAM products?

You can purchase SAAM products such as stickers, palm cards, teal ribbon temporary tattoos, and more at the NSVRC Store: [bit.ly/NSVRCstore](http://bit.ly/NSVRCstore)

### Are there free SAAM resources available?

Yes! The SAAM website ([www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam)) provides free share graphics, printable posters, event planning guides, and more!

### How can I get involved?

Use the Campaign Guide, Beginner's Guide to SAAM Event Planning blog series ([bit.ly/SAAMBlogSeries](http://bit.ly/SAAMBlogSeries)), and planning guides to determine the best way to start a SAAM campaign in your community.

### What is the NSVRC?

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) is the leading nonprofit in providing information and tools to prevent and respond to sexual violence. NSVRC translates research and trends into best practices that help individuals, communities, and service providers achieve real and lasting change. The center also works with the media to promote informed reporting. Every April, NSVRC leads SAAM, a campaign to educate and engage the public in addressing this widespread issue.

## LEARN MORE

- NSVRC's media packet (<http://bit.ly/2BldBZT>) provides in-depth information and statistics on the complexities of this issue.
- Contact us! We can connect you with the appropriate expert at NSVRC or a local field expert. The NSVRC team is available for interviews and is a resource for reporting on sexual violence.
  - 877-739-3895
  - [resources@nsvrc.org](mailto:resources@nsvrc.org)
- Follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/nsvrc](https://facebook.com/nsvrc)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/nsvrc](https://twitter.com/nsvrc)) and use #SAAM

<sup>1</sup>Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Walters, M. L., Merrick, M. T., ... Stevens, M. R. (2011). *National Intimate Partner And Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 summary report*. Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)

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