

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Proclamation

April 2023

Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) calls attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and impacts every person in the community. SAAM aims to raise public awareness about sexual violence and educate communities about how to prevent it.

Systems of oppression such as racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, ageism, ableism, etc. contribute to higher rates of sexual harassment, assault, and abuse. Unfortunately, those same groups are also the most impacted by inequitable systems of oppression in our society, and statistics show:

- More than 1 in 4 non-Hispanic Black women (29%) in the United States were raped in their lifetime (Basile et al., 2022).
- More than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native women (84.3%) have experienced violence in their lifetime (Rosay, 2016).
- 1 in 3 Hispanic women (34.8%) reported unwanted sexual contact in their lifetime (Basile et al., 2022).
- 32.9% of adults with intellectual disabilities have experienced sexual violence (Tomsa et al., 2021).
- 47% of all transgender people have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lives (James et al., 2016).

As such, we recognize that it will take ending all forms of oppression to end sexual violence worldwide.

Making a connection between various forms of oppression and the underlying causes of sexual assault is crucial to making holistic and lasting change. However, we cannot do this without recognizing historical injustice and realizing how privilege and complacency reinforces oppression.

We can trace a line from sexual violence to systems of oppression - The theme of this year's Sexual Assault

Awareness Month campaign is "Drawing Connections: Prevention Demands Equity." The campaign calls on all individuals, communities, organizations, and institutions to change the systems surrounding us to build equity and respect within the community, workplace, and the future our youth hold.

I join advocates and communities across the country in taking action to prevent sexual violence. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and each day of the year is an opportunity to create change for the future.

Name

Date

Basile, K. C., Smith, S. G., Kresnow, M., Khatiwada S., & Leemis, R. W. (2022). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 report on sexual violence. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/nisvsReportonSexualViolence.pdf>

James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). The report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. National Center for Transgender Equality. <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>

Rosay, A. B. (2016, September). Violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men. NIJ Journal, 277. National Institute of Justice. <http://nij.gov/journals/277/Pages/violence-against-american-indians-alaska-natives.aspx>

Tomsa, R., Gutu, S., Cojocar, D., Gutiérrez-Bermejo, B., Flores, N., & Jenaro, C. (2021). Prevalence of sexual abuse in adults with intellectual disability: Systematic review and meta-analysis. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18(4), 1980. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18041980>

