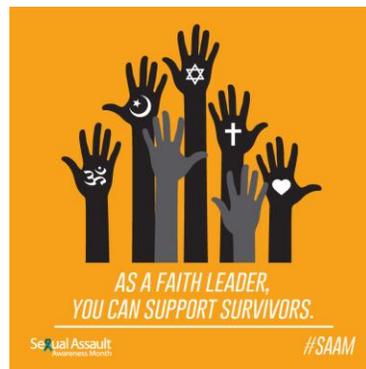


April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Sexual Assault is non-consensual sexual contact or intercourse. It is an act of power and control. There is no consent if a person was forced, pressured, threatened, or coerced into saying yes. In Wisconsin, individuals under 18, those who are unconscious or sleeping, or whose judgment is impaired by alcohol, other drugs, or a mental illness are not legally able to give consent.

What can I and my church do to help end sexual assault?

- Role model respect for other people's bodies and boundaries – ask before giving affection and respect others' right to say no.
- Speak out against sexual assault and in support of survivors. When you hear victim-blaming, speak up and let people know that only perpetrators are responsible for their actions.
- Step up – when you see sexual violence happening or hear a sexist or rape joke, safely prevent or stop the violence.
- Use curriculum in youth groups that teaches how to identify and prevent sexual abuse and promotes healthy relationships.
- Talk to adults and youth about healthy and unhealthy messages in the media surrounding relationships.
- Review your church policy on sexual abuse and reporting and engage your congregation in a discussion about it.
- Make your church a welcoming place for survivors – offer sermons on abuse, add information to church newsletters and bulletins, display posters in bathrooms and bulletin boards, host workshops, use stories of sexual abuse in the Bible at adult education, or write a letter to the editor in your local newspaper.



How can I support a survivor?

- Listen, believe, and do not judge.
- Here are examples of things to say: “Thanks for telling me.” “You are a courageous person.” “I believe you.” “This was not your fault.” “I’m here for you.” “What can I do to help?”
- Connect them to resources, such as Hope House.
- Identify other supportive people they can talk to.
- Take care of yourself too.

For more information and resources, please visit

- www.FaithTrustInstitute.org for faith communities
- www.WCASA.org Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- www.RAINN.org Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network
- www.NSVRC.org National Sexual Violence Resource Center
- www.1in6.org and www.MaleSurvivor.org for male survivors
- www.D2L.org Darkness to Light (child sexual abuse prevention)
- www.StopItNow.org Stop It Now (child sexual abuse prevention)

Free and Confidential Services

Hope House of South Central Wisconsin provides free services to people affected by sexual assault and domestic violence. Services include a 24/7 helpline, supportive counseling, support during Sexual Assault Nurse Exams, legal help, support groups, safety planning, and community education. Services are also available for friends and families of survivors that are looking for support. Please call Hope House to request a presentation for an adult or youth group.



Hope House of South Central Wisconsin

720 Ash St/P.O. Box 557

Baraboo, WI 53913

24-hour helpline: 1-800-584-6790

www.HopeHouseSCW.org

Please visit our website to learn about Sexual Assault Awareness Month projects and events like Denim Day.

