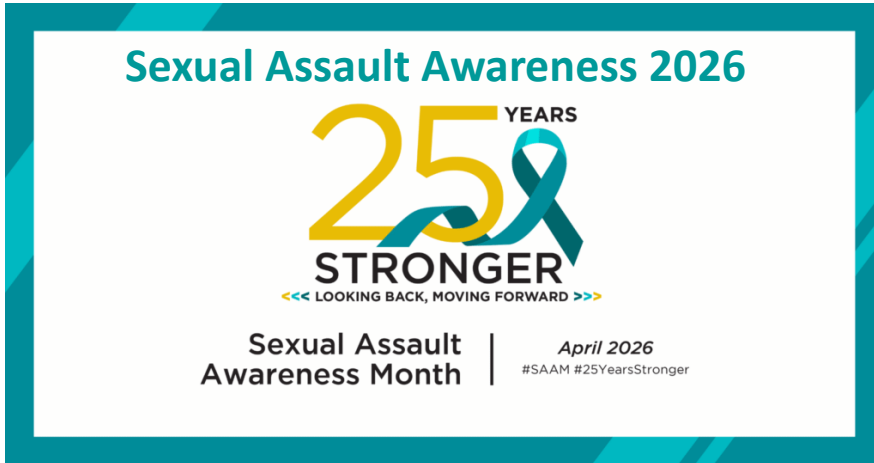


DASAS

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Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault Services



This April, during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we reflect on 25 years of action and progress toward ending sexual assault, abuse, and harassment. The 2026 theme, “25 Years Stronger: Looking Back, Moving Forward,” celebrates the resilience of survivors and the communities that have worked for change.

Since 2001, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) has led the national SAAM campaign to help communities across the country engage in Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) each April. For 25 years, SAAM has united survivors, advocates, and communities in the shared commitment to end sexual violence. This milestone is both a celebration of progress and a call to keep moving forward. What began as an effort to elevate survivor voices and spark conversation has grown into a nationwide movement involving advocates, educators, students, community leaders, and organizations of all kinds.

The theme “25 Years Stronger: Looking Back, Moving Forward” honors the history and growth of the movement while reaffirming our commitment to a safer future for all. Looking back, we remember the survivors and advocates who laid the foundation for change. Moving forward, we renew our focus on prevention, healing, and action.

Sexual violence is an umbrella term that includes any type of unwanted sexual contact. Forms of sexual violence include: rape or sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, unwanted sexual contact/touching, sexual exploitation and trafficking, exposing one’s genitals or naked body to others without consent, nonconsensual image sharing (including AI generated imagery), words and actions of a sexual nature against a person’s will and without their consent. Sexual violence represents a range of behaviors

As we celebrate 25 years of SAAM, we recognize how far we’ve come and the work still ahead. By standing in solidarity, we can continue to shift culture, strengthen prevention, and create a world free from sexual violence.

We invite you to learn how to take meaningful steps toward prevention, support those around you, and create spaces where everyone feels safe, valued, and respected. Together, we can carry this movement forward for the next 25 years and beyond.

Source: <https://www.nsvrc.org/>

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Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault Services Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide free, confidential and empowering services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, human trafficking, sexual assault and stalking while raising awareness and prevention efforts throughout our communities.

What Can You do to Prevent Sexual Violence

Create safe communities for children. It is important for adults to feel confident in their ability to protect children from violence. Children are not responsible for protecting themselves or avoiding sexual abuse. Parents, guardians, educators, and other adults can create safe communities for all children by:

- Becoming comfortable talking with the children in their lives about their bodies and physical development, respecting when a child does not want to give or receive physical affection such as a hug, kiss, or “high-five” – even if it is from a family member.
- Practicing action steps when another adult acts inappropriately with a child or children (such as insisting on spending time alone with a child or not respecting the child’s boundaries).
- Knowing what support is available if they think abuse is happening.
- Reaching out for help when they suspect any form of abuse against a child.

We can all help create respectful, healthy, and safe places for children. You can make your community a better place for everyone.

Every person has the ability to promote and share respectful behaviors. This can be as simple as privately asking a friend not to make inappropriate comments or as public as intervening during an argument or conflict if safe. Taking action in some way, shape, or form begins to change the thoughts or beliefs or norms of a community. For example, a friend of your family makes “jokes” or comments about a highly-publicized case of sexual assault. They imply the victim is at fault. In this situation, you could:

- Share the information you know about sexual violence and say that sexual assault is always a choice made by the perpetrator, and victims are never at fault.
- Ask compassionate and thoughtful questions about the person’s attitude. Why do they feel that way? Maybe having a discussion could change their attitude or belief.
- Tell them those comments are not appreciated in your home/workplace/presence and you would appreciate it if they stop.

These small, but long-reaching, actions can create tremendous change. We start the wheels of change when we do something that interrupts or brings attention to something people see as “normal” or accepted. People who commit sexual violence rationalize their actions with belief in inequality and oppressive attitudes and systems – changing these attitudes and systems can begin to bring about an end to sexual violence.

Encourage healthy relationships and interactions. Many of the messages we receive from media are violent, manipulative, or harmful to both young women and young men. It is important to think carefully about these images and stories so that you can create healthy relationships and sexual experiences. Consent means both people actively agree with what they are doing together. It is a mutual decision that both people make without any coercion or force. Consent is best recognized when it is verbal and when it shows a “yes” (or something like “sure” or “please”).

Some ways you can practice consent:

- Ask the other person if they are comfortable when you are in a sexual or romantic situation. This doesn’t have to be formal or stuffy, a simple “Are you OK with this?” works just fine.
- Wait for a verbal “Yes” (or clear body language like nodding their head that tells you they feel good about the situation). Silence, a “No,” or physically resisting means things need to stop.
- Answer honestly and verbally when someone asks you for consent. They might not know about this kind of consent, so have a conversation ahead of time.

Again, it doesn’t have to be a big deal, just a simple request between two people who respect and like each other.

Sexual assault affects millions of individuals worldwide, yet each of us has the power to help prevent it. You don’t have to be a hero to make an impact. Small actions can have powerful effects!

Source: pcar.org/

Sexual Assault
Awareness Month

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Proclamation

April 2026

April marks **Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM)** – a time to honor 25 years of progress and recommit to creating safer communities for all. This year's theme, "**25 Years Strong: Looking Back, Moving Forward,**" celebrates the resilience of survivors and the communities that have worked for change.

For 25 years, SAAM has supported survivors, raised awareness, and inspired action to prevent sexual assault, abuse, and harassment. As we reflect on how far we have come, we also recognize the work that lies ahead.

Prevention starts with all of us. It is in how we support one another, practice consent, and create spaces rooted in care and respect. When we act with intention, we move closer to a future free from violence.

We honor the survivors who have shared their stories and the advocates who have led the way. Their courage reminds us that prevention is possible and that each of us has a role to play.

As we look to the next 25 years, we renew our commitment to building a future free from sexual violence. Together, we can continue to strengthen prevention, support healing, and create communities where everyone feels safe and valued.

Statistics show:

- Most women and men across all sexual identities who experienced contact sexual violence reported that the person who harmed them was someone they knew (Chen, et al., 2023).
- Over 53% of women and over 29% of men reported experiencing contact sexual violence (Chen, et al., 2023).
- 1 in 5 male victims reported only male perpetrators, 1 in 2 had only female perpetrators, and about 1 in 6 had both male and female perpetrators (Chen, et al., 2023).
- More than 1 and 4 non-Hispanic Black women (29%) in the United States were raped in their lifetime (Basile et al., 2022).
- 1 in 3 Hispanic women (34.8%) reported unwanted sexual contact in their lifetime (Basile et al., 2022).

STOP

SEXUAL ASSAULT

APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

How You Can Help

Effective communication is important to a survivor's wellbeing. If you are wondering what you can do, here are some suggestions:

- Remain calm. You may feel shocked or outraged, but expressing these emotions to the survivor may cause confusion or discomfort.
- Believe the survivor. Make it clear that you believe the assault happened and that the assault is not her or his fault.
- Give the survivor control. Control was taken away during the assault. Empower the survivor to make decisions about what steps to take next, and try to avoid telling her or him what to do.
- Be available for the survivor to express a range of feelings: crying, screaming, being silent, etc. Remember, the survivor is angry with the person who assaulted her or him and the situation, not with you. Just be there to listen.
- Assure the survivor of your support. She or he needs to know that regardless of what happened, your relationship will remain intact.
- Avoid making threats against the offender. Threats of harm may only cause the survivor to worry about your safety and risk of arrest.
- Maintain confidentiality. Let the survivor decide who to tell about the assault.
- Encourage counseling. Give the survivor the DASAS hotline number (877) 345-5534, but let the survivor decide whether or not to call.
- Ask before offering physical support. Asking "Can I give you a hug?" can re-establish the survivor's sense of security, safety, and control.
- Say what you can guarantee. Don't make promises you can't keep, such as saying the survivor will never be hurt again, or that the offender will be put in jail.
- Allow the proper authorities to deal with the assault. Confronting the person who committed the sexual assault may be harmful or dangerous. Attempting to investigate or question others who may know about the assault may hamper a legal investigation. Leave this to the proper authorities.
- Be patient and recognize that healing can take years with advances and setbacks.
- Take care of yourself. If you need support for yourself, please contact DASAS for a confidential place to discuss your feelings.



Source: <https://www.nsvrc.org/>



Denim Days



Wear Jeans for \$5 a day & Show Your Support!!

Return form to: DASAS, 407 W 5th St, McCook, NE 69001

E-Mail: das@dasas.net, Fax: 308-345-4177,

Thank you for joining us in the fight to end sexual violence.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated!

For any questions please call us at 345-1612.

Denim Days Participation Form

Organization Name/Contact: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Days: One day each week in April (4 days)

Twice in April

One day in April

Other: Please Specify _____



Can't wear jeans? You can still make a contribution and show your support.

As a business owner, show your support by matching the funds raised by your employees or make a contribution on behalf of your organization.

Every dollar counts!



Together we can help end violence and support victims!

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Sexual Violence - Children and Teens

Sexual abuse can happen at any age, but children and teens are at highest risk.

Young children depend on adults for basic care and safety. The more dependent children are, the more at risk they are.

12.3% of female victims of rape were first raped when they were 10 or younger (Black et al., 2011).

27.8% of male victims of rape were first raped when they were 10 or younger (Black et al., 2011).

A child is sexually abused when they are exposed to sexual acts or behaviors. Individuals who sexually abuse children look and act like nice people, holding positions of trust and power. They can be caregivers, family members, friends, neighbors, healthcare providers, leaders of faith communities, teachers or coaches.

Most of the time the child knows their abuser.

37% are biological parents.

23% are non-biological parents or parents' partners.

40% are other (including family members and non-family members). (Sedlak et al., 2010)

Blurring boundaries, giving attention and gaining trust are all part of a process that starts long before an abusive act occurs. All of these things help the abuser go undetected by both children and adults around them.

It is estimated that less than one in 12 children will tell.

Children often keep silent for a number of reasons. Children often go through a wide variety of emotions such as shame, anger, sadness, guilt or fear. They may feel threatened into silence or fear that no one will believe them. Sometimes they do try to tell, only to be hushed by family members.

Often though, the child simply does not fully understand what is happening. Children — especially young children — are used to doing what they are told. People who sexually abuse children take advantage of this.

How can I protect my child from sexual abuse?

- Encourage open communication with your children early in their development.
- Teach him/her to tell you about any physical contact initiated by an adult and to trust you with problems and emotions.
- Let the child know that they can talk to you about problems and concerns without you reacting and getting angry.
- Urge your children to tell you about anyone who hurts or scares them or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Pay careful attention to persons around your children. Keep in mind that even 'nice' people, people you trust, can do mean, hurtful or wrong things.
- Trust your instincts. Refuse to leave your children in the company of those you do not trust, no matter who that person is.
- Include information about sexual assault when teaching your children about safety.
- Teach your children, as early as possible, to care for their own needs, such as bathing, dressing and using the toilet.
- Give your children permission to refuse to obey an older child or adult if they believe what is happening is wrong.

If you suspect a child is being abused, trust your instincts. You can report suspected child abuse by calling (800) 652-1999.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month



Thank you for your Support

DASAS would like to thank everyone who made a donation to our organization since our last issue. We would also like to thank you anonymous donors. We apologize if we inadvertently missed anyone.

Deborah Hoffman
Nancy Mousel
Susan Riggs
Myrna Harper

Night N Gals
McCook Methodist Women
St John Lutheran Guild
Arapahoe Methodist Church
Trinity Community Church Women's Group , Cambridge
First Christian Church, Beaver City
Abate of Nebraska, District #12
In memory of Margaret Parker



DASAS is looking for a Victim Advocate! Join our Team!

More information can be found on our website at dasas.net.

Devote Your Time and Talents as a Board Member!

DASAS is currently looking for energetic and committed volunteers to serve on our board of directors. It is our mission to provide free, confidential and empowering services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, human trafficking, sexual assault and stalking while raising awareness and prevention efforts throughout our communities. The DASAS board currently meets on the third Monday of the months of January, March, May, July, September and November at 6pm at our office in McCook.

Board members are the heart and soul of our program. They bring skills and wisdom to our organization as they generously contribute their time and energy. Serving on the board will give you an opportunity to be part of the movement to end intimate partner violence. If you have a sincere interest in assisting victims of violence and are willing to share your time and talent, please consider joining us in our efforts as a board member for DASAS. For further information or for an application, please contact us at (308) 345-1612, email director@dasas.net or stop by the office at 407 West 5th Street in McCook.

Wish List ☆

Paper Towels, Toilet Paper
Laundry Soap & Dryer Sheets
Spray & Wash/Shout
Hand & Body Lotion
Liquid Hand Soap
Lysol/Clorox Wipes
Multipurpose/Glass Cleaner
Bathroom/Toilet Bowl Cleaner
Kitchen 13 gallon Trash Bags
Saran wrap/Aluminum Foil
Ziploc Bags (quart/gallon)
Kitchen Towels/Pot Holders
Kitchen Utensils

Cookware/Baking Pans/Cookie Sheets/Pizza Pans
Diapers—Size 6
Bottled water
Boxed & canned foods, Snack items
(check expirations dates, please)
Copy Paper
Old Cell Phones
Forever Postage Stamps
Phone Cards/Gift Cards

***Please, new items only. Donate used items to local thrift stores on behalf of DASAS.**

***Items needed the most are printed in bold.**

DASAS STAFF

Donna - Executive Director,
Email: director@dasas.net

Kathy - Office Manager /Advocate,
Email: kathy@dasas.net

Sarah- Victim Advocate,
Email: sarah@dasas.net

- Outreach Advocate,
Email: @dasas.net

DASAS Board of Directors

Karen Van Kooten-Wall - President

Marla Messersmith - Vice President

Carol Cotton - Secretary/Treasurer

Cathy McDowell

Tracy Flaska

Peg Smalley

Help is available 24 hours a day!

All services are free and confidential!

*24-Hour Crisis Line

*Emergency Shelter

*Crisis Support

*Legal Advocacy

*Information & Referrals

*Assistance with Protection
Orders

*Medical Advocacy

*Community Education/
Prevention Programs

*Economic Advocacy

For services in Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes,
Hitchcock and Red Willow counties

Call: 345-5534 or (877) 345-5534

Domestic Abuse/ Sexual Assault Services

407 W. 5th Street
McCook, NE 69001

Business Phone: (308) 345-1612

24 Hr. Crisis Line: 345-5534

or 1-877-345-5534

www.dasas.net

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE