

September 2015

The Advocate

The Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center newsletter

Rape Culture

Kathy Williams
Executive Director

Recent news stories of Josh Dugger and Bill Cosby have described cases of sexual violence. Unfortunately, each of these stories is laced with accounts of victim-blaming.

What is victim-blaming? Victim-blaming is the act of assigning any or all responsibility of a crime to the person victimized, instead of the person committing the crime. This can be achieved in very obvious ways as well as very subtle ways.

Forms of victim-blaming include comments such as, “she was asking for it,” “you can tell by the way she was dressed,” “what was she doing out at night alone,” and numerous others. These kind of statements imply the victim did something wrong or could have *prevented* what happened. It implies that if the victim behaved differently the rape would not have happened. This also implies that the rapist is not in control of his/her behavior. The rapist is overcome by the way someone is dressed.



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Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center

**100 % OF RAPES
ARE THE FAULT OF THE RAPIST**

The perpetrator is overcome by seeing a woman who had too much to drink. The abuser is not in control of his or her behavior. This line of reasoning is insulting to the majority and overwhelming number of men who will never commit rape. These statements make the assumption that biological urges are the cause of rape. The reality is, rape is based in the need to exert power and control over another person and has nothing to do with biology.

Rape culture forms when people continue to use this line of reasoning. For instance, someone who would never think of committing rape or any crime may say, “she was asking for it.” While he or she did not commit the sexual assault, they are re-victimizing the victim. Each and every time statements like these are made, the blame is steered away from the perpetrator and instead the victim is targeted. Honestly, we are smarter than that.

In the case of Bill Cosby, or any other high profile reports of rape, comments are often made to discredit the victim. They may not be as blatant but statements like, “she is looking for fame” or “all she wants is money,” are attempts to question the victim’s credibility and diminish the possibility of prosecution. We saw this play out with the first woman who came forward reporting her sexual assault by Bill Cosby. When ten women came forward, similar comments continued. As time passed, women continued to come forward, approximately 35-50 to date, and finally people started questioning whether there really was something going on.

The voices of victims and survivors of sexual violence are silenced each time the victim-blaming statements are made. The atmosphere of disbelief creates a comfortable cover for the abuser. When society decides to stop blaming victims, we can truly start making progress to ending sexual violence.

Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center works with individuals and communities through comprehensive services and education to create a culture of intolerance for sexual violence and an atmosphere of healing for those impacted by it. Free presentations and programs are available and can range from 15 minutes during a meeting to a 2-hour class or professional training. If you would like additional information please contact Perla at 316-263-0185 or Perla@wichitasac.com.

WASAC Education

September 16: 6:00 -7:30 p.m.

Protective Parenting Program

September 29: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

WASAC Lunch and Learn

Sexual Assault and

Substance Abuse

September 30: 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Survivor Writing Workshop

All are Free & Confidential

Call us today for more

information 316-263-0185.

WASAC Happenings



Laura Roberson Court Advocate

Laura is WASAC's new Court Advocate. Laura's role includes advocacy for survivors of sexual assault, assisting them as they navigate through the criminal justice system. Laura will also provide support services for their family or caregivers.

Laura said that being able to provide a safe space for victims and families to feel that they are heard and have support is her favorite part of the job. "I enjoy this loving environment at WASAC and the beautiful co-workers I get to share my time with."

Laura enjoys yoga, meditation, reading, coffee shops (she loves her coffee), and loves going to the cinema in her free time. Laura is also actively involved in her church community and a member of the social action committee. This committee is involved in various projects for the Wichita community, including ECOFEST.

If you would like additional information about court advocacy, please contact Laura at 316-263-0185 or Laura@wichitasac.com.

Please join us as we welcome Laura to the WASAC family!

**Art and Writing Workshops
are BACK!!**

**Creating Self-Compassion for
survivors of sexual violence.**

Refer clients, family & friends

See flyer for details.



Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center presents



Creating Self-Compassion

Art & Writing Workshops for Survivors of Sexual Violence

Free and confidential

8 week groups

All supplies provided

Art workshop

(adult mixed gender group)

Monday evenings 6 - 7:30 PM

October 5 - November 23

(adult female only group)

Monday evenings 6 - 7:30 PM

February 8 - March 28, 2016

Writing workshop

(adult female only group)

Wednesday evenings 6:00 - 7:30 PM

September 30 - November 18

(adult mixed gender group)

Wednesday evenings 6:00 - 7:30 PM

February 3 - March 30, 2016

Pre-registration is required for all groups. Group size is limited.

If you are interested in one or both groups, please call Mary or Kathy at (316) 263-0185 or email advocate@wichitasac.com. Once you are confirmed for the group, we will send you details about the location of the group and meeting space. If you are interested in other services offered by the Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center, visit us at www.wichitasac.com.



WICHITA AREA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTER

Lunch & Learn 2015

~~~~ **NEW MEETING PLACE** ~~~~~

Bring your lunch and join us from 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. on the last Tuesday of each month. Come learn more about the reality of sexual violence.

**Free and open to all! No RSVP required.**

Sep 29: Sexual assault & substance abuse

Oct 27: Risk & benefits of protection orders

Nov 24: Holiday challenges and “traumaversaries”

Dec 29: Warning signs of stalking

Lunch & Learn sessions are held at the

**Wichita Public Library-Central Location**

**Patio Room-1st floor, 223 S. Main**

**For more information, please call 316-263-0185**



# Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center

## Adult women (18+)

- Support group  
Tuesday, 5:30 - 6:30 pm
- Trauma-sensitive yoga  
Tuesday, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

## Teen girls (13-17)

- Support group  
Monday, 5:30 - 6:30 pm
- Trauma-sensitive yoga  
Monday, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

## Parents and caregivers

- Support group  
Monday, 6:45 - 7:30 pm

WASAC also offers short-term individual therapy for women, men, and children. To schedule an appointment, please call our office between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.

WASAC support groups are confidential, free, and open to survivors at any point in their healing. All groups meet weekly and are open-ended, with no appointment necessary to participate. At this time, child care is not available.

WASAC office

355 N Waco,  
Suite 100

SW corner of 3rd/Waco

316-263-0185