

September 2016

The Advocate

The Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center Newsletter

Disability Community and Sexual Violence

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Outreach Advocate

When thinking of survivors of sexual assault, many of us do not think of people with disabilities. In reality, people with disabilities frequently experience sexual assault. 83% of women with disabilities will experience sexual violence (Stimpson & Best, 1991). 30% of men with intellectual disabilities have been sexually assaulted (Sobsey & Doe, 1991; Sorenson, 2000).

While both men and women with disabilities have a heightened risk of being sexually assaulted, women are at an especially high risk. Some women with disabilities who have experienced violence or homelessness may move into a nursing home. In 2009, Susan Magasi and Joy Hammel wrote an article entitled, "Women with Disabilities' Experiences in Long Term Care: a Case for Social Justice." This study explores the lives of women in nursing homes. In this study, several of the women interviewed stated they went to a nursing home due to the threat of having to live in extreme poverty or because they felt tricked or forced into it (Hammel, 2009, p.38). Some survivors also report going into a nursing home to flee an ongoing sexually abusive relationship with a romantic partner. For some of these women, going into a nursing home was a last resort.

Many sexual assault survivors with a disability may also be experiencing various forms of interpersonal violence. These can include intimate partner violence, abuse by a care giver, or human trafficking. The abuse is often committed by someone the person lives with or has a very close relationship with.

Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence. But why are people with disabilities at higher risk? First, people with disabilities are often left out of conversations about healthy sexuality, making them more vulnerable to abuse and unable to disclose due to not knowing or understanding their body. This can make them an "easy target" for abusers (Eastgate, 2012, p. 136). Additionally, survivors with disabilities may be less likely to be believed than those without disabilities, should they make a disclosure of sexual abuse. Society often sees people with



disabilities as less credible witnesses due to their disability. Secondly, a unique barrier for the disability community can be communication. A survivor with a disability may be less likely to seek services if they feel a victim advocate or rape crisis center won't be able to understand them.

A survivor with a disability may have a very intimate relationship with their abuser. As a result, the survivor may feel inclined to seek services from a domestic violence shelter. Many survivors who have a disability identify as people who have experienced domestic violence; even if their abuser is not an intimate partner. In fact, "nationally, about 85% of women with disabilities have experienced domestic violence" (The North Carolina Office on Disability and Health).

There is an increasing effort locally and nationally to bring awareness about violence and its impact on people with disabilities. The Violence Against Women Act has funding to assist organizations with capacity building specific for women with disabilities. Rape crisis centers across the country are starting to include information about disabilities in their services and learning about best practices for outreach to

the disability community. Across the state of Kansas, several organizations have hired staff trained in the issue of sexual assault against people with disabilities.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This is a good reminder to be aware of issues related to violence and the disability community. For example, a sexual assault survivor with a disability, may experience difficulty from their trauma, that makes it harder to gain or maintain employment, or feel comfortable safety planning with their work schedule.

If you have any questions about survivors with disabilities or working with a client and need additional resources, please feel free to contact me at adele@wichitasac.com or call our office at 316-263-0185.



MORE THAN
1 IN 5
YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

between the ages of 12 and 19 reports experiencing violence (including physical abuse, rape or sexual assault from a stranger or partner)—**more than twice the rate of youth without a disability.***

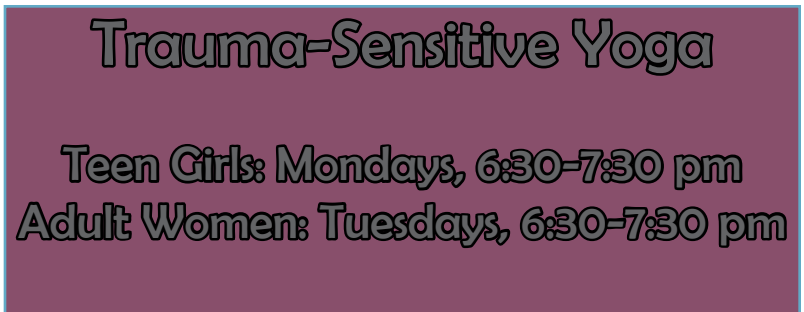


Want more WASAC News?

Look for us!



WASAC
www.wichitasac.com



Trauma-Sensitive Yoga

Teen Girls: Mondays, 6:30-7:30 pm
Adult Women: Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 pm

WASAC Calendar of Events

September 13: Canceled
Adult Women's Support and Yoga Group
(will resume following week)

September 21: 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Protective Parenting Program
(court approved)

September 27: 12:00-1:00 p.m.
WASAC Lunch and Learn
Risks and Benefits of Protection Orders

September 29: 7:00 p.m.
BITCHY BINGO @ Rain Cafe & Lounge
WASAC Fundraiser
518 E. Douglas Ave
316-263-0185



Risks and Benefits of Protection Orders September 27th

In this month's lunch and learn we will learn more about the steps a person can take when trying to petition for a Protection From Abuse Order (PFA) or a Protection From Stalking Order (PFS). Participants will learn the eligibility requirements for a protection order, learn about the court process, and discuss other safety issues and concerns that can arise with protection orders. This topic is back by popular demand, do not miss this!

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

Location: 355 N Waco, Suite 100, 67202

Hosted by: Cherrie Holder, Protection Order Advocate

Bring a friend or co-worker and your lunch!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Ronnie Wills, Court Advocate with daughter Ambur.

Ronnie Wills is WASAC's new Court Advocate

Responsibilities:

Provide follow-up and support to sexual violence survivors and their support system. Offer information and referrals, accompany survivors to interviews and throughout court process.

Favorite part of role:

Accompanying survivors to court proceedings. "Navigating the criminal justice system can be extremely overwhelming. I receive great satisfaction in supporting survivors through this difficult process."

Fun facts about me:

- I play roller derby for the ICT Roller Girls.
- I am the co-director of the ICTRG, which assists with fundraising for local charities.
- Board member of West High Booster Club and member of West High Site Council.

— GET INVOLVED —

Gain Experience * Help Your Community * Support Survivors

Become a Volunteer Advocate!

We need volunteers! Our volunteers are extremely important and help us provide critical services to survivors of sexual violence. Our volunteer advocates take shifts on the 24-hour crisis hotline and are available to accompany survivors to hospital exams and police interviews providing emotional support and advocacy.

Our new advocate training provides intensive education on the psychological, medical and legal implications of sexual assault, as well as other forms of oppression and how they interconnect in the lives of survivors. Crisis intervention and counseling skills are developed through a series of presentations, discussion, and role playing. During this 40-hour training, WASAC and community partners team up to provide a detailed synopsis of the demand for sexual assault advocacy in Sedgwick County.

After completing the application and screening process, our volunteers are required to attend 1 orientation, the 40-hour training session and complete 2 buddy shifts.

Volunteers are asked to commit for a minimum of 1 year and sign up for 2 shifts each month.

****Volunteers must be 21 years of age****

Upcoming 40-Hour Training Schedule:

When: September 7th-22nd, 2016
Evening and Weekend Sessions

Where: 355 N. Waco, Suite 100



Wichita Area
Sexual Assault
Center

For more information, contact Amy at 263-0185
or amy@wichitasac.com

You can also find our volunteer application
online at

<http://wichitasac.com/volunteer/>



Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center

2016



Free and open to all! No RSVP required.

Bring your lunch and join us from 12-1 p.m. on the last Tuesday of each month to learn more about the reality of sexual violence in our community.

July 26 Trauma-Informed Services

August 30 Sexual Violence against People with Disabilities

September 27 Risk and Benefits of Protection Orders

October 25 Sexual and Domestic Violence: Connections

November 29 Navigating the Criminal Justice System

December 27 Practicing Self Care While Caring for Others

All WASAC Lunch & Learn sessions are held at our office at 355 N Waco, Suite 100. For more information, call (316) 263-0185 or visit us online at www.wichitasac.com.



Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center

Teen girls (age 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

Adult women (age 18+)

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

WASAC also offers short-term individual therapy for men, women, 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