



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Women's Center Leads Community Efforts to Raise Awareness During Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Opportunities abound throughout April to change the way we think and talk about sexual violence.

WAUKESHA, Wis. – The Women's Center encourages all to take action this month in preventing sexual violence and learn how we, as a community, can come together to address this pervasive crime.

Nearly one in five women and one in 71 men in the United States have experienced rape or attempted rape at some time in their lives. However, rape is the most under-reported crime – 63% of sexual assaults are not reported to the police. In eight out of 10 cases of rape, the victim knew the person who sexually assaulted them. Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), held every April, gives us a chance to reiterate that sexual violence should never be accepted or tolerated, to have important conversations, and work together as a community to prevent it.

TWC's Executive Director, Angela Mancuso, stated, "Sexual Assault Awareness Month is an opportunity to improve understanding, to change behaviors, to dispel myths and stereotypes, and to take responsibility for this issue that is far too prevalent. It's so important that we continue to stand with survivors, end victim blaming, be engaged bystanders, and hold perpetrators accountable. There is much more work to be done."

The Women's Center has coordinated opportunities for community members to:

- Display SAAM awareness ribbon pins, bracelets, and informational materials to support their engagement efforts. Contact The Women's Center at 262.547.4600

to request materials. Awareness materials for SAAM are also available online at <http://twcwaukesha.org/event/saam/>.

- Wear denim on April 24 for Denim Day, in support of sexual assault survivors and as a statement that a clothing choice doesn't ever excuse sexual assault. Info on the history on this global event can be found at: <https://www.denimdayinfo.org/>.
- Attend the (em)Power Luncheon, featuring Terry Crews, on Wednesday, April 24, 2019, at Potawatomi Hotel & Casino. The Women's Center's largest fundraiser of the year, proceeds from this event directly support the life-saving and life-changing programs offered confidentially and at no cost, ensuring that all those who need these services can access them. Join together with The Women's Center and hundreds of like-minded individuals on this special afternoon to stand with survivors and support this cause.

As the only agency in Waukesha County providing supportive services to those affected by sexual assault and abuse, including trafficking, The Women's Center is proud to be a community leader in advocating for survivors and invites the public to join the conversation.

"We want everyone to know that help is always available through our 24-Hour Hotline at 262.542.3828. When a survivor makes the difficult choice to reach out for support, they will be believed, welcomed, and respected at The Women's Center," stated Mancuso.

The Women's Center leads a wide range of initiatives to prevent and respond to sexual assault. These include violence prevention and community education programming, which can be tailored to school groups, businesses, and civic or religious organizations; counseling for adult and child survivors of sexual violence; and rape crisis response for sexual assault survivors at Waukesha Memorial Hospital, Waukesha Community Hospital, and Moorland Reserve Health Center.

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About The Women's Center

Founded in 1977, The Women's Center provides safety, shelter, and support to empower all impacted by domestic abuse, sexual assault, child abuse, and trafficking. The Women's Center offers free and comprehensive programming including: emergency shelter & 24-Hour Hotline; legal advocacy; family counseling; domestic violence, sexual assault and abuse counseling; substance abuse and mental health support; transitional living; community education and violence prevention; and employment counseling and life-skills development.

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