



*The National Alliance to End Sexual Violence provides a critical voice for sexual assault advocates in Washington, D.C.*

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Laurie Robinson, Elizabeth Pyke  
FROM: The National Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
Monika Johnson Hostler, Pres. and Ellen Fern, Govt. Relations (202) 289.3900  
DATE: December 12, 2008  
RE: National Alliance to End Sexual Violence Policy Recommendations for the New Administration

Sexual assault is a crime with long-term significant health and economic consequences for victims, their friends, families and communities. Sexual assault victims are a large, diverse and complex group; sexual assault occurs across the lifespan and in a variety of settings: homes, schools and colleges, workplaces, and care facilities. Individuals in communities of color and Native American communities, people with disabilities and others who are disenfranchised and/or vulnerable are sexually assaulted at especially high rates.

Attempts to address sexual violence are often overly focused on sex offender legislation and initiatives that provide false fixes and can actually decrease public safety. Effective attempts to end sexual violence should be focused on evidence-based approaches to prevention, assisting victims, and controlling offenders.

### Multi-agency Recommendations

#### **Leadership and Career staff**

Due to the complex and disturbing nature of sexual assault, it remains more challenging to garner public, legislative and fiscal support as well as spokespeople to address sexual assault than for other forms of violence against women.

1. Following up on President-elect Obama's and Vice-President-elect Biden's statements during the campaign, a position within the White House specifically addressing violence against women should be created. This staff position would both work on the issue within the Domestic Policy Council and would reach across federal agencies to ensure the coordination of efforts and information.
2. NAESV urges the administration to seek out appointees to positions addressing violence against who are known to have substantial and demonstrable experience in effectively addressing sexual violence. With the programmatic expansion of VAWA 2005, political appointees with a substantive knowledge of sexual violence are critical to the meaningful implementation of the law.
3. The White House and the Department of Justice should take the issue of sexual assault out of the shadows, take leadership on the issue, and make it an issue of central importance in the Administration.
4. Career staff that oversee or manage sexual assault initiatives should have credentials and experience specific to the sexual assault field.

**Interagency Coordination**

1. An effective high-level working group should be established between the White House, the FBI, the Office of Tribal Justice, OVW, OVC, NIJ, and the CDC to coordinate sexual violence services, prevention, and research. Current silos often work at cross-purposes and create unnecessary burdens for community providers.

**White House Conference on Ending Sexual Violence**

1. The White House should convene a conference to address prevention, intervention, and effective criminal justice responses to sexual violence.

**Office on Violence Against Women**

1. The Sexual Assault Services Program should be fully funded.
2. Sexual assault should have full parity under all grant programs.
3. OVW should create policy and fully exercise its authority to ensure parity for sexual assault funding at the state level where many administrative and funding decisions are made.
4. VAWA 2005 should be fully implemented including aspects of rural, legal, and housing initiatives that specifically address sexual assault.
5. The Sexual Assault Working Group of OVW should be maintained.
6. A specific focus on tribal and communities of color initiatives to address sexual violence should be fully implemented, funded and maintained.
7. Initiatives to address sexual violence in the workplace should emphasize entry level/low wage workers and immigrants.
8. OVW should embrace its role in providing national leadership on violence against women issues.

**Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)**

1. VOCA Funding must be protected and increased. Caps and reductions in VOCA funding violate the very purpose of the Victims of Crime Act.
2. OVC should support a balance between use of funding as long-term assistance to sustain existing victim services and funding for innovative approaches, or services to previously underserved communities.
3. OVC should create a mechanism to ensure parity for sexual assault funding as VOCA funds are administered at the state level.

**Other DOJ activities**

1. The Prison Rape Elimination Act should be fully implemented and collaboration and coordination should occur between this program and other DOJ initiatives as well as victim service providers.
2. Research should focus on the best strategies for reducing sex offending from prevention, mental health, services, corrections, and criminal justice perspectives. Research on evidence-based practices, as well as research on outcomes of current measures, should be provided to policy makers.
3. DOJ should collaborate with service providers, law enforcement, and others to address the sexual exploitation of minors via the internet and by other means.



Working to end sexual violence and ensure services for victims is the purpose of the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV). The NAESV Board of Directors consists of leaders of state sexual assault coalitions and national law, policy, and tribal experts who promote the organization's mission to advance and strengthen public policy on behalf of state coalitions, individuals, and other entities working to end sexual violence. Most importantly, the NAESV advocates on behalf of the victim/survivors—women, children and men—who have needlessly suffered the serious trauma of sexual violence and envisions a world free from sexual violence.

NAESV utilizes a comprehensive grassroots communication network to shape national policy related to sexual violence and victims' needs, ensure funding for rape crisis programs and sexual assault coalitions, and provide expertise to governments, businesses and non-profit organizations addressing sexual violence in all of its forms.

The leadership of the NAESV maintains relationships with allied national level anti-violence organizations including the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Violence, Arte Sana, National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, National Center for Victims of Crime, Rape Abuse Incest National Network, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U. S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women.

Priorities for fiscal year 2009 include full funding for the Violence Against Women Act of 2005, which includes funding (\$50M) for the newly created Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) and increased funding for the Rape Prevention Education Program and Rural Services Program; full funding for the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA); preservation of the Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) fund; and the rape crisis set-aside and funding of the Preventive Health and Human Services Block Grant.

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# SEXUAL ASSAULT

## WHY IT MATTERS

Sexual violence is a devastating problem that impacts the lives of thousands of women, men, and children each year. As rape is a severely underreported crime, the available data greatly underestimate the true magnitude of the problem. Further, victims who are both physically and sexually abused are at higher risk of being injured and killed than victims who suffer from only one form of abuse.<sup>1</sup>

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ **Every 2.5 minutes** someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ **One in six** women have experienced an attempted or completed rape in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ The FBI estimates that **one in ten** men will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ According to a report from the U.S. Department of Justice, nearly 25% of women and 7% of men have been raped or sexually assaulted by a current or former partner.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ Between one-third and one-half of all **battered women are raped** by their partners at least once during their relationship.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ 62% of women raped more than once by the same partner reported that the **abuse lasted one year or more.**<sup>4</sup>
- ✓ 62% of sexual assaults are **not reported to the police.**<sup>4</sup>

## MARITAL RAPE

- ◆ Marital rape accounts for 25% of all rapes, affecting well over 75,000 women each year.<sup>3</sup>
- ◆ Between 10% and 14% of married women will be raped at some time during their marriages.<sup>3</sup>
- ◆ Married women are particularly likely to be raped multiple times by their husbands before escaping the violence.<sup>5</sup>
- ◆ Women who are raped and battered by their partners experience the violence in various ways. Sexual assault may follow a battering incident or when the abuser wants to reconcile after a "fight" and then coerces his partner into having sex.<sup>6</sup>

## CHILDREN

- 29% of all forcible rapes occurred when the victims were under 11 years old.<sup>7</sup>
- 52% of surveyed women and 66% of surveyed men were sexually assaulted by a caretaker as a child.<sup>1</sup>
- In a survey conducted by Diana Russell, only 2% of incest cases and 6% of extrafamilial child sexual abuse cases were reported to the police.<sup>8</sup>

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ◆ Women who are disabled, pregnant, or attempting to leave their abusers are at an increased risk of intimate partner rape.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Youth are particularly impacted by intimate partner violence. Individuals ages 16 to 24 experience the highest per capita rates of violence.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ 25% of women will be raped during their college career and 90% of victims know the person who sexually assaulted or raped them.<sup>9</sup>

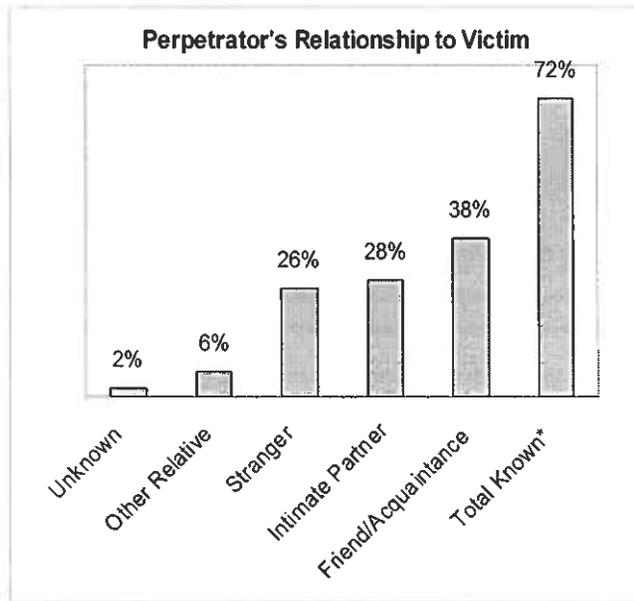
## CONSEQUENCES

Victims of sexual assault are:

- ⇒ *Three times more likely to suffer from depression.*<sup>10</sup>
- ⇒ *Four times more likely to be suicidal.*<sup>10</sup>
- ⇒ *Six times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).*<sup>10</sup>
- ⇒ *Twenty-six times more likely to abuse drugs.*<sup>10</sup>
- 36% of women raped by an intimate partner sustained an injury other than the rape itself during their most recent assault. Only 29% of these injured women received medical attention.<sup>11</sup>



**PERPETRATORS**



72% of victims are sexually assaulted by someone they know.

**HOW TO HELP**

- Ask your Member of Congress to support funding for direct services and programs created in the Violence Against Women Act, such as the Sexual Assault Services program that creates a funding stream of federal money for direct services for victims of sexual assault.
- Ask your local schools and universities to address the issues of sexual violence in their classrooms and through victim assistance programs.
- Encourage your primary care physician and OB/GYN to screen women for signs of physical and sexual violence and ask if they are in a violent or abusive relationship during regular checkups.
- Volunteer at your local rape crisis center or state sexual assault coalition. Visit the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence at [www.naesv.org](http://www.naesv.org) to learn about organizations in your area.

**IF YOU NEED HELP**

For more information or to get help, please call the  
**National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE**  
**National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE**

**SOURCES**

<sup>1</sup> Tjaden, P. and Thoennes, N. (2000). Full report of the prevalence, incidence, and consequences of violence against women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf>. Accessed March 5, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Catalano, S.M. (2006). Criminal victimization, 2005. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv05.pdf>. Accessed March 5, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Bergen, R.K. (1996). *Wife rape: Understanding the response of survivors and service providers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

<sup>4</sup> Tjaden, P. and Thoennes, N. (2000). Extent, nature, and consequences of intimate partner violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/181867.pdf>. Accessed March 5, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Randall, M. and Haskall, L. (1995). Sexual violence in women's lives. *Violence Against Women*, 1(1), 6-31.

<sup>6</sup> Russell, D.E.H. (1990). *Rape in marriage*. New York: MacMillan Press.

<sup>7</sup> Kilpatrick D.G., C.N. Edmunds, and A. Seymour. (1992). *Rape in America: A report to the nation*. Arlington, VA: National Victim Center. [http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/ncvc/resources\\_prof/rape\\_in\\_america.pdf](http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/ncvc/resources_prof/rape_in_america.pdf). Accessed March 5, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Russell, D.E.H. (1988). The incidence and prevalence of intrafamilial and extrafamilial sexual abuse of female children. In *Handbook on sexual abuse of children*, L.E.A. Walker (Ed.). Springer Publishing Co.

<sup>9</sup> Fisher, B.S., et al. (2000). *The sexual victimization of college women*. Washington, DC: U.S. National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/182369.pdf>. Accessed March 5, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> World Health Organization. (2002). The world report on violence and health. [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/world\\_report/en/full\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/full_en.pdf). Accessed March 5, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Reuters News Service. (2000). Many women do not report sexual assault by partner. *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, 36.



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# Violence Against Women Act 2005: Sexual Assault Services Program

## ***What is the Sexual Assault Services Program?***

As part of VAWA 2005 (Public Law No: 109-162), the Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) was initiated to provide assistance to victims of sexual violence. Specifically, SASP will provide funds for service providers and make resources available to state, territorial and tribal sexual assault coalitions who work to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of local rape crisis centers.

## ***The Current Landscape***

Approximately 1,315 rape crisis centers nationwide provide critical support to victims in their recovery from sexual violence. Without a consistent and specialized funding stream for direct services, rape crisis centers are stretched to the limit - trying to meet increased demand for services with reduced government funding. Rape crisis centers need:

- **Resources to meet the increased demand for services** - additional staff are needed to provide medical and legal accompaniments, short- and long-term individual counseling, support groups for victims and their families and operate 24-hour hotlines.
- **Resources and skills to meet the needs of special communities** - educational programs as well as direct services including on-site translators and cultural sensitivity training is needed to assist underserved populations. Transportation is needed to meet the needs of rural victims.
- **Public awareness of available services** - many victims are unaware of the services available to them through local rape crisis centers.

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**By creating a desperately needed federal funding stream for direct services, SASP will assure rape crisis centers have the necessary funds to continue providing vital services to all victims of sexual violence.**

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## ***How will SASP funds be utilized?***

SASP would authorize the Attorney General to award grants to assist tribes, territories and states in their efforts to provide services to adult and minor sexual assault victims and their family and household members.

Specifically, grants could be used for:

- **General intervention and advocacy** including accompaniment through medical, criminal justice and social support systems and related assistance.
- **Training and technical assistance** relating to sexual assault for various organizations, including government, law enforcement, courts, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations and professionals working in legal services, social services and healthcare.
- **Intervention and related assistance for culturally specific organizations** to address sexual violence.

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## Violence Against Women Act 2005: Rape Prevention and Education Grant Program

### ***What is the Rape Prevention and Education Grant Program?***

The Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) grant program, created through the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, represents a strategic step toward strengthening national, state and local sexual violence prevention efforts and the operation of rape crisis hotlines. RPE funding provides formula grants to States and Territories to support rape prevention and education programs conducted by rape crisis centers, state sexual assault coalitions, and other public and private non-profit entities. Many promising programs working with youth, young adults and communities have been supported with RPE funds over the past ten years, demonstrating the effectiveness and need for rape prevention programming. These programs and initiatives support the value of funding appropriations at the authorization level; thus confirming the impact of this valuable program in the prevention of sexual violence.

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**Rape Prevention and Education grants provide crucial funding for rape crisis centers and campus sexual assault programs that are generating a positive response from schools, communities and the public-at-large.**

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### ***The Importance of Rape Prevention and Education Outreach***

Rape Prevention and Education funds assist rural, suburban and urban areas with programming designed to support community advocates' work in ending sexual violence in their communities. These outreach activities are crucial not only in changing public attitudes and behaviors, but also in reaching sexual assault victims who have not previously sought help. Similarly, training for allied professionals on issues related to sexual violence enables those persons to better understand victims and make appropriate referrals. A Kaiser Family Foundation study found that parents and students alike want school-based primary prevention programs to learn to avoid sexually violent behavior and information on what to do if a friend is sexually assaulted.

While an obvious need for rape prevention education exists, community-based sexual assault programs are increasingly reporting that it is more and more difficult to meet the demand for these critical public awareness activities.

Rape Prevention and Education funding also supports the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), founded by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. The NSVRC provides up-to-date information, materials, research data and resources regarding sexual violence to policy-makers, Federal and State agencies, college campuses, sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions, the media and the general public.

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## Violence Against Women Act 2005:

### Rural Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Child Abuse Enforcement Assistance Program

#### ***Expanding Outreach Programs to Rural Communities***

VAWA 2005 reauthorized the program that addresses violence against women in rural communities. However, unlike previous grants that were only available to assist victims of domestic violence, VAWA 2005 has expanded the program to include victims of sexual assault, dating violence and stalking. Additionally, eligibility has also been expanded for rural areas in non-rural states, such as profoundly rural areas in Alabama, West Virginia and Texas.

Related to sexual assault, new language in VAWA 2005 includes set aside funding for services that "meaningfully address" sexual assault in rural communities. The total amount available for sexual assault grantees will be dependent on the overall amount appropriated to the program; but specifically, no less than 25 percent will be allotted for services to "meaningfully address" sexual assault in rural communities.

At such time the amounts appropriated reach \$45 million, the percentage shall increase to 30 percent for sexual assault services; when appropriations reach \$50 million the percentage shall increase to 35 percent; and when appropriations reach the maximum amount of \$55 million, the percentage shall increase to 40. In addition, ten percent of appropriated funds will be allotted to Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations, eight percent will be available for technical assistance and no less than 25 percent of such amounts will be available for specific technical assistance to sexual assault grantees.

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**Rural grant funds are designed to fund cooperative efforts between law enforcement, prosecutors and victim services. In the past, grant funds have led to the development of rural outreach services, the creation of sexual assault and domestic violence task forces and councils, enhanced coordination between law enforcement, prosecutors and victims services and resulted in better enforcement of laws against victims.**

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#### ***Addressing Violence Against Women in Rural Communities***

Victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking in rural and remote communities face unique obstacles in their efforts to escape abusive and dangerous relationships. Rural communities often lack the basic infrastructure needed to assist victims. Social and cultural pressures are great, and the dynamics of small communities present challenges in the provision of confidential and safe services. Barriers to interventions in rural communities may include: lack of public and private funding sources for service development, large geographic areas and harsh weather conditions that make travel difficult for victims, under funded and understaffed law enforcement agencies that hamper the criminal justice response, lack of legal representation for protective orders and other civil matters, gaps in the 911 emergency systems that delay responses to crimes in progress, distances of more than 100 miles to the nearest emergency shelter and lack of public transportation, child care and social services.

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