

## Violence Prevention Coalition of Bedford



*A citizens group for peace, tolerance, cooperation and outreach in the community*

*Established in 1997*

### ***Mission of the Violence Prevention Coalition***

*We believe that all forms of violence are unacceptable and that community life requires nonviolent resolution of conflict*

### **APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH (#SAAPM)**

April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention month (#SAAPM). The goal is to educate and engage the public in addressing this widespread issue.

To end sexual assault, we all need to be part of the solution. Educating yourself and others, helping a friend who is being abused, and speaking up are all examples of things you can do to help.

Talking about these issues openly will help end the shame and stigma that sexual assault survivors are burdened with. The next time you're in a room with 6 people, think about this:

- 1 in 3 teens experience sexual or physical abuse or threats from a boyfriend or girlfriend in one year.
- 1 in 5 women are survivors of rape.
- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men have experienced sexual violence in their lives.
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men were sexually abused before the age of 18.

#### **What is Sexual Assault?**

Sexual assault is forced or coerced sexual contact without consent – the presence of a clear yes, not the absence of a no. Sexual assault is a crime motivated by a need to control, humiliate, dominate and harm. It can take the form of:

- Rape
- Incest
- Child Sexual Abuse/Molestation
- Oral sex
- Harassment
- Exposing/flashing
- Forcing a person to pose for sexual pictures
- Fondling or unwanted sexual touching above and under clothing
- Force which may include but is not limited to:
  - Use or display of a weapon
  - Physical battering
  - Immobilization of the victim

#### **What can you do to help?**

Sexual assault is not just something that happens to someone we may read about on the news. This is an issue affecting our friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers every day. Silence and lack of knowledge about sexual assault play a large part in why it persists. Together, we can break the silence. Simply wanting to help and learn more is a huge step toward ending sexual assault. One important thing to remember: You are not alone in this. Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help.

If you know of someone that could benefit from speaking to a caring, well-trained peer advocate, please connect them with the National Dating Abuse Helpline, a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, at 1-866-331-9474 (TTY: 1-866-331-8453), by texting "loveis" to 77054, or through live chat at [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org).

Feel free to contact Bedford Youth and Family Services with any questions at 781-275-7727

DVSN (Domestic Violence Services Network) offers a Free and confidential Help Line: 888-399-6111

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

[National Chat Helpline for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse or Assault](#)

Adapted from:

[www.nomore.org](http://www.nomore.org)

**Additional Resources:**

[www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/)

[CDC infographic about preventing sexual violence](#)

[Infographic-Domestic: Violence](#)

Check out these shocking statistics, understand domestic violence and the damaging effects on women, families and children.

[Infographic-Teenagers & Sexual Violence](#)

This infographic provides an overview of how sexual violence is experienced and impacts young people.