

NEWSLETTER - May 2020

Miss the last DCCESV Meeting?
Minutes from every coalition meeting are available on our website under the "What We Do" section.

Visit DCCESV.ORG today!



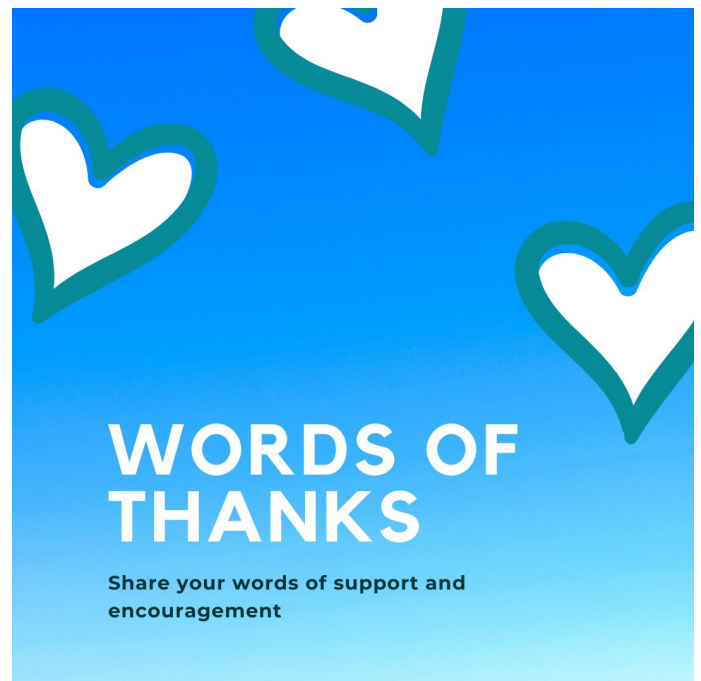
Visit the "What We Do" page to see the latest meeting minutes, special projects, and newsletter archive.

#DCThanks Social Media Campaign

On April 17, the DC Coalition to End Sexual Violence launched the #DCThanks social media campaign. Through this campaign, we recognize victim service providers in DC for their hard work and enduring commitment to survivors during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Each week, we will spotlight professions and organizations that are doing essential work during this crisis by sharing words of appreciation and encouragement. Each post will include an invitation to others to share their gratitude as well.

To participate, share your words of encouragement and use the hashtag #DCThanks. We encourage you to repost our graphics as we share them on social media as an invitation to your followers to join in and express their thanks to the people who are at the frontlines fighting for survivors even during a global pandemic.

If there are specific organizations, professions, or individuals you would like to nominate for their work during this challenging time, please share your nominations with us via social media, @DCCESV.



ASK DC Offers Current COVID Resources

In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, victim service providers have remained committed to serving the District and its survivors. In order to honor this work and continue to connect victims to the care they deserve, we have mobilized Assault. Services. Knowledge. DC as a gathering place for current information about the operations of victim service providers in DC. In our new website section “COVID-19 Resource Updates,” visitors can find information about the operations of victim service providers as they change and adapt in this unprecedented landscape. As always, this website and app remain free and confidential to all users.

In recognition of the intersecting challenges victims and survivors may face, such as housing, food, and financial insecurity, the COVID-19 Resource Updates section of ASK DC also includes up-to-date information to connect users to daily needs resources like food and shelter. This also includes mental health resources, emergency grants and funds for various populations, internet access offerings, and childcare and parenting resources.

[ASK DC](#) is offering **FREE POSTCARDS** to be shipped to an address of your choosing. These postcards contain essential hotlines and are targeted toward people who may not have access to web resources. Anyone is eligible to [order these postcards](#); place a FREE order and drop off a few when you go to the gas station, grocery store, pharmacy, or liquor store. With 10 DC-specific hotlines on the back, you can help ensure that people get the care they need. Postcards are available in English, Amharic, Chinese, French, and Spanish.

We invite you to continue sharing your updates, resources, and any status changes with us as we maintain this index for survivors in the District. Any updates can be submitted to Hannah Goldstein at hgoldstein@mencanstoprape.org.

Whether you're feeling unsafe or need to find a meal, we can help

Available in 8 languages. Confidential. Safe. FREE.

Visit www.askdc.org or download the app
The only city-wide app with resources and emergency notification capabilities

DC Victim Hotline:	1.844.443.5732
DC Rape Crisis Center:	202.232.0789
Children's National Medical Center:	202.476.4100 (press 0)
Ayuda (multilingual):	202.387.4848
Deaf DAWN:	202.559.5366 / info@deafdawn.org
Courtney's House (trafficking):	202.423.0480
FAIR Girls (trafficking):	1.855.900.3247
Asian/Pacific Islander DVRP:	202.833.2233
DC 24 Hour Shelter Hotline:	202.399.7093
DC 24 Hour Crisis Hotline:	888.793.4357
Additional Resources:	coronavirus.dc.gov/

ask DC
assault. services. knowledge.
| COVID-19 |

Organization Spotlight: FAIR Girls

This quarter DCCESV recognizes FAIR Girls, a non-profit in Washington, D.C. dedicated to eradicating human trafficking and creating brighter outcomes for survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Founded in 2003, FAIR Girls has directly served over 1,000 girls and young women through their broad work, which includes case management and trauma-informed direct services.

With a focus on supporting their clients in transitioning from victim to survivor, FAIR Girls offers a number of client-centered, trauma-informed direct services to female-identifying survivors of human trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation. Their holistic approach to care includes long-term assistance in the form of case management. Clients receive personalized guidance that may include counseling, crisis intervention, and legal support.

FAIR Girls also runs the Vida Home, a transitional home for survivors aged 18 to 26. Serving up to six young women survivors at a time and up to 50 per year, survivors have access not only to a warm bed, meals, and basic necessities, but also to resources such as workforce development programming, survivor support groups, counseling, and other programming.

As they explain it, FAIR Girls is “helping close the ‘on-ramps’ into exploitation and trafficking, and increasing the ‘exit ramps’ from exploitation.” This approach extends their mission from serving survivors to incorporating a systemic approach to human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Through their policy advocacy program, FAIR Girls addresses institutional pathways that lead to exploitation, and calls for legal measures that advance the agency of people wishing to exit commercial sex trafficking. Additionally, FAIR Girls advocates for policies that stop the arrest and prosecution of sex trafficked individuals, and protect at-risk youth by connecting them to services.

FAIR Girls shares the expertise of their policy and direct-service work to educate the community. Through prevention education and trainings, FAIR Girls reaches junior high and middle school students who may be vulnerable to exploitation. Their expertise is also shared with direct service providers in



communities beyond the sexual assault field to raise awareness about risk factors, warning signs, misconceptions of trafficking and exploitation, and how to connect survivors with care.

To learn more about FAIR Girls, visit their website, www.fairgirls.org.

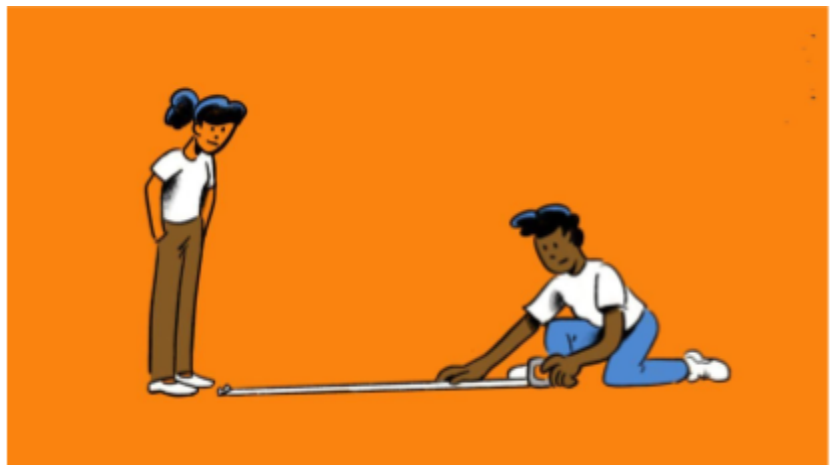
Quarantine is an Opportunity to Teach Consent

By Hannah Goldstein, Program Coordinator, Men Can Stop Rape

If the abundance of public education campaigns and mnemonic devices is any testament—no means no; consent is like tea; FRIES—there’s something contained in the concept of consent that some find difficult to navigate. A concept that may seem simple to understand on its surface, internalizing the meaning of consent in a way that produces personal safety can in practice be awkward, unclear, or confusing, even for those who have a clear sense of their own boundaries.

Presently, in the age of quarantine, the connection between personal boundaries and safety is plainer than ever. With the assistance of CDC guidelines and a call to “flatten the curve,” the entire country has been galvanized to engage in practices that draw attention to physical boundaries—for example, standing no closer than six feet apart and wearing personal protective equipment in public.

This is a moment that’s rife with parallels to the conversations we typically have around consent. Only this time, given the sweeping nature of the virus, it’s a conversation that has been so broad as to include not only the typical crowd of college students, advocates, young people, and passionate individuals, but the entire country. We may have the unique opportunity to harness the lessons of quarantine as a tool to communicate the essence of consent.



During the pandemic, we are asked to consider and communicate our boundaries, and to be responsive to that of others.

Consent is practiced when conversations around consent—what it is, how to practice it—are allowed to happen, both on an individual scale (in one-to-one interactions) and on a societal scale. This goes for interactions that are not only physical, but that in any way invoke someone’s participation. For example, during quarantine, we are called upon to practice consent in communicating to others if they are standing too close. In such a situation, I am able to express this because I’ve

reflected on and set my own boundaries, and because there is a supportive culture that reinforces that my wishes be understood and respected. This is not to say that my own wishes for my boundaries to be respected are not enough. Rather, having a culture that validates my call for this regard from others makes it easier for others to internalize and understand when a boundary has been named.

These conversations don't take place in a vacuum; they are conducted against a cultural backdrop. In this case, our cultural backdrop is one that spurs people to take responsibility not only for their own safety, but the safety of people who they may not know—elderly folks, immunocompromised people, essential and healthcare workers, and more. Boundaries are more easily expressed and respected because we all inhabit an understanding of the harm posed. We've been called upon to participate in a culture that embodies compassion by practicing respect for the well-being of others by "flattening the curve."

The understanding that, even if you're not ill, you have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that supports harm reduction is the same ethos involved in primary prevention. Primary prevention of sexual assault conceives of prevention not simply as stopping violence from happening in specific instances, but actively creating a culture where violence is not permissible or normalized. This view of prevention means that people have a responsibility to do more than just refrain from perpetrating violence.

While typically this can be hard to wrap one's head around, with coronavirus, this has been the idea at the center of preventing the spread. Whether or not you are ill, you have a responsibility to your community to follow the prescribed guidelines. These actions are about more than just making sure you personally avoid harm; they are about preventing harm on a societal scale, for people whose lives you may have no stake in.

With a new baseline around what social interaction looks like, those who may struggle to grasp the importance of conversations around consent now have a familiar framework to more easily understand it.

Many people still don't have conversations where consent is made explicit, and I would venture to say that's because the culture around how people engage has been slow to change. While many groups—advocates, students, and activists, to name a few—have been actively engaged in conversations around consent, and have been key in broadening this conversation, old norms remain. However, with a new baseline around what social interaction looks like, those who may struggle to grasp the importance of conversations around consent now have a familiar framework to more easily understand it. As a community,

we can demonstrate leadership by making clear the parallels between navigating personal boundaries during a pandemic and doing so when the terms of life are more familiar.

As we imagine what the world and our country will look like on the other side of the pandemic, we have the opportunity to effect real social change. From calls for universal healthcare to demands for wage guarantees, people all over the country are assessing which institutions and practices ought to be restored, and which ought to be reshaped and redefined. Much as we may like to leave quarantine behind, these times present the population at large with a sort of answer key as to how primary prevention and cultural change works. Ultimately this time of social distancing has much to tell us of the power of collective action as a tool of prevention.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

This year's Sexual Assault Awareness Month was all about digital engagement. Between virtual events, workshops, and trainings; a digital SAAM Proclamation; and social media campaigns raising awareness and generating conversation, our members and stakeholders mobilized en masse on the Internet. Check out the [SAAM 2020 Social Media Highlights Gallery](#) to get a peek at highlights and analytics from this year's DC SAAM.



DCCESV Mobilizes Around COVID-19

In response to closures and systemic interruption flowing from COVID-19, the Members and Stakeholders of the DC Coalition to End Sexual Violence have rallied around the pillars of community, communication, and coordination to meet the needs of survivors during this crisis. DCCESV has hosted weekly Zoom check-ins, during which attendees have discussed the new challenges presented by the rapid societal changes wrought by coronavirus. These targeted conversations have enabled the sexual assault community to share resources and information broadly, strengthening and mobilizing a network of communication in order to reach survivors. Additionally, these conversations center gap analysis as a priority. With accessibility challenges at the forefront of discussion, Members and Stakeholders collaborated to come up with ways to reach residents who may not be able to access resources digitally, whether because they are sheltered with an abuser or they have no internet access.

DCCESV has also mobilized to make victim resource information available to residents of the District regardless of web access. Due to these efforts, postcards with critical hotlines are available for order, with the intention of distributing them in highly frequented locations that have remained open during

the pandemic, such as pharmacies, gas stations, and grocery stores. These materials are available for order and download by organizations, businesses, and residents of DC. DCCESV has engaged translation services to broaden the reach of these materials to non-English speaking residents.

The Coalition continues to check-in about budget priorities, the status of the Sexual Assault Victims' Rights Amendment Act (SAVRAA) 2019, and other priorities that arise for Members and Stakeholders as the landscape for providing services continues to evolve.

This newsletter was produced by Men Can Stop Rape under 2020-DCCESV-01, awarded by the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, Executive Office of the Mayor, District of Columbia. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Executive Office of the Mayor.

STAY CONNECTED:



Men Can Stop Rape, 1130 6th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001