

NEWSLETTER - July 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](https://www.dccesv.org) today!



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

DCCESV Launches Executive Director Search

The DC Coalition to End Sexual Violence is pleased to announce that we have launched our search for an Executive Director. The Coalition seeks an Executive Director with visionary leadership, deep passion for social change, the capacity to influence systems' response to sexual violence, a sustained commitment to engaging community-based organizations in coalition work, and an in-depth knowledge of non-profit financial management and fund development. After addressing member feedback regarding desired qualifications and qualities in a prospective Executive Director, as well as calls to include components in the posting that attract more diverse candidates, the listing was officially posted on July 16, 2020. [See the full posting on idealist.com.](#)

WE'RE HIRING!
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
[WWW.DCCESV.ORG/CAREERS](https://www.dccesv.org/careers)



DCCESV
DC COALITION TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Organization Spotlight: The Wendt Center for Loss and Healing



This quarter, DCCESV highlights the work of The Wendt Center for Loss and Healing, a non-profit in Washington, D.C. dedicated to helping those who are living with grief, loss, life-threatening illness and trauma. With the organization's roots reaching as far back as the 1970s, the Wendt Center for Loss and Healing has long been a pioneering force in the field of loss, trauma, grief, and healing.

Through an array of programs and services, the Wendt Center supports those who have been impacted by violence. Not only are counseling services provided regardless of ability to pay, but the Wendt Center offers its services in several languages as well. Their programs serve people of all ages, with specific offerings for children and adults. Therapeutic interventions are available for those broadly grappling with grief, as with the annual Camp Forget-Me-Not/Camp Erin DC for children and teens, as well as for those dealing with highly specific grief experiences, as with the RECOVER program, for those who must identify a deceased loved one.

Though their work does not solely focus on sexual assault, the Wendt Center serves victim-survivors and those affected by sexual violence through a variety of programming that includes both individual and group counseling. Programs such as HOPES, for victims of crime, and C.H.I.L.D., for children, offer a continuum of care to people who are in need of mental health services. The Wendt Center provides support in and resources around adult and child sexual assault as well as domestic violence. Through their expertise in addressing trauma and violence of all kinds, the Wendt Center provides essential mental health services to the sexual assault community in Washington, D.C.

In addition to their counseling work, the Wendt Center also serves the community by providing community outreach and crisis intervention. Wendt Center counselors address the unique challenges that arise when specific groups or communities face unexpected crises or losses. The organization also provides training for emerging and existing mental health and professional service providers, offering a trauma- and grief-informed lens to the work of professionals locally and nationally.

To learn more about the Wendt Center or how to get involved, [visit their website](#).

ASK DC COVID: Postcards to Close the Digital Divide

In response to closures and changes in services during COVID-19, ASK DC launched a section of the website dedicated to providing current information around available resources. This section of the website has continued to serve as a source for up-to-date information about programs that serve survivors in Washington, DC, including victim service information as well as resources addressing daily needs such as food, shelter, and childcare support.

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 DVPR:	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

Launched in May, this effort was matched by a print campaign intended to get the word out about essential resources for those without access to the internet. These postcards are still available for free order to be shipped to an address of your choosing. Postcards can be ordered in English, Amharic, Chinese, French, and Spanish. With 10 DC-specific hotlines on the back, you can help connect survivors and victims in Washington, DC, to resources and daily needs. **To date, over 2,000 postcards have been disseminated by organizations, agencies, students, members of the faith community, and other concerned residents.**

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[Order your postcards, or download a digital version, on ASK DC](#), and simply drop a few off when you visit the grocery store, gas station, or other frequented and essential businesses.

A Call for Contributions: Share Your Events!

The membership of DCCESV continues to organize a robust offering of online events and webinars. In Quarter 3 alone, we featured over 60 member and stakeholder [events on our site](#). Continue to send your events, webinars, and other programs to hgoldstein@mencanstoprape.org to be featured on the Coalition webpage.



**"THIS TRAINING WENT BEYOND MY EXPECTATIONS AND COVERED MORE THAN I EVER IMAGINED."
-HMTI PARTICIPANT**

**AUGUST 18 - 20, 2020
ONLINE ZOOM MEETING**
This activity is pending approval from the National Association of Social Workers
Register at www.mcsr.org

Healthy Masculinity Training Institute Goes Virtual

Join Men Can Stop Rape (MCSR) this August 18-20 for a virtual Healthy Masculinity Training Institute. Adapted from their three-day in-person training, MCSR is offering an online version of their nationally recognized institute, concentrated into three-hour segments at a reduced cost. Through the training series, participants will learn the scientific theories, strength-based approach and dynamic exercises that are a part of MCSR's 23-year history and socially distant-adaptable practices of mobilizing boys and men to promote healthy masculinity.

The HMTI is a chance to connect and heal in the relationship- and community-building aspect of primary prevention work. Featuring interactive group exercises and multimedia presentation, the institute adopts a pro-social, public health approach to creative cultures free from violence. The HMTI equips participants with

the skills to positively construct masculinity and social norms that foster safer communities.

This activity is pending approval from the National Association of Social Workers. To register, visit mcsr.org/hmti. Email training@mencanstoprape.org with questions.

Special Pantry for Survivors - July 31

Thrive DC is hosting a Special Pantry for survivors on July 31. Call to make an appointment to get a bag of groceries—no lines, and no crowds. Case managers working with survivors are welcomed to call to arrange to pick up bags for clients. Email alicia@thrivedc.org for more information, or call (202) 503-1522 to arrange your pickup at 1525 Newton St NW. [Read about the event here.](#)

Child Sexual Assault On the Rise During Pandemic

By: Hannah Goldstein

COVID-19 has made victims and survivors even further susceptible to risk factors that amplify assault and challenges that complicate seeking help. From closures and changes to mental health services to shelter needs and shutdowns of businesses that provide free WiFi, the pandemic has left those needing support increasingly vulnerable, and sometimes in unexpected ways. Children, it seems, are no exception.

According to RAINN, based on hotline calls, lockdown brought about an increase in child sexual assault. Among callers, “67% identified their perpetrator as a family member and 79% said they were currently living with that perpetrator” ([NPR](#)). Studies have also shown that stressful circumstances—such as financial stress or anxiety about health, in this case—increase the likelihood that parents will perpetrate abuse.



Foster care shutdowns have also left children vulnerable to assault

and maltreatment. Due to the personal contact involved in foster care—from contact with birth parents to home visits by caseworkers—many states have found their foster care systems grinding to a halt. Though statistics are still emerging, many have also identified an increase (or expected increase) in youth homelessness. Not only does this make minors more vulnerable to communicable diseases such as coronavirus, but it exposes them to the threat of sexual assault.

This is to say nothing of school closures. For children who lack other protective factors such as supportive family environments, financial stability, or food and shelter security, school is a space where they can be connected to social-emotional support and services. Teachers provide a degree of supervision and may help detect child sexual assault. [A 2018 study by the Children’s Bureau](#) found that educators made up 20.5% of reporters of child maltreatment. Furthermore, although many schools have continued to offer meals to children even while children participate in distance learning, access challenges mean that many children who lack food security are exposed to a greater likelihood of being trafficked or exploited in order to meet basic needs.

All of this points to the ongoing reality that children are more vulnerable to assault and exploitation during the COVID crisis than ever before. With many protective factors stripped away, children are not only at greater risk of sexual assault, but are suddenly rendered responsible for reporting their abuse or seeking help. As the pandemic stretches on, it remains clear that action must be taken to account for this increase.

Children both deserve and require the support of caring adults, whether abuse is present or not. Whether through remote check-ins, referrals for services, or financial support, adults have the power to support children in a variety of ways. Adults should not only practice extra vigilance in keeping an eye out for child sexual assault, but should seek to provide greater social-emotional support to the children

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in their lives. Many services and programs that cater to youth have continued to operate throughout the pandemic, even if in a virtual capacity. These offerings provide essential community support and guidance during a time where youth are more vulnerable.

Those involved in the sexual assault field can offer support by tailoring programming and increasing offerings for children, or building partnerships that broaden their capacity to do so, given the appropriate area of expertise. With the unique challenges of the coronavirus pandemic in mind, those who build programming designed for the

pandemic setting may even find that their contributions represent a more robust, durable infrastructure for supporting at-risk and in-risk youth not only now, but in the future.

Those looking to get involved can advocate for local governments and other funders to channel their dollars into organizations that are providing on-the-ground services and relief. What's more, those looking to support children can donate directly to those organizations themselves. DCCESV represents a broad spectrum of members and stakeholders in the sexual assault field of Washington, DC, many of whom work directly with and for children in a variety of arenas: [primary prevention](#), [the legal system](#), [trafficking](#), [healthcare](#), [advocacy](#), and more. If you're looking for ways to get inspired and organizations to support, you can look at a full list of our members and stakeholders [here](#).

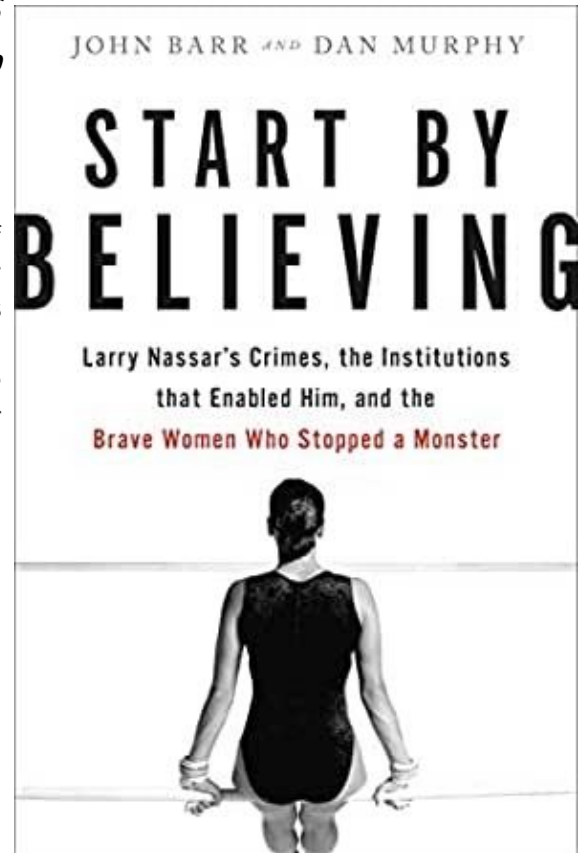
The pandemic has revealed extant flaws and weaknesses in many facets of society. While shutdowns have certainly exacerbated vulnerabilities for many groups, the undeniable truth is that many of these realities have existed for a long time—only now are they bubbling to the surface. With this awareness of the problem of child sexual assault and its increase, it's the responsibility of adults—both professional and otherwise—to mobilize in a manner appropriate to their expertise to provide essential supports for young people.

Book Review: *Start By Believing: Larry Nassar's Crimes, the Institutions that Enabled Him, and the Brave Women who Stopped a Monster*

Start by Believing reveals the win-at-all-costs culture in elite athletics and higher education that enabled a quarter century of heinous crimes. For decades, osteopathic physician Larry Nassar built a sterling reputation as the go-to doctor for America's Olympians while treating countless others at his office on Michigan State University's campus. It was largely within the high-pressure world of competitive gymnastics that Nassar exploited young girls, who were otherwise motivated by fear and intimidation, sexually assaulting hundreds of them under the guise of medical treatment.

In *Start by Believing*, John Barr and Dan Murphy confront Nassar's acts, which represent the largest sex abuse scandal to impact the sporting world. Through never-before-released interviews and documents they deconstruct the epic institutional failures and individuals who enabled him. When warnings were raised, self-serving leaders chose to protect their organizations' reputations over the well-being of young people.

Following the paths traveled by courageous women—featuring a once-shy Christian attorney and a brash, outspoken Olympic medalist—Barr and Murphy detail the stories of those who fought back against the dysfunction within their sport to claim a far-from-inevitable victory. The gymnasts' uncommon perseverance, along with the help of dedicated advocates, brought criminals to justice and helped fuel the #MeToo revolution.” - review excerpted from *GoodReads*



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STAY CONNECTED:



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