APRIL IS
SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH
WE CAN BUILD SAFE SPACES TOGETHER

ORIGINS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) is an annual campaign to raise public awareness about sexual assault and educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence. It is observed every April.

As early as 1976, Take Back the Night marches rallied women in organized protest against rape and sexual assault. These marches protested the violence and fear that women encountered walking the streets at night. Over time, these events coordinated into a movement across the United States and Europe. Because of this movement, broader activities to raise awareness of violence against women began to occur.

In the early 1980s, activists began to raise awareness of violence against women and domestic violence during the month of October. In the late 1980s, the National Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCASA) informally polled state sexual assault coalitions to determine the preferred date for a national Sexual Assault Awareness Week. A week in April was selected.

By the late 1990s, many advocates began coordinating activi-

-ies and events throughout the month of April, advancing the idea of a nationally recognized month for sexual violence awareness and prevention activities. SAAM was first observed nationally in April 2001.

Observing Sexual Assault Awareness Month at UT Southwestern

Join the Office of Institutional Equity & Access’ Division of Title IX as we observe Sexual Assault Awareness Month 2022. Each April, we seek to support survivors and educate our campus community on preventing sexual violence.

Our signature program, Candid Conversations: Navigating Institutions from a Survivor’s Perspective, on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 from 12 noon to 1 PM, will analyze the various touchpoints and resources with which a survivor of sexual assault interacts. This virtual panel discussion will feature experts in the areas of law enforcement, forensic nursing, advocacy, mental health, and Title IX. All faculty, employees, staff, students, and residents are welcome to attend.

Register here!

WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual assault refers to any act that meets the definition of rape, fondling, incest, or statutory rape (for more information about the meaning of sexual assault, please click here). Sexual assault is an issue that transcends stereotypical boundaries: sexual assaults can happen anywhere, including the workplace.

WHAT ARE SOME MYTHS AND CHALLENGES THAT SURVIVORS FACE ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Many myths and misunderstandings surround sexual assault. Some of the most prevalent and dangerous myths are as follows:

Myth: Sexual assaults only occur in a domestic setting.
Truth: Sexual assaults can occur anywhere, at any time, including at the workplace during working hours.

Myth: Sexual assaults are mostly committed by strangers.
Truth: Acquaintances, friends, and even romantic partners commit sexual assaults.

Myth: Consent to one sexual act is consent to all subsequent sexual acts.
Truth: Sexual assaults can occur during intimacy that began as consensual if consent is no longer given.

Myth: There is only one way to respond to a sexual assault.
Truth: There is no one way or right way for a survivor to respond to sexual assault. It is entirely natural for people to experience and show the full range of human emotion after experiencing a sexual assault, and people will grapple with having experienced sexual assault in very personal ways.

Why is it a workplace issue?

It is critical that every member of the UT Southwestern community understands the meaning of sexual assault, how to properly report any known or suspected instances of sexual assault, and how to support those who may have experienced sexual assault.

WHAT YOU SAY MATTERS

Talking about sexual assault is hard. For many survivors, the reaction of the first person they disclose to, often a friend or family member, can have a huge effect on their healing process. Hear firsthand from survivors in RAINN Speakers Bureau how what you say and do matters.
WAYS TO TAKE ACTION
There are a variety of ways you can take action individually by supporting organizations and initiatives preventing sexual assault both locally and internationally.

- Educate Yourself
- Challenge Myths
- Practice and Model Consent
- Support Survivors

WAYS TO OBSERVE SAAM:
In-person Observations

WEAR TEAL | National Sexual Violence Resource Center: Sexual Assault Awareness Month: Day of action
- Clasps are someone in your life is a survivor of sexual harassment, assault, or abuse, even if they have never shared their story with you. Show your support for survivors of sexual harassment and abuse by wearing teal — the color of sexual violence prevention — on April 5th and post a selfie to Twitter or Instagram using #SAAM2022. By wearing teal, you are signaling that you support survivors and are a safe person to talk to if they need to reach out.

Learn more

Candid Conversations: Navigating Institutions from a Survivor’s Perspective | 12 PM
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Learn more

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORTING A COLLEAGUE AT UT SOUTHWESTERN:
The Title IX Office at UT Southwestern: UT Southwestern offers resources and support to members of our community who may have experienced sexual assault. A member of UT Southwestern's Title IX Office is available to meet with individuals who may have experienced sexual assault in a confidential manner and will work with the community to determine how the institution can best support the survivor. Please call 214-648-4343 or email TitleIX@utsouthwestern.edu.


QUESTIONS?
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