Hello friends! Can you believe it has been one full year since the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way we have been doing life?

For all of you that have suffered illness and/or loss this past year, we are so deeply sorry.

This past year, we have felt the incredible support of our community. Each time we reached out for donations of much needed items, our community responded quickly exceeding our need. We are so very grateful for all the support.

If you are still wondering how you can help, April is your opportunity! April is one of our favorite times of year here at COMPASS because it’s Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM).

Although we needed to postpone our in-person events again in order to stay safe, we have some fun and meaningful ways that you can show your support to survivors of sexual assault. Throughout this newsletter you will see a glimpse of some of the virtual events happening in the coming weeks.

However, if you are not already following us on social media, please connect with us on Facebook or Instagram to stay informed of all upcoming events. Stay safe. We will see you soon.

Molly MacMath, Executive Director

COMPASSRAPECRISIS.ORG
Understanding
COERCED CONSENT

COERCED CONSENT: Permission obtained for sexual activity that is made under duress, deceit or pressure. It is NOT true consent and is a form of assault. Coerced consent can take many forms, including the following:

1.) Making comments such as “if you really loved me, you would do this,” “Everyone else is doing it” etc.

2.) Using visuals that could make someone afraid to say no, such as brandishing a weapon or making comments about how one is “skilled” in a particular violent form of defense.

3.) Asking for a particular activity over and over until the person simply “gives in” due to annoyance or just wanting the other person to quit asking.

4.) Using one’s position of power to take advantage of someone, such as in cases of statutory rape.

Only an enthusiastic verbal yes followed by affirmative body language should be taken as permission to engage in ANY sexual activity at any time.

Empty chairs represent powerful message

Throughout April, pictures of teal chairs may pop up on social media from some of your favorite businesses and organizations. The empty chair signifies how a survivor has to be absent from a particular event (work, school, social events, etc) because of the aftermath of the assault.

If you see a teal chair, please repost on your own social media.

campus updates

While many college campuses are still virtual due to the pandemic, we are still finding ways to keep the students informed and engaged. We have been using social media platforms, blast emails, and google classroom to share important updates, resources, and virtual events. COMPASS hosted a “Shine the Light” event for survivors on the Day of Action, April 6. During the event, students left their dorm light on or shined their cellphone flashlight out of the windows. Even small gestures like this can have a very meaningful impact in our community.

SPRING 2021

DENIM DAY
APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH
show support by wearing jeans to work!

COMPASS
an affiliate of Goodwill Industries

Learn more about COMPASS, Inc. and the story behind Denim Day by visiting their website:
www.CompassRapeCrisis.org
TUSC/CARROLL 24 HOUR HOTLINE: 330.339.1427
STARK 24 HOUR HOTLINE: 330.452.1111

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To the profession and hopefully gain employment. I read about this organization and it seemed like such a reputable and important service for the community. Turns out I was right.

Q: What is one thing about yourself that most people don’t know?
Leia: I don’t know how much of a “secret” it is, but I have been diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum. I try to use my experience of being an “outsider” to connect with and help other marginalized communities, including survivors of sexual violence.

Q: Do you have any advice for people who have been sexually assaulted?
Leia: Don’t let anyone write your story for you. Your experience is yours alone to decide how to view and what to do with it. Your individual needs and healing journey will not look like anyone else’s. Don’t compare yourself to any other survivor, and most importantly, be gentle with yourself. You deserve it.

Q: Do you have any advice for people who are thinking about becoming a volunteer for ANY organization?
Leia: Research the organization thoroughly first to make sure it is a really good fit, not only for yourself, but for the community at large that it serves. As with anything, put your heart and soul into it. Treat it as a job and give it the best you have.

Say hello to Leia! Leia is a dedicated volunteer of COMPASS. She is a resident of Copley, Ohio and has a Bachelors Degree in Human Services. Leia is certified in Adult/Infant/Child CPR, AED, and First Aid from the American Red Cross, certified in emergency bleeding management, cat and dog first aid and CPR, Blood Born Pathogens Management and Psychological First Aid. She is deeply involved in the community and volunteers with a variety of organizations beyond COMPASS.

Q: What are the most critical problems faced by people in this field?
Leia: Oh, there are so many. For starters, there are still deeply entrenched myths related to sexual violence, from victim blaming to ideas about what “really” constitutes rape, not to mention lack of adequate funding for programs, such as rape kit processing.

Q: Do you have a most embarrassing moment as a volunteer?
Leia: Oh my, I can’t think of one off the top of my head, but being on the autism spectrum, I encounter social faux pas on a regular basis.

Q: Why did you initially choose to volunteer for COMPASS?
Leia: I had just graduated with my Human Services degree and was looking for a place to start volunteering to get used to the profession and hopefully gain employment. I read about this organization and it seemed like such a reputable and important service for the community. Turns out I was right.

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Teal Tuesdays are back! Do you want a simple way to get involved in Sexual Assault Awareness Month? Wear teal every Tuesday in April. Then share a selfie on your social media page with the hashtags #tealTuesdays #SAAM. Don’t forget to tag COMPASS in those selfies!

#tealTuesdays #SAAM
Sexual Assault Awareness: 10 Myths Busted

While many know and recognize sexual assault as a pervasive issue, there are a lot of misconceptions not only about what causes sexual assaults but also – how to prevent sexual violence in general. Let’s take a look at some of these myths and bust them together:

**Myth #1** Sexual assault usually a crime of ‘passion’ or ‘lust’

FACT: Research shows that sexual assaults are often planned and are acts of power and control over a victim.

**Myth #2** Perpetrators are usually a stranger to the survivor

FACT: Statistics tell us that 90% of the time, survivors know their assaulter. 60% of child sexual abuse cases are perpetrated by someone the child knows outside the family, and 30% are assaulted by family members.

**Myth #3** Too many victims lie or give false reports

FACT: When it comes to sexual assault, only 20% of victims report at all and only between 2-8% have been reported as false. Believing victims is always the first step.

**Myth #4** Only people not in committed relationships are victimized

FACT: 1 in 10 women have experienced rape by an intimate partner. Consent occurs and is ongoing throughout a relationship – always ask.

**Myth #5** Sexual assaults most often occur in public or outdoors

FACT: 55% of rape or sexual assault victimizations occur at or near the victim’s home, and 12% occur at or near the home of a friend, relative, or acquaintance.

**Myth #6** The rape crisis movement just started in the past couple years

FACT: This movement arguably began in 1866 when a number of black women were assaulted by a white mob. The testimony of this group before Congress is recorded and history notes this as the first step towards awareness.

**Myth #7** It doesn’t happen THAT often

FACT: There is an average of 293,066 victims ages 12 or older of rape and sexual assault each year in the U.S. This means 1 sexual assault occurs every 107 seconds. That means almost every 2 minutes someone is being sexually assaulted.

**Myth #8** People with disabilities are at low risk for sexual assault

FACT: Individuals with disabilities are twice as likely to be victims of sexual assault than individuals without.

**Myth #9** Men do not get sexually assaulted

FACT: 1.5% of all men have been raped and 47% of bisexual men have experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact in their lifetime.

**Myth #10** Getting help for survivors is expensive

FACT: Organizations like Compass and its affiliates offer multiple free services for survivors, like: counseling, peer support groups, prevention education for schools and businesses, court and hospital advocacy.