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## **APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH (SAAM)** Prevention is Possible!

Hebron, KY, April 1, 2016 - April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). This year's campaign focuses on ways that individuals, communities, and the private sector can help prevent sexual violence. Nearly one in five women and one in 71 men are victims of sexual assault (Black et al., 2011), but all of us are impacted by sexual violence.

Everyone understands that sexual violence impacts victims and their families, but the effects of this violent crime on communities and society are less obvious. Sexual violence creates a climate of fear, anger, and/or disbelief in the workplaces, campuses, and communities that it occurs in. Additionally, sexual violence generates financial costs such as criminal justice and medical expenses, crisis and mental health service fees, and, perhaps most damaging; the lost contributions of survivors.

Preventing such a far-reaching and prevalent social issue as sexual violence may seem overwhelming or even impossible. This mentality implies that there isn't a solution — or if there is, we can't achieve it. But we can and we are. There are many practical steps that are currently being taken in our homes, neighborhoods, schools, faith communities, and workplaces. But there are many more things we can do to promote safety, respect, and accountability.

Prevention starts with challenging victim-blaming and believing survivors when they disclose. Individuals can model supportive relationships and behaviors, call out harmful attitudes, and challenge the societal acceptance of rape. Communities and businesses can take action to implement policies that promote safety, respect, and equality.

As this year's slogan declares, prevention is possible! Join us in helping everyone see their role in preventing sexual violence. You can learn more at [www.nsvrc.org/saam](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam).

Women's Crisis Center (WCC) is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit social service agency committed to leading our community in the social change needed to end domestic violence, rape, and sexual abuse. Services are provided confidentially and at no cost to our clients. To learn more visit [www.wccky.org](http://www.wccky.org).

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