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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Topeka, KS, 4/4/2016 – The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) welcomes April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Governor Sam Brownback signed a proclamation on April 1, 2016, recognizing April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the state of Kansas.

Sexual violence is a heinous crime that does not discriminate. It affects women, men, and children of all backgrounds and economic groups in Kansas and across the United States. In Kansas, one rape is reported every 8 hours, 18 minutes. In over 80% of these reported cases the offender is known by the victim.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey reports nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men in the United States have been raped at some time in their lives, and nearly 1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men have experienced other forms of sexual violence victimization in their lifetime. Equally disturbing, the national survey shows that those with food and housing insecurity are particularly at risk of sexual assault.

Rape and sexual violence also have long-term health consequences. Sexual assault victims can carry the physical and emotional trauma with them for years and many victims have increased health problems across their life spans. In addition to the immediate physical and emotional costs, the impact of sexual violence may also include posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, depression, homelessness, eating disorders, and suicide.

KCSDV conducted the first-ever statewide census of the number and type of sexual violence services provided in the state. During one week in Kansas in 2015, there were 816.25 hours of services provided to 455 victims of sexual violence.

“Sexual Assault Awareness Month gives everyone the opportunity to learn more, respond better, and involve the community,” said Joyce Grover, executive director of KCSDV. “Many victims never tell anyone about the sexual violence. We challenge everyone this month to be the person a survivor can turn to for help and support.”

KCSDV invites everyone to learn more about what you can do. Find more information at kcsdv.org or check with your local domestic violence and sexual assault program about activities in your community. Join the conversation at facebook.com/kcsdv.

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Founded in 1982, the purpose of KCSDV is the prevention and elimination of sexual and domestic violence through a statewide network of programs providing support and safety for all victims of sexual and domestic violence and stalking, with primary focus on women and their children; direct services; public awareness and education; advocacy for victims; comprehensive prevention; and, social change efforts. Learn more at www.kcsdv.org.
