



**For Immediate Release:**  
Tuesday, April 1, 2014

**KCSDV Media Contact:**  
Joyce Grover, 785-232-9784

## **Kansas Observes April as National Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

**Topeka, KS, 4/1/2014** – The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) welcomes April as National Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Sexual violence is one of the most insidious crimes impacting women, children and men across the state. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment report that nearly 1 in 10 women in the United States and in Kansas has been raped by an intimate partner or someone else in her lifetime. Much of the sexual violence experienced by women and men occurred before the age of 18. Every year, at least 1,100 rapes are reported to law enforcement in Kansas.

Rape and sexual violence have long-term health consequences. Sexual assault victims carry the physical and emotional trauma with them for years, many having increased health problems across their life spans. A recently released report from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment reported that the likelihood of reporting fair to poor health was twice as high with rape victims as with those who had not reported prior sexual violence. Statistically supported chronic health conditions reported by victims included asthma, arthritis, COPD, and high cholesterol. Those who have food and housing insecurity are particularly at risk, the research shows.

“Through the month of April, we hope Kansans will observe Sexual Assault Awareness Month by learning about how this issue impacts them,” said Joyce Grover, executive director of the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence. “Rape is one of the most underreported crimes we know of so the 1,100 rapes in Kansas is the tip of the iceberg,” Grover stated, “We thank Governor Sam Brownback for signing a declaration that recognizes Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Kansas. Every one of us is impacted by rape and sexual violence: whether it is because we are afraid to walk or live alone, because we live in a culture where victims are too often blamed for being raped; or, because we spend untold numbers of dollars on responding to and recovering from sexual violence,” said Grover.

Learn more about what you can do, and find a list of statewide events at [kcsdv.org](http://kcsdv.org) or check with your local DV/SA program. Join the conversation at [facebook.com/kcsdv](https://www.facebook.com/kcsdv).

- ### -

*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](http://www.kcsdv.org).*