



Outreach Guidance During Stay at Home Orders

The purpose of this document is to help programs connect to their communities during the stay at home order. We have heard that there are some programs (across the country) that are struggling to connect with new survivors at this time. This could be due to cancelled/ postponed community events, lack of community members knowing you're still operating if your physical office is closed, and a lack of understanding in the community of the full spectrum of services your agency offers. We hope this guidance may provide suggestions on how you can continue to show up in your communities. If you have any questions about implementing these, please feel free to reach out to leah@nccasa.org or gabriella@nccasa.org.

A message about continuing to center the needs of marginalized survivors during this time.

As we continue to work with survivors in our communities, it is imperative to our work that we are centering the experiences of our most vulnerable survivors. Consider this when you are doing outreach by providing visibility of services for these communities. If you have a Latinx outreach coordinator or an LGBTQ+ outreach coordinator, ask if they would like to share a message for those communities. Further, your agency could do something in the media to talk specifically about the impacts of sexual violence on folx with marginalized identities in your community. You may provide statistics, barriers to accessing services, information about generational and/or institutional trauma that people from specific cultural or racial backgrounds face, as well as the intersections of sexual violence and oppression. You could talk about the impact of sexual violence on men and non- binary folx. Use this as a platform to educate the community while also increasing your visibility.

Being intentional about reaching out to marginalized survivors improves your outreach to all communities. As you are reading through this document, we encourage you to find the ways we have spoken into this and how it can be specifically applied in your community and remembering that centering marginalized voices and experiences at all times, not just during the pandemic is paramount to work in ending sexual violence.

Social Media Outreach

Social media can be a great way to reach survivors. Survivors will often turn to social media to find a sense of community or try to make sense of what has happened to them. Here are some tips for using social media as outreach:

- Post 4-7 times a week: this is important because users will likely not follow you if they go onto your page and see that you haven't posted in a while
- Avoid using harmful images that perpetuate stereotypes of "who gets sexually assaulted" and "poster child images" (i.e. woman crying in a dark corner)
- Make your organization information easy to see: include your organization name, contact, and a brief message about who you are and what you do, make sure you include multiple identities in your marketing (without tokenizing)
- Posts should be relevant: post about your services, messages to survivors, focus on posts that explicitly speak into marginalized communities, facts about trauma, facts about sexual violence, or anything that is related to your field that lets people know when they go to your page that you are a knowledgeable voice they can trust
- Use hashtags: posting hashtags can help your post be seen by people that aren't following you, you can use these to promote the subject matter you are talking about or even target a specific location, ex: #wakecounty or #believesurvivors. Hashtags will also help you gain followers. I recommend posting between 5-15 hashtags in each post.

- Use relevant hashtags, if there's something going on in your community that is trending and is related to sexual violence or oppression you can use those to connect with more members of your community that may not have ordinarily felt like your services are safe for them
- Tag community partners: by tagging the people you work with in posts that you want to have a far reach, they can then be aware of the post and also repost or retweet the information. Think outside the box for this; don't just tag law enforcement or hospitals. What other places in your community are survivors seeking support?
- Brand your posts: if you created the post using Canva or another design site, then make sure to include your organization's tag in the graphic you've created so when it circulates people know who made it and where the information came from
- Follow certain hashtags and organizations: by following the NSVRC or NCCASA, you can always repost information that we post and by following hashtags like #believesurvivors, you can see posts that are trending and repost those as well
- Avoid using pinks and pictures of women: it's important that we remain inclusive in this work, when we post primarily pink images or images of women, we send subliminal messages as to who we feel our audience is and survivors who are gender non-binary or male survivors may not feel your services apply to them

Mailing Outreach

We know it can be dangerous to send things through the mail, for this could pose a safety risk for people still living with an unsafe person or for survivors who don't want their families to know about their experience. There may be ways to still connect with your community while mitigating this risk.

- You could do a postcard size mailing to your community including not just resources for your agency, but for other community resources available (i.e. food bank information, mental health resources, your helpline number and services you're offering). This may seem less "suspicious" to unsafe members in the home.

- Connect with your local churches. While they may not be congregating at this time in person, some are offering virtual services and other ways to stay connected with their members. You could reach out to them to let them know you're still available and to share that information with the church in one of their mailings.
- Send letters/ resources to your local correctional institution (jail/ prison/ juvenile detention center) letting those who are incarcerated know that your services are still available even if an advocate cannot come to the institution at this time. Maybe include some coping techniques (grounding techniques, journal prompts, etc) they can do from the facility. For more information regarding PREA, please see this document regarding incarcerated populations and COVID-19--[Incarcerated Populations and COVID19.docx](#)
- We cannot emphasize enough to stay connected with your local hospitals. Drop off or mail packets/ resources they can give to the survivors that are choosing to get exams done. You can also mail/ drop off posters for the hospital to hang up (maybe in the restrooms) with your helpline information for patients who may not be there for forensic exams, but are survivors needing support.

Local Media Outreach

Now may be a good time to talk to your local news station about getting some airtime to increase awareness of sexual violence in the community and to talk about your program. During this time especially, it will be important to really highlight the helpline services and to maybe think about using “helpline” instead of “crisis line”. There are a lot of survivors who may think you're only available for them if they want to go to the hospital, or make a police report, which we are seeing lower trends of, due to fear of going to hospitals and social spaciousness orders. It's important that survivors know they don't have to be in crisis to utilize your services and to call to talk to an advocate throughout the lifespan/ healing journey.

When you're choosing staff to talk with the local media, consider inviting your LGBTQ+ outreach coordinator or Latinx Outreach Coordinator, if applicable and they would like to, to be part of this conversation to share the message with your community that you have staff members that are specifically there to support these populations. When possible, you want to make sure the staff you are

choosing to send messages to the community is representative of the client's you serve. Remember, if we center our message around the needs of our most vulnerable survivors, we will increase our chances of reaching all survivors.

Here are some prompts you may use for local media outreach, but you may also come up with ones on your own that better fit with your community needs:

- Talk about SAAM. Remind people that April is still Sexual Assault Awareness Month and talk about what sexual violence looks like in your community. Include explicit information of how sexual violence impacts the marginalized members of your community and address the intersections of oppression with sexual violence. You can talk about the history of the sexual violence movement and how it was led by women of color. Tell people about any virtual SAAM events you may be having, and try to provide ways the community can be involved with SAAM while practicing social spaciousness.
- If you want to do direct outreach to survivors, you could do a PSA of sorts about how you understand that this time of isolation, social spaciousness, and for some folks, quarantine can be really triggering. Some survivors may have had to go to the hospital because of their own health, or to be with a loved one. This can also bring flashbacks and high levels of anxiety. You can reinforce your message that you are there to talk with survivors to help them through this time and that you can provide, or point them in the direction of, some resources that may help them cope during this time (*see NCCASA resource page*).
- If your survivors have any needs at this time, you can take this opportunity to reach out to the community to see if they can provide any assistance. Some needs your agency may have for SA survivors could be: socks, sports bras, comfy clothes for after an exam, coloring books and art supplies (if you have survivors that you are providing on-going support for and it is safe for them, you could mail coloring books or art supplies to them as part of coping while at home). If your program is still doing support groups in a modified way and you are reading some books that are healing for survivors, you could ask the community for gift cards to amazon or another platform to help you get these books. I think folks often think about what they can provide to shelters, which is great, but SA survivors have needs too and this is a great time to bring attention to that.

Community Outreach

- During this time, our homeless serving agencies are having to work extra hard to keep those who are housing insecure safe and healthy. You could reach out to these programs to ask them if there are any needs they have that you could assist with. Be sure to share your helpline number directly with homeless serving agencies and provide them with posters or flyers they could put in their overnight or day shelters to reach survivors that are housing insecure or experiencing homelessness.
- As we know there is a strong correlation between substance use and mental health and survivors of sexual violence, it may be helpful to reach out to programs that work closely with folks experiencing these issues. This could look like checking-in and asking them how they are providing services right now in case you are working with a survivor that needs to be connected with these resources. It could also look like a partnership of dispersing resources (such as being on the postcard/ flyer together). It could be making sure they know your agency is there to support them in their work with survivors of sexual violence. You could ask them if they could put up posters in their clinics (if it's inpatient) or include your program information in their email signature if they're communicating with clients/ patients via email, or other chat platform. Ask them if they'd like you to do the same.
- If your agency is in a community where there is a local community college or university, you could contact the institution to see if your information could be sent out as part of one of their weekly mailings. There are a lot of programs at colleges that work specifically with survivors of sexual assault, and those programs may not be operating right now.
- As a lot of our community members are accessing information through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) at this time, it may be helpful to reach out to your local DHHS and ask if they could put your information on any of their COVID-19 resource pages on their website.
- One program had a great idea of putting posters up in their local grocery stores and/ or gas stations that had information about their programs and helpline numbers since those are still places people are having to go during shelter in place orders. You could also ask grocery stores to put flyers (like the postcards mentioned above) in every shoppers bag.

- If you have community centers for the Latinx community, LGBTQ+ centers, or other culturally specific centers, reach out to them to see what your agency can do to support them during this time as you know that survivors may already be connected with them.
- Same with your military bases, if your agency is in a community where there is a military base or there is a significant veteran presence, see if you can connect with their SHARP coordinator or veteran's group about what your agency can do to support survivors of military sexual assault or if the program/ group needs anything from your agency to help them support the survivors they're already serving.