

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month—Engaging New Voices

EAU CLAIRE, Wis.-April, 15th 2017– Sexual violence happens every day. **In our community**, the Family Support Center- Eau Claire Sexual Assault Outreach provided services to over 200 individuals affected by sexual violence in 2016. Sexual violence can happen to anyone and impacts all groups of people.

When someone forces or pressures another person into sexual activity, they commit sexual violence. This happens any time a person does not or cannot give consent. Reasons someone might not be able to consent include: fear, illness, disability, or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

Sexual violence does not just affect victims and their families; it can cause feelings of fear, anger, and lack of trust for people in their community.

We can all use our voices to change the culture and prevent sexual violence. We need to work on the root causes and social norms that allow sexual violence to exist. It is time for new voices to join in to prevent sexual violence and support healthy relationships:

- Parents can support and talk about healthy boundaries with children early on. For younger children parents can start talking about what consent means in everyday relationships and with teens they can discuss healthy sexuality.
- Coaches are someone that many teens look up to and can make a difference in how teens think. They can teach their athletes that negative talk about relationships and sexuality may not seem like a big deal but supports an environment of disrespect and even violence.
- Faith Leaders have a lot of influence and should be ready to address sexual violence and healthy relationships, while supporting survivors.
- Community Members can promote respect, equality, and safety. To get involved in local efforts you can join the Eau Claire Healthy Communities coalition efforts on healthy relationship promotion. To learn more, visit www.ehealthycommunities.org or email healthy.communities@co.eau-claire.wi.us.



It's time for all of us to take action to create a safer community for all. For more information about Sexual Assault Awareness month, visit <http://www.nsvrc.org/>.

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