



# Wabanaki Women's Coalition

April 2021 Newsletter

## Kwey Relatives...

### April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

While we support survivors of sexual violence every day of the year, the month of April has been dedicated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) across the country. Advocates, volunteers, and other professionals help engage with communities about sexual violence, share information and ways to support survivors, volunteer, bring people together to take a stand against sexual violence and help raise awareness about the importance of consent, healthy boundaries and the right to bodily autonomy.

Consent involves understanding, communicating and respecting another person's boundaries and having other people respect yours. The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) offers 5 rules for obtaining, confirming and honoring consent:

Rule 1- Establish Boundaries: Boundaries are your personal rules. They help you articulate the behaviors that make you feel safe and respected, not just in terms of sexual relationships, but in all sorts of relationships. Your boundaries can be shaped by many things, including the cultural norms you grew up with, like your family dynamics, your religion, your education, or where you grew up. Your personal life experiences and your personality also influence your comfort level with different interactions or activities. Boundaries can be physical, emotional, or digital, especially now as the coronavirus pandemic means so much of our lives take place online. An example of a Physical Boundary could look like: *"I'm not a "hugger" or comfortable hugging someone I just met, only people I know really well."*

APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH  
Your Voice Has Power.... Use It to Support Survivors

www.WabanakiWomensCoalition.org						Wabanaki Advocates Are Here for YOU
	<p><b>YOU ARE NOT ALONE...</b> All calls to an Advocate are confidential</p>					

## *5 Rules for Obtaining & Respecting Consent Continued...*

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Rule 2 - Communicate Comfort Zones: Conversations about boundaries should be rooted in respect and empathy. Remember, having boundaries creates stronger, more trustworthy relationships - it's not a personal attack.

Rule 3 - Ask Every Time: It's important to discuss boundaries and expectations with your partner prior to engaging in any sexual behavior. If you're unsure about another person's boundaries, ask. Be clear and direct with your questions. It's necessary and it should happen every time. Consenting to one activity, one time, does not mean someone gives consent for other activities or for the same activity on other occasions.

Rule 4 - Check In Regularly: The best way to ensure that all parties are comfortable with any sexual activity is to talk about it, check in periodically, and make sure everyone involved consents before escalating or changing activities. Boundaries can change over time as you grow and experience new things. So what was okay recently, may not be okay today or tomorrow. You can withdraw consent at any point if you feel uncomfortable. One way to do this is to clearly communicate to your partner that you are no longer comfortable with this activity and wish to stop.

Rule 5 - Respect Each Other: Respect is about honoring one another's boundaries. Enthusiastic consent is a model for understanding consent that focuses on a positive expression of consent. Simply put, enthusiastic consent means looking for the presence of a "yes" rather than the absence of a "no." Source: [www.rainn.org/articles/consentrules](http://www.rainn.org/articles/consentrules).

## *Serving Our Partners*

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Maliseet Domestic  
and Sexual Violence  
Advocacy Center

Office: 207-532-3000  
24 Hour Hotline:  
207-532-6401



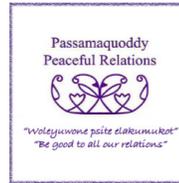
Indian Township Passamaquoddy  
Domestic and Sexual  
Violence Advocacy Center

Office: 207-796-6106  
24 Hour Hotline:  
207-214-1917



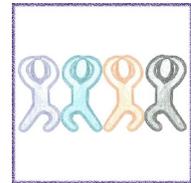
Penobscot Nation  
Domestic and Sexual  
Violence Advocacy Center

Office: 207-817-7446  
24 Hour Hotline:  
207-631-4886



Passamaquoddy Peaceful  
Relations Domestic and Sexual  
Violence Advocacy Center

Office: 207-853-0092/0093  
24 Hour Toll Free Hotline:  
1-877-853-2613



Micmac Domestic and  
Sexual Violence  
Advocacy Center

Office: 207-760-0570  
24 Hour Hotline:  
207-551-3639

## *Proclamation by President Biden*

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### **“A Proclamation on National Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Month 2021”**

March 31, 2021

Sexual assault, at its core, is a devastating abuse of power — one that affects people of every age, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, socioeconomic background, and religion. It is the responsibility of each of us to stand up and speak out against it, not only to improve the laws and services available to survivors, but also to change the culture and attitudes that allow sexual assault to proliferate. Together, we must work toward a society that upholds every person’s right to live free from sexual violence — where our institutions and communities commit to preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment, supporting survivors, and holding offenders accountable.

The pandemic has exacerbated the already harrowing challenges facing sexual assault survivors by making it more difficult or risky for them to seek help. Victims may be reluctant to go to the hospital for a medical forensic exam because of the risk of COVID-19 exposure; rape crisis centers and other social service providers have struggled to maintain their services while adopting necessary public health protocols; and survivors are often isolated from loved ones, friends, or co-workers who might be in the best position to provide support. As we race to stop the spread of this devastating virus, we must strengthen our efforts to support sexual assault survivors whose suffering may be compounded by this pandemic, as well as by the economic crisis that has further undermined their economic security and taken a toll on service providers. We also must recognize that sexual assault was already a public health crisis even before the pandemic struck. According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, done by the CDC, one in five women has been a victim of a completed or attempted rape at some point in her lifetime. Research has revealed a strong link between sexual violence and chronic disease, as well as greater long-term economic burdens on survivors of sexual assault. The trauma of assault is further compounded by the high costs of medical and mental health care, navigating the criminal justice system, and lost productivity.

My Administration stands with survivors, and is committed to alleviating the public health crisis of sexual assault. As part of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), we included \$450 million in supplemental funding for domestic violence and sexual assault services, including rape crisis centers. Recognizing the added barriers faced by survivors from historically marginalized communities — particularly survivors who are Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other people of color — the ARP includes new funding to support community-based organizations to provide culturally-specific services for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

I am also proud to have created the first-ever White House Gender Policy Council, through an Executive Order that I signed on International Women’s Day. In addition to its work to bring a whole-of-government approach to gender equity in every policy we pursue, this Council

## *Proclamation by President Biden Continued...*

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will help coordinate Federal agencies to develop a National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. I have also established an independent review commission that will provide recommendations to help guide the development of new policies and enforcement measures in keeping with my Administration's unwavering commitment to improving the response to, and prevention of, sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military.

To strengthen our national commitment to end gender-based violence, we must also renew and further improve the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Writing and championing the passage of VAWA as a Senator is one of my proudest legislative accomplishments — it is a law that has transformed the way our country responds to sexual assault and intimate partner violence. With each reauthorization, I have worked with the Congress to expand VAWA's provisions on a bipartisan basis to improve protections, including for Native American women, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, as well as immigrant survivors and survivors from communities of color and other underserved groups. I applaud the House of Representatives for recently passing the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021 with bipartisan support, and I urge the Senate to follow their lead to renew and strengthen this landmark law immediately. Through this legislation, we can continue to support Federal programs with a proven track record of helping survivors heal, strengthen the coordinated community response, improve the response of the criminal justice system, and provide additional pathways to safety by supporting innovative programs and prevention efforts.

We have made important strides thanks to courageous survivors and dedicated advocates. This month, we honor the strength and resilience of sexual assault survivors, and we recommit ourselves to standing with them for safety, dignity, and justice. There is still much work to do, and it will take all of us to do it. This year's Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month is an opportunity for every person, employer, school, sports team, faith-based organization, and institution to come together and commit to being part of the solution. We must rededicate ourselves to creating a society where sexual violence — including sexual assault and sexual harassment — is not tolerated, where survivors are supported, and where all people have an opportunity to thrive without fear of abuse or assault.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 2021 as National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. I urge all Americans to support victims when they reach out and disclose abuse.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

## Start By Believing Awareness Campaign

Start by Believing is a public awareness campaign designed to end the cycle of silence and change the way we respond to sexual assault. It was first launched in April 2011 by End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI). Since then, thousands of professionals across the country and around the world have made their own personal commitment.

# 10 Reasons to Start by Believing



- I told my mom that I was sexually assaulted by someone we knew, and she immediately started defending him and questioning me. Never once did she support me or ask me if I was okay.*

- Amy
- Most victims of sexual assault never report to law enforcement, often because of the responses they receive from friends and family members.**
- When my two siblings told me they had been sexually molested by my father, I took my father's side. All these years later, I realize that I had been in the best position to get them help if I had just started by believing.*

- Tori
- A negative response can worsen the trauma and foster an environment where perpetrators face no consequences for their crimes.**
- My mother first revealed the sexual abuse she endured as a 5-year old when she was 95. For 90 years of her life, she thought no one would believe her.*

- Pat
- Statistics show that rapists don't just attack once - many re-offend, often multiple times.**
- My daughter Jenny was raped by a serial predator. It should never have happened. Several years earlier the perpetrator was caught assaulting a woman, and he was acquitted because "the jury didn't like the victim." Thousands of lives were impacted by one jury's presumption that a victim was lying. We can change. We can help victims recover and put away predators if we simply start by believing victims who have the courage to come forward.*

- Steve
- Start by Believing stops this cycle by improving how we respond to survivors.**
- From the patrolman who arrived at my door, the officers who searched for my cat, to the detective who worked my case for over two years, I felt believed and supported.*

- Tony
- Every response matters. Your response matters. Stop the cycle of silence and Start by Believing.**

## Upcoming SAAM Events in our Tribal Communities



**Spaghetti Supper**

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the Maliseet Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center would like to invite you to enjoy a take home spaghetti supper. We will be handing out information, as well as giveaways for the first 100 people.

When: April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
 Time: 4:30 to 6pm  
 Where: 88 Bell Rd., Littleton Administration building



The Micmac Domestic & Sexual Assault Advocacy Center  
 8th Annual Sexual Assault Awareness Social Drive-Thru

**APRIL 30, 2021**  
**1:00PM—3:00PM**

**COMMUNITY DRIVE-THRU**

- Rain or Shine
- Free T-Shirts
- Take Home—Cook at Home Dinners
- First Come, First Serve
- Door Prize Raffles!

**MICMAC WELLNESS PARKING LOT**




April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

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April is **SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH**



All the participants will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a prize at the end of the month.

Show your support for Sexual Assault Awareness by wearing teal!

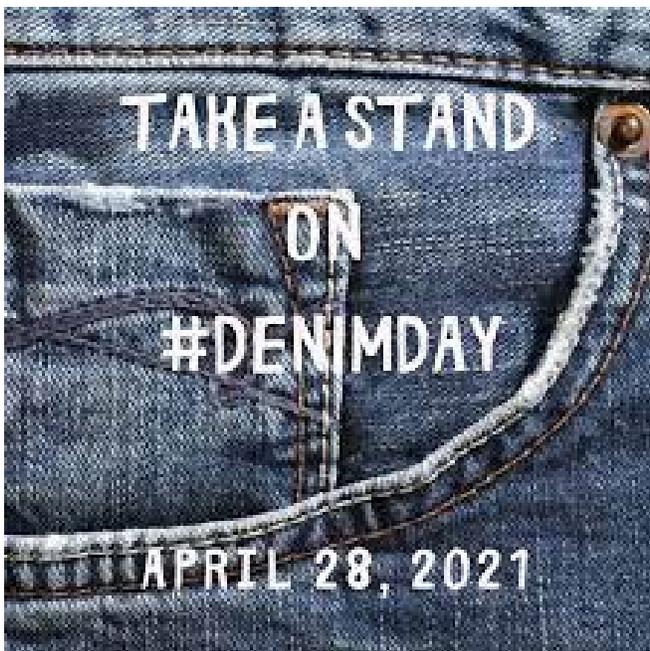
**On Tuesday's we wear Teal!**

**YOUR VOICE HAS POWER!**

- Believe survivors
- End victim blaming
- Ask for consent
- Respect boundaries

Share your picture to your facebook account wearing teal with hashtags #tealtuesday #saam and tag our Indian Township Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocacy Center page. You can submit one Teal Tuesday picture each week for multiple entries into the raffle.

Indian Township Advocacy Center 24hr hotline 207-214-1917



**TAKE A STAND ON #DENIMDAY**

**APRIL 28, 2021**

## *Ways To Create Safe Online Spaces*

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### **We can practice digital consent by:**

- Asking permission before sending explicit messages or texts
- Respecting the decisions of others once you ask. It's never okay to coerce or pressure someone to send photos or record sexual acts. If someone says no after you ask for digital consent, respect their choice and move on.
- Understanding that everyone has boundaries around meeting up in real life. If you've met online or on an app, make sure you both agree on the next steps and feel safe and comfortable with meeting up in person. Regardless of what others expect, everyone has the right to decide what is best for them and to act on those values.
- Asking each time. Getting digital consent is important every time — even if your partner agreed to something before, they are not obligated to agree to do it again.

### **We can practice and model everyday consent online by:**

- Respecting the devices and accounts of others. It's never okay to try to unlock someone else's phone without permission or look through their inbox or texts. Similarly, when sharing a device with someone, log out of accounts that you do not have permission to use and do not look at private account information.
- Asking permission before posting a photo of someone else on social media and before reposting or resharing something personal.
- Checking if it's okay before sharing information outside of your one-on-one chat.
- Agreeing on a platform and giving options when communicating — for instance, giving the option to leave your webcam off during a video call.
- Making your availability for activities like video calls clear and conducting them within the agreed-upon time frame. Let a friend or colleague know you would like to video call specifically rather than assuming. Source: [www.nsvrc.org/saam/2021/preventionresources/digitalconsentboundaries](http://www.nsvrc.org/saam/2021/preventionresources/digitalconsentboundaries).



**Digital**

**Consent**

*is a way to refer to sexual consent that happens through screens.*

# JDVAM 2021

## FEBRUARY IS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS Know Your Worth

www.WabanakiWomensCoalition.org



Aline  
Penobscot Advocacy Center



Nancy  
Passamaquoddy Peaceful Relations



Jane  
Wabanaki Women's Coalition



Donna  
Wabanaki Women's Coalition



Angel  
Micmac Advocacy Center



Jessica  
Penobscot Advocacy Center



Penobscot Advocacy Center



Alisia  
Indian Township Passamaquoddy



Desiree  
Indian Township Passamaquoddy

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE...  
All calls to an Advocate are confidential**



Krista  
Micmac Advocacy Center



Tanya  
Maliseet Advocacy Center



Tawoma  
Maliseet Advocacy Center



Allison  
Maliseet Advocacy Center



Darlene  
Indian Township Passamaquoddy



Sarah  
Micmac Advocacy Center

Wabanaki Advocates Are Here for YOU

24/7 Helpline ~Maliseet 532-6000 ~Micmac 551.3639 ~Passamaquoddy Peaceful Relations 877.853.2613 ~Indian Township Passamaquoddy 214.1917 ~Penobscot Nation 631.4886

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PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE