

# Sexual Assault Awareness Month

## Proclamation

**APRIL 2021**

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month – a time to draw attention to the prevalence of sexual assault and educate individuals and communities about how to prevent it. Sexual harassment, abuse, and assault are widespread problems. We know that, in the United States alone, nearly one in five women and one in 67 men have been raped at some time in their lives (Smith et al., 2017), and that one in six boys and one in four girls is sexually abused before the age of 18 (Dube et al., 2005).

Sexual harassment, assault, and abuse happen in all communities – and that includes online spaces. We are spending more and more of our lives online – whether that’s for work, school, or entertainment. Unfortunately, with this increase in virtual connection comes an increase in online abuse and harassment. Consent and boundaries can be violated online in a number of ways, and the trauma of online abuse is all too real for many survivors.

But each of us has the power to change that. We can all make a difference to ensure that our online communities are safe and respectful for everyone.

2021 marks the twentieth anniversary of SAAM, and the theme of this year’s campaign is “We Can Build Safe Online Spaces.” The campaign calls on us to create online spaces that are built on the foundational values of practicing consent, keeping kids safe, and supporting survivors

**I join advocates and communities across the country in preventing online abuse. Together, we can build safe online spaces now and into the future.**

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Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Dube, S. R., Anda, R. F., Whitfield, C. L., Brown, D. W., Felitti, V. J., Dong, M., & Giles, W. H. (2005). Long-term consequences of childhood sexual abuse by gender of victim. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 28(5), 430-438. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2005.01.015>

Smith, S. G., Chen, J., Basile, K. C., Gilbert, L. K., Merrick, M. T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 state report*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>

