



## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

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### 2010 SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

#### *CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCEMENT*

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**THEME: “Hurts one. Affects all...Preventing sexual assault is everyone’s duty.”**

The 2010 Campaign will focus on the effects sexual assault has on the military’s mission readiness. As is readily understood throughout the military, mission readiness defines a unit’s ability to deploy quickly and efficiently. A sexual assault can reverberate throughout a unit and beyond, degrading readiness by harming the life of the victim, and the military’s ability to work effectively as a team. This theme provides SARCs the opportunity to speak with commanders and senior enlisted leaders about maintaining mission readiness and preventing this crime. “Hurts one. Affects all” not only conveys that sexual assault affects the victim, it affects bystanders. Preserving mission readiness can serve, then, as motivation for acts of bystander intervention. Each Military Service will have a series of posters that illustrate real-life situations encouraging everyone to get involved.

**THEME BACKGROUND: Why this theme?**

Experts and practitioners often describe the negative consequences of sexual assault as having a ripple effect, starting with the victim and expanding outward to include families, friends, work colleagues, neighbors, and increasingly larger parts of the population. The same can be said for the effects in the military. This was confirmed with the focus groups conducted this year with commanders of all grades, SARCs and VAs. The crime of sexual assault diminishes the Armed Forces' ability to function proficiently at the levels of Service member, unit, and command. Its impact is both immediate and long-lasting for individuals in the military and for the institution as a whole. Sexual assault particularly diminishes a unit’s mission readiness.

Mission readiness is negatively impacted in three ways.

1. The alleged perpetrators are often placed on administrative hold and therefore cannot deploy with their units.
2. Victims may not be able to fulfill their duties or may otherwise have their ability to perform the mission compromised as a result of the traumatic events.
3. The attention of the unit leadership shifts from the normal duties involved in maintaining readiness to addressing a victim’s needs, investigating the alleged perpetration, and restoring the unit’s cohesion and trust.

Divisiveness may exist not only within a unit but also between units if an alleged perpetrator is in one unit and the victim is in another.

Messaging focused on sexual assault and mission readiness already played a role in the 2009 campaign, represented by the strategically placed red dog tag logo with the words

READINESS=RESPECT. In meetings with all the participating Service Branches, enthusiasm was expressed for advancing mission-readiness messaging more to the forefront in 2010.

## **OUTREACH IDEAS**

Since the entire nation – inside and outside the DoD -- will be observing Sexual Assault Awareness Month, many opportunities exist to partner with other organizations or tap into past successful events. We suggest that you start planning as early as possible. Decide what your installation or unit needs, what you have done in the past and what the installation or unit can handle to determine the best activities for your SAAM events.

**Below is a listing designed to spark ideas.**

- **Celebrate National SAAM Day of Action** (Tuesday, April 20, 2010)  
will no doubt feature events across the country. Any event you might plan for this day would show solidarity with the civilian community; however, there is no requirement by DoD to have your events aligned with this date. For updates on what is planned for April 20, check out <http://www.nsvrc.org/calendar/2010-04>.
- **Partner with local civilian organizations**  
You could invite this outside groups to talk about their services with you, your installation commander and other members of the Sexual Assault Response Team
- **Hold Q and A Day**  
Building an informed community is one of the strongest ways to ensure awareness and support of your sexual assault efforts. To that end, you could hold an open forum to discuss sexual assault in a non-threatening environment. You might consider separating the genders so that each side can be heard honestly and without filters.
- **Organize an “Envisioning Group”**  
Through your Envisioning Group at your installation or camp, you can brainstorm on what the military can do to stop sexual assault and improve our prevention and response program.
- **Celebrate Denim Day (21 April 2010)**  
Every year since 1999, Peace Over Violence has organized Denim Day USA It is a rape prevention education campaign. As part of this event, we ask community members, elected officials, businesses and students to make a social statement with their fashion statement and on this day wear jeans as a visible means of protest against misconceptions that surround sexual assault. For more info go to <http://denimdayusa.org/>. Note: SAPRO will recognize this day in the Washington, DC area.
- **Hold a White Ribbon Campaign**  
The White Ribbon Campaign is the largest effort in the world of men working along side women to end violence against women. In more than 55 countries, campaigns focus on educating men and boys. In some countries, it is a general public education effort focused on ending violence against women. <http://www.whiteribbon.ca/>
- **Reach Out to Partner Agencies**  
The issue of sexual assault touches many areas of our lives and as a result, many organizations are working hard to fight the crime. Join with other programs such as Equal Opportunity, Drugs

and Alcohol Program, Family Advocacy Program, etc. for additional opportunities to spread our message and how it relates to all the other issues facing our Service members.

- **Partner with Local Schools**

Behaviors leading to sexual assault are formed long before Service members enter the military so we need to reach out to potential Service members that reside in our DoD schools. To educate early, you can organize a school dance with local civilian rape crisis centers to educate our children and foster good will between the military and the surrounding civilian population.

- **Operation Law Enforcement**

Our law enforcement partners are key to the success of fighting sexual assault. SAAM is an opportunity to get to know your military police or security forces and for them to become more involved with SAPR. For example, you could request permission to tie teal ribbons to the antennae of police cars in your county.

- **Connect Activities to Alcohol Awareness Month (also in April)**

Working with your Drug and Alcohol Officer or NCO, brainstorm ideas on ways to collaborate in conjunction with SAAM. Alcohol Awareness Month, sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence since 1987, encourages local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues. An integral part of Alcohol Awareness Month has been Alcohol-Free Weekend, which takes place on the first weekend of April, 2-4 April 2010. Alcohol-Free Weekend is designed to raise public awareness about the use of alcohol and how it may be affecting individuals, families, and businesses. For information visit <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/seasonal/aprilalcohol/>.

## **NEXT STEPS: Make a Plan with Your commander**

### Share your ideas with your commander

Once you decide what is best for your unit/installation, develop a proposal to be routed up the chain of command for approval. (See **Sample SAAM Proposal for your Commander**). You should start by scheduling an appointment to see what he/she would like to do and move forward from there. Get in there as soon as possible!

Your commander may have ideas, but you also need to be prepared to toss out a few possibilities. Your ideas will help your Commander to start thinking about it or he/she may give you the go ahead to move along with your plans.

### Prepare documents for the commander's signature.

Once you have agreed on what you would like to do during April, you will need to prepare a couple documents for signature.

- Memorandum for Action that includes:
  - Synopsis of SAAM events you would like to do
  - What do you want the Commander to do?
  - Recommendations (We recommend giving 2-3 realistic courses of action.)
- Proclamation for his/her signature that you can disseminate to subordinate units (See past memos for examples on our website at [http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/miscellaneous/secdef\\_memo2009.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/miscellaneous/secdef_memo2009.pdf)).

### Meet with the money folks

All good ideas run the risk of failing if there is not sufficient funding to support, so plan an early meeting with your budget personnel to determine your budget for the year and SAAM if you do not already know, and make sure it is budgeted for future years to ensure funding.

### Plan for receipt of materials

SAPRO's goal is to have materials on their way out the door by the end of February. The final list of products is being revised pending budget issue, but is expected to include the following:

- Posters
- Facilitator guides for each poster for training
- Interactive video training tool
- All-services video and audio PSAs
- Public Affairs Guidance

*Note: All items will be on the website as well that can be used for reproduction.*

**Please check our website periodically for updates. ([www.sapr.mil](http://www.sapr.mil))**

If you have any questions, please email your SAPR leadership or us at [sapro@wso.whs.mil](mailto:sapro@wso.whs.mil)/ 703-696-9422.