**Newsletter Article for Faith Community Newsletters**

**April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

The facts are disturbing: every 68 seconds, someone living in the US is assaulted. Most of the victims are women and girls, and boys and men are also victimized. Most sexual assaults occur at or near the victim’s home (RAINN.org). We all know someone who has been affected.

In faith communities, we hesitate to talk about sexual violence, and our silence can make victims afraid to speak up. Yet, faith-based people who have experienced sexual assault need and want the support of their faith communities.

As a place where people come together to support and care for each other, **we can help reduce the impact of sexual violence, sexual assault, and sexual harassment in our community**. By learning more about abuse and raising awareness in our community, we can let those who have experienced sexual violence know that they are not alone. We can help them find expert help in our community.

Survivors of sexual assault say that they need the support of their faith and spiritual communities in order to find justice and healing. We all have a critical role to play. Please, talk to your friends and others in our congregation about your ideas, and contact our local sexual violence services agency, NAME OF LOCAL SV AGENCY and NUMBER HERE to learn more.

*If you are in immediate danger, call 911. If you or someone you know has experienced or may be experiencing sexual violence, call the sexual assault hotline at (800) 656-HOPE (4673). For resources about faith and sexual violence, visit* [*https://www.interfaithpartners.org/our-resources*](https://www.interfaithpartners.org/our-resources)*.*