



Help Us Prevent Rape A Budget Request (2015-2017)

The Need

With headlines involving Hollywood, professional sports, the military, colleges and even schools, sexual violence has become far too commonplace. These developments, together with human trafficking and implementation of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, **pressure sexual assault service providers to meet much more complex demands while operating at 2009 state funding levels.**

Sexual violence affects Wisconsinites from every walk of life and every part of the state. No one is immune and the numbers are staggering. In Wisconsin:

- **390,000** women have experienced rape
- **912,000** women have experienced sexual violence other than rape
- **507,000** men have experienced sexual violence other than rapeⁱ

In 2013, Wisconsin's sexual assault service providers had **only enough funds to serve 12,703 victims.**ⁱⁱ

Sexual assault services are stretched so thin that victims often encounter **long waiting lists** and long drives to get the help they need. Some Wisconsinites **must travel through multiple counties** to access services. In addition, fluctuations in funding for sexual assault services in recent years have caused the **elimination or reduction of many initiatives to prevent sexual assault** in our communities.

The Solution

Increased and consistent funding for sexual assault victim services, prevention, and education is the most effective way to end sexual violence in our state and to help victims become survivors and thrive.

Administered by the Wisconsin Department of Justice, the **Sexual Assault Victim Services (SAVS) grant program is the only state program that provides funds to Wisconsin's sexual assault service providers to serve victims and their families.** Examples of services include 24/7 crisis hotlines, personal support, guidance in the medical and criminal justice processes, and prevention and education initiatives.

These service providers also **play a key role in the reporting and eventual prosecution of sexual violence crimes.** Victims who work with a community-based advocate are more likely to engage with the criminal justice system, which increases the ability of the system to hold perpetrators accountable and to make our communities safer. This is essential given that **65% of sexual assaults go unreported** to law enforcement.ⁱⁱⁱ

SAVS' current funding is \$2 million annually via General Purpose Revenue (GPR), split among 44 organizations working on shoestring budgets. **At these levels, SAVS funds do not touch six counties.**^{iv}

The widespread prevalence and devastating nature of sexual assault warrant a stronger investment in the prevention, education, and services necessary to make Wisconsin safe for every child, youth, and adult. For the 2015-2017 biennium, we **respectfully request \$4 million appropriated annually via GPR** for the SAVS grant program. This is a very modest funding request given the need.

About Us

The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Inc. (WCASA) is a membership agency comprised of 50 sexual assault service providers (SASPs) across the state, other organizations, and individuals working to end sexual violence in Wisconsin. WCASA works to ensure that every victim in Wisconsin gets the support and care they need. WCASA's mission is to create the social change necessary to end sexual violence.

For more information, please contact:

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ⁱ Prevalence estimates from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report. Published 2011. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ⁱⁱ Email correspondence with Wisconsin Department of Justice.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Bureau of Justice. <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/vnrrp0610.pdf>

^{iv} Six counties not served by 2015 SAVS grantees: Barron, Buffalo, Florence, Green Lake, Sawyer and Waushara. Wisconsin Department of Justice. <http://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/default/files/ocvs/not-victim/SAVS%202015%20Service%20Areas.pdf>