

# NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

APRIL 17, 2024



**Our Voices Have Power. Together, We Can Build Safe & Respectful Communities.**

**Building Connected Communities** is the 2024 campaign theme for Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). This month, let's work together to draw attention to the prevalence of sexual assault and educate ourselves and our campus communities about how to prevent it.

## **ENHANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE: KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS**

Whether you are a parent, professor, administrator, student, coworker, or friend—you can make a difference in someone's life by noticing the warning signs of sexual assault and abusive relationships.

In the majority of sexual assault cases, the perpetrator is someone the victim knows. This can make it more difficult for someone to be open about sexual assault, particularly if the perpetrator is part of a friend group, a family member, a classmate, a partner or someone who is well liked by other peers. In abusive relationships, often the abusive partners will try to cut the victim off from their support system. As someone outside of the relationship, you have the potential to notice warning signs that someone may be in an abusive relationship or at risk for sexual assault.

### **WARNING SIGNS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT**

- Signs of depression, such as persistent sadness, lack of energy, changes in sleep or appetite, withdrawing from normal activities, or feeling "down"
- Self-harming behaviors, thoughts of suicide, or suicidal behaviors
- Low self-esteem
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Anxiety or worry about situations that did not seem to cause anxiety in the past
- Avoiding specific situations or places
- Falling grades or withdrawing from classes
- Increase in drug or alcohol use

### **WARNING SIGNS THAT SOMEONE MAY BE IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP**

- Withdrawing from other relationships or activities: spending less time with friends, leaving sports teams, or dropping classes
- Saying that their partner doesn't want them to engage in social activities or is limiting their contact with others
- Disclosing that sexual assault has happened before
- Any mention of a partner trying to limit their contraceptive options or refusing to use safer sexual practices, such as refusing to use condoms or not wanting them to use birth control
- Mentioning that their partner is pressuring them to do things that make them uncomfortable
- Signs that a partner controlling their means of communication, such as answering their phone or text messages or intruding into private conversations
- Visible signs of physical abuse, such as bruises or black eyes

**RAINN**