

April Newsletter

Being an Active Bystander Online

Special Dates

- **April 5** - Wear Teal for Teal Tuesday Day
- **April 6** Volunteer Mtg. - Zoom 3:45pm
- **April 1-30** - Child Abuse Prevention Month and Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- **April 27** -

Current Needs

- \$25 Walmart or Sheetz cards
- Laundry detergent
- Dryer sheets
- Disinfectant spray (like Lysol)
- Twin size blankets



We hear a lot about the importance of being an active bystander when we see harassment happening in a physical setting, and we know that it is a very effective tool. But what about bystanding in an online setting? What does that look like and how can we protect ourselves while standing up for victims?

First of all, know that if you are feeling intimidated by the idea of intervening, you are not alone. While over 66% of Americans have witnessed online harassment, only 30% have intervened. Many people have concerns about their own safety and worry about making the situation worse. So, let's look at both direct and indirect ways to be an effective digital bystander.

Identify the abuse – Did you see someone putting down their partner on social media? Publishing compromising pictures? Making sexist or victim-blaming statements? Making direct threats? Understanding what is happening helps you decide how to respond.

Distract the abuser – Draw attention away from the abuser by posting funny or cute pictures on the offensive post or comment. If the abuser is trying to silence the target, redirect attention to and support the original content that is being subject to harassment.

Gather help – We know that there is power in numbers, so reach out to friends, online communities, private groups, etc. to alert them to the platform where the abuse is happening. Enlist their aid in helping to distract the abuser. Report the abuse to the platform or group administrator, and ask others to do so, also.

Document the abuse – Take screenshots and save hyperlinks of abusive content to give to the target in case they want to pursue legal action later on. You might want to save the information in a folder to avoid retraumatizing the victim.

Directly address the harassment - This is not a time to educate or humiliate the abuser; rather, it involves actions that show support for the target, condemns the online abuse, fact-checks inaccurate statements, and asks for others to reject the harassing behavior.

Check in with the target - If you know the person being harassed, reach out to them and ask what type of support they need, especially before taking any public action. Be a listening ear and respect their wishes about the best way to help them.

No matter how you decide to be an active online bystander, remember to prioritize your own safety, as well as that of the victim, and assess the risks before taking action. Know that whatever part you play in being a bystander, you are helping to create safer online spaces for all.

Around the Shelter

Staff changes

As we say goodbye to March, we also say goodbye to Lynn McKee, our Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator. She is finally ready to retire and spend more time traveling and camping with her husband! She began as a volunteer back in the early 90's, answering the hotline and helping out with activities around the shelter. Upon retiring from the school system, she joined the Response staff and has been in her current position for five years. Lynn has used her expertise to educate the community about Response and the services they provide. She has also trained many new volunteers, kept donations in order, and networked with various community organizations. We are sad to see her go, but are happy to wish her well and we know that she will still join us as a volunteer from time to time!

Stepping into Lynn's shoes is Jenna Bradley, the current Children and Youth Services Coordinator, who also happens to be Lynn's daughter! Jenna began with Response as a volunteer with the Teen Advisory Board in high school. She stayed connected throughout college, attending candlelight vigils, lobbying in Richmond, and volunteering in the office. Her time with Response led Jenna to get her BS in Psychology and Women's Studies from the University of Mary Washington. She worked in the early childhood education field for several years before joining the Response staff in February of 2021. Jenna is excited to combine her passion for education with her creative talent, to help Response reach more survivors, and teach the community about the impact of domestic and sexual violence.



Pinwheel Garden Recap



This year was a little chilly to be planting anything at the end of March, but we had a great turnout at each of our pinwheel gardens! We had the opportunity to coordinate with the Shenandoah County Department of Social Services, who joined us this year with pinwheels and yard signs. Thank you to the local police departments and community members who also came out to help!



Upcoming Events

SAAM

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Throughout the month, we will be participating in the 30 Days of SAAM challenge. To find daily advocacy actions to spread awareness and information on social media, check out NSVRC's website [#30daysofSaam](https://www.nsvrc.org/30days). We will also be highlighting a number of these activities during the month, so watch our social media for ideas on how to follow along!

April 5th

Wear teal and share a picture

April 7th

Share words of encouragement in your handwriting

April 15th

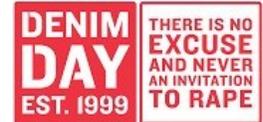
Share something that brings you joy online

April 28th

Use items to spell out S-A-A-M and share a photo

Denim Day

Join us on Wed., April 27 for **Denim Day**— a day to support survivors, spread awareness and education around sexual violence, and challenge rape culture. The campaign began after a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court where a rape conviction was overturned because the justices felt that since the victim was wearing tight jeans she must have helped the person who raped her remove her jeans, thereby implying consent. The Denim Day campaign was created as a way to bring awareness to victim blaming and the myths surrounding sexual violence.



Many businesses allow their employees to wear jeans on this day for a small fee, and then donate the funds to a local sexual violence agency. So spread the word about this important day, encourage local businesses to join in, and be sure to send us a picture if you know of a group that is participating! Thanks for helping to make an important social statement!

Spring Fashion Show



May 15th is the date to put on your calendar for our Annual Spring Fashion Show! Join us at Woodstock Brew House from 2-4 pm for an afternoon filled with fashion, food, and fun! There will be familiar faces modeling their latest fashions, delicious hors d'oeuvres, drinks, raffle baskets, and lots of laughter.

Tickets include a complimentary beer, wine, or soda as well. Prices are as follows:

Individual - \$50

Individual Sponsor - \$150 (2 tickets and recognition in the program)

Business Sponsor - \$300 (4 tickets and recognition in the program)

For tickets and more information visit: <https://www.responseva.org/upcoming-events> Can't wait to see you there!

Woodstock 5 Miler



For the past 15 years, Woodstock has been the site of a 5 mile race which has been held to benefit various charities or local community members in need. This year we are so happy to announce that Response will be the recipient of the funds generated by this race! Sponsored by the Shenandoah Valley Runners, the race begins at the County Government Building at 8 am on Saturday, June 11. More info and a registration form can be found at: <https://www.responseva.org/upcoming-events>