

30 Days of Prayer

Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month

It is our hope that praying for specific things during Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month will grow your understanding of issues surround sexual violence (SV) and inspire you to advocate for survivors of SV in your community.

The following calendar will focus you, but it most definitely does not limit you. If you know specific individuals and families affected by SV or specific needs in your community, meditate on those during your prayer time.

It is also our firm belief that faith is lived everyday through action and that action you take can end sexual violence in your community.

Please know that some of the below material include stories or information that might be hard to read or triggering for survivors of SV. If you experience distress, a flashback, or are triggered by the material, please contact your local sexual violence support center for someone to speak with and process your feelings or memories. You are not alone. It was not your fault.

Day 1

Prayer Focus

- Pray for yourself (or your group) as you embark on this journey of prayer.

Action

- Find a prayer partner or set accountability partners within your group to pray together and discuss your prayers and feelings around the topics and action steps.
- Pick up a notebook or journal and write your thoughts, feelings, and prayers and desired actions you want to take.

Day 2

Prayer Focus

- Pray for an increased understanding around SV.

Action

- Look up the full definition of SV and Texas' legal definitions at www.hopealliancetxt.org/education/facts-statistics/. (scroll to the bottom of the page)
- The basic definition from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA) is: "Sexual assault, or rape, is a violent crime, not a sexual act. The myth that men who rape women are sexually deprived or pathological is being dispelled and replaced with the understanding that rape is more of an act of power and control than lust."



Day 3

Prayer Focus

- Pray for opportunities to arise in your community for you to advocate for survivors.

Action

- Advocacy starts small, with one step. A great first step is believing and not blaming the victim for the sexual violence.
- Do a little SV myth busting at Chicago's Rape Crisis Center's website: www.rapevictimadvocates.org/what-you-need-to-know/myths-and-facts.

Day 4

Prayer Focus

- Pray for wisdom in supporting survivors in healthy ways.
- Pray for those supporting survivors of SV as friends.

Action

- Learn about becoming a trauma informed supporter at www.traumainformedcareproject.org
- “Becoming ‘trauma-informed’ means recognizing that people often have many different types of trauma in their lives. People who have been traumatized need support and understanding from those around them. Often, trauma survivors can be re-traumatized by well-meaning caregivers and community service providers.”

Day 5

Prayer Focus

- Pray for those supporting survivors as medical professionals.

Action

- Learn about the Sexual Assault Nurse Exam (SANE) that happens at hospitals and SAFE’s Eloise House (www.safeaustin.org/help/eloisehouse). American Crime, Season 2, Episode 2 shows a shortened, yet accurate SANE exam with SAFE’s lead forensic nurse (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFv0NxeHAYo>).

Day 6

Prayer Focus

- Pray for those supporting survivors in shelters, support services, & in counseling.

Action

- Look up your local Rape Crisis Center or Domestic Violence Shelter and explore their website learning about their services, service area, and ways you can support them.
- If you are in Williamson County, it will be Hope Alliance (www.hopealliancetx.org); Travis County will be SAFE (www.safeaustin.org); Hays & Caldwell Counties will be Hays-Caldwell Women’s Center (www.hcwc.org).



Day 7

Prayer Focus

- Pray for the first responders (like police) that support survivors after an incident and throughout the legal process.

Action

- Explore your local police department’s resources for SV victims. Learn about the victim services department and what is offered.

Day 8

Prayer Focus

- Pray for those that have survived sexual street harassment and those that experience it everyday.

Action

- Explore the Hollaback movement (www.ihollaback.org) and read a couple of stories of how street harassment affects the lives of people every day.



Day 9

Prayer Focus

- Pray for those that sexually harass people on the street.

Action

- Utilize the Power & Control Wheel (www.theduluthmodel.org/pdf/PowerandControl.pdf) to understand why people harass and abuse. Think about how street harassment fits into the wheel.

Day 10

Prayer Focus

- Pray for a change in our culture that dismisses street harassment, minimizes its victimizing impact, or attributes it to innate characteristics of men (i.e. “boys will be boys”).

Action

- Grab a journal or some paper and write out your thoughts or list other things our culture attributes to “boys being boys.”
- Track how those thought patterns can lead to abuse and victim blaming.
- Think about ways you can gently challenge those cultural assumptions.

Day 11

Prayer Focus

- Pray for adults who were sexually abused as children.

Action

- Take a few minutes to read and learn about some of the hurt and paths to healing for survivors of child sexual abuse here: <http://www.pandys.org/articles/innerchild.html>.

Day 12

Prayer Focus

- Pray for children who have been sexually abused and are currently being abused.

Action

- Find some clean paper and markers or crayons and sit down and draw happy childhood memories. No need to color in the lines, be free. As you draw, think about the innocence of children, their curious spirit, and their vulnerability to abuse.

Day 13

Prayer Focus

- Pray for the families of sexually abused children.

Action

- Go outside, take a walk, sit in the grass, swing. These are great coping and healing strategies for anyone affected by trauma and super helpful for families.

Day 14

Prayer Focus

- Pray for those that sexually abuse children.

Action

- Pull up the Power and Control Wheel from Day 9 and think through who child sexual abuse fits into the abusive power dynamics.

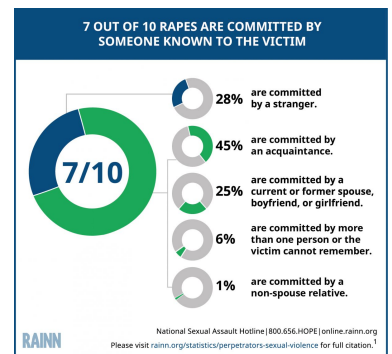
Day 15

Prayer Focus

- Pray for victims of acquaintance rape and date rape.

Action

- See a larger image of the circle chart to the right to see that most sexual assaults are by people the victim knows (<https://www.rainn.org/statistics/perpetrators-sexual-violence>).



Day 16

Prayer Focus

- Pray for victims of sexual assault, assaulted by their spouse or intimate partner.

Action

- Learn more about marital rape here (<https://psychcentral.com/lib/marital-rape/>).

Day 17

Prayer Focus

- Pray for male victims and survivors of sexual assault.

Action

- Learn more about boy and male sexual abuse at RAINN (<https://www.rainn.org/articles/sexual-assault-men-and-boys>).
- Read stories by men and the cultural barriers they face in reporting. (*please note these are graphic stories*)
 - www.goodmenproject.com/featured-content/from-hurt-to-healing-male-survivors-of-sexual-abuse-dg/

Day 18

Prayer Focus

- Pray for religious schools, colleges, and universities as they support survivors of SV, prevent SV, and navigate the aftermath of sexual abuse by faculty, staff, and students.

Action

- Look up information on Title IX (www.knowyourix.org) for university sexual assault prevention, support, and reporting.

Day 19

Prayer Focus

- Pray for state and federal legislators that craft law and procedures around supporting victims of sexual assaults and prosecuting abusers.

Action

- Look up who your local legislators are here: <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx>.
- Learn more about the Violence Against Women Act here: <http://nnedv.org/policy/issues/vawa.html>.
- Read Texas Senate Bill 1191 about assault victims rights during forensic exams (<https://www.texastribune.org/2013/08/13/er-staff-must-be-able-gather-sexual-assault-evidence/>.)

Day 20

Prayer Focus

- Pray for the victims and survivors of clergy sexual abuse.

Action

- Read a few of the following stories of ministerial sexual abuse on women and men (*please note these are graphic stories*).
 - Priest - www.thehopeofsurvivors.com/stories/all_shall_be_well.php
 - Pastor - <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2010/3/31/852885/>
 - Missionary - <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2016/may-web-only/missionary-donn-ketcham-abuse-bangladesh-mks-abwe-report.html?start=1>



Day 21

Prayer Focus

- Pray for the communities of faith that have/have had abusive faith leaders.

Action

- The Faith Trust Institute has some great resources on clergy/ministerial sexual abuse. Learn more here: <http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org/store/01tA0000000M7rXIAS>.

Day 22

Prayer Focus

- Pray for the abusive faith leaders.

Action

- Abuse from religious leaders is not new, the Bible has numerous narratives. But abuse from faith leaders has the added element of that faith leader having religious authority. Find the Power and Control Wheel from Day 9 and see how the power dynamics intersect the religious world.

Day 23

Prayer Focus

- Pray for our denominations who hide abusive clergy out of fear and for those facing it with brokenness.

Action

- Research reporting, policies, and procedure for your faith community and see how your community supports survivors.



Day 24

Prayer Focus

- Pray for the abusers who abuse in faith communities and use their piety to hide abuse.

Action

- Read [Elizabeth's story](#) of sexual abuse (*please note this is a graphic story*) (www.homeschoolersanonymous.org/2013/05/15/i-cant-tell-my-story-without-a-trigger-warning-elizabeths-story)

Day 25

Prayer Focus

- Pray for those that see abuse inside their faith community, communities, or families and do nothing or are too scared to say anything.

Action

- Look up some of [these](#) bystander prevention tools. (<http://www.nsvrc.org/projects/engaging-bystanders-sexual-violence-prevention/bystander-intervention-resources>)
- Read about [these](#) awesome bystanders. (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/brock-turner-bystanders_us_5755b3e1e4b0c3752dce45f8)

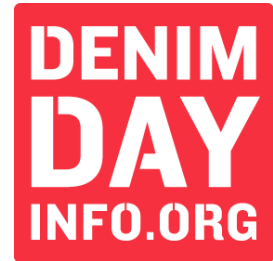
Day 26

Prayer Focus

- Pray for survivors of sexual assaults who were blamed for being assaulted.

Action

- Read this story (www.denimdayinfo.org/about) about an Italian court case and sexual assault victim blaming.
- Wear denim today and share with friends the above story and why it isn't okay to blame the denim for sexual assault!



Day 27

Prayer Focus

- Pray for healthy support systems for survivors of SV.

Action

- Sit down with a journal or paper and write out the characteristics of healthy support systems and how you can be part of one for a survivor of sexual abuse.

Day 28

Prayer Focus

- Pray for healthy relationships with friends, family, and future partners for survivors of SV.

Action

- Read up on what healthy relationships look like (http://www.loveisrespect.org/pdf/Healthy_Relationships.pdf).

Day 29

Prayer Focus

- Pray for equality in relationships where neither partner controls or dominates the other.

Action

- Pull up the Equality Wheel (www.theduluthmodel.org/pdf/Equality.pdf) and read through the different aspects of how relationship can be equal and non-violent.

Day 30

Prayer Focus

- Pray for your continued awareness around sexual violence and ways you can support and advocate for survivors.

Action

- Develop an awareness raising campaign (<http://www.ihhproject.org/>) or event in your community in the next two months. Please contact and share your plans with a local support service! They will likely be thrilled that you are taking the initiative and can support you in your project.



RESOURCES:

Denim Day

www.denimdayinfo.org/about

Duluth Models (Wheel Diagrams)

www.theduluthmodel.org

Faith Trust Institute (Clergy Abuse)

www.faithtrustinstitute.org

Hays-Caldwell Women's Center (support services for Hays & Caldwell)

www.hcwc.org

Hollaback Campaign

www.ihollaback.org

Hope Alliance (support services for Williamson County)

www.hopealliancetx.org

It Happens Here Project

<http://www.ihhproject.org/>

Love Is Respect

www.loveisrespect.org

National Sexual Violence Resource Center

www.nsvrc.org/saam/about

Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN)

www.rainn.org

SAFE (support services for Travis County)

www.safeaustin.org

Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV)

www.tcfv.org

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA)

www.taasa.org

Title IX

www.knowyourix.org