



Parent Power: Partnering with Advocates to Prevent Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is a serious problem that affects many people across the United States. Youth are at significant risk for sexual violence but we can help protect them by teaching and modeling healthy relationship skills. These skills are a vital part of sexual violence prevention and sex education, all of which are most impactful when taught together. As a parent/guardian, you play a significant role in what your child is learning and you don't have to do it alone. Community advocates can provide the support and resources you may need to talk to your children about boundaries, peer pressure, respect for own body/others' bodies, identifying safe and trusted adults and where to get help if needed.

You have the power to help end sexual violence and protect youth. It can feel daunting to know where to start but you can utilize your community resources! Skilled advocates can help you prepare for conversations about healthy relationships with your children, learn more about your local school's sexual violence prevention and healthy relationships curriculum, find ways to prevent violence in your community, and keep your family safe and healthy.

What is an advocate and where can I find one?

Advocates are trained individuals who serve the needs of the community and perform a wide variety of tasks that support the well-being of families across Minnesota. You may encounter advocates in many different settings such as community events, courts, schools, youth programs, public benefits offices, hospitals, libraries or local violence prevention organizations. Advocates' work may differ depending on the organizations they work for and the communities they support.

What can an advocate do to help?

<p>Help you talk to your children about healthy relationships.</p>	<p>Advocates can help you prepare for conversations with your children about healthy relationships and put these skills into practice. They can help you talk to your child about personal boundaries, respect for own body/others' bodies, unhealthy messages on television, movies, and pop culture and other issues related to healthy relationships.</p>
<p>Help you talk to other adults about healthy relationships.</p>	<p>Advocates can help you practice and develop skills to talk to other adults in your life, such as partners, relatives, and friends, about healthy relationships. Some advocates can facilitate family conversations and help you talk to other adults about parenting skills, personal boundaries, respect for own body/others' bodies, unhealthy messages on television, movies, pop culture, and other issues related to healthy relationships.</p>

<p>Find trusted resources about sexual violence prevention and healthy relationships.</p>	<p>Advocates can refer you to trusted resources and information about healthy relationships. Many advocates can refer you to free local classes and workshops for parents/guardians as well.</p>
<p>Answer questions about sexual violence prevention and healthy relationship skills.</p>	<p>Advocates are trained professionals and can answer questions you might have about sexual violence prevention and healthy relationship skills or they can find answers to your questions.</p>
<p>Help you find your local school board and attend meetings.</p>	<p>Advocates, particularly those that work in education, often have information about school board meetings. Ask an advocate if you need help finding out when and where the school board meets so you can learn more and get involved in your school's sexual violence prevention efforts.</p>
<p>Make appointments with teachers, principals, and other school staff to talk about healthy relationships curriculum.</p>	<p>Advocates can help you make appointments with teachers, principals, and other school staff. They can help you find your school's sexual violence prevention efforts and some advocates may be able to attend the meeting with you.</p>
<p>Connect you to parent/guardian peer groups and community leaders.</p>	<p>Advocates can help you find parent/guardian support groups and connect you to other parents/guardians with similar questions and concerns. Advocates may also be able to help you connect with knowledgeable community leaders and help you find opportunities to get involved in healthy relationship education and violence prevention.</p>
<p>Provide you with resources so you can attend school/community events and stay involved in sexual violence prevention.</p>	<p>Advocates often have access to child care vouchers, transportation, bus passes and other means of family support or know where to find them. These resources can help you attend parent-teacher conferences, school board meetings, school-related events, parent/guardian associations, or individual appointments with school administrators. Ask an advocate for a referral.</p>
<p>Provide information about what to do if a sexual assault occurs or someone tells you that they were sexually assaulted.</p>	<p>Sexual violence advocates can specifically provide direct services to victims/survivors and their family. They can help families access medical care, legal support, counseling, and other services after a sexual assault occurs.</p>



Where can I find an advocate?

To find an advocacy organization near you visit the following website or contact MNCASA:

1. Rape Help MN, Advocate Finder

<http://rapehelpmn.org/find-help/>

2. Minnesota Coalition against Sexual Assault (MNCASA)

www.mncasa.org