



NIAGARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT and ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
5467 UPPER MOUNTAIN ROAD, SUITE 200
LOCKPORT, NEW YORK 14094-1895

Antoinette Lech, M.A., M.B.A.
Director
(716) 439-7410
(716) 439-7418 Fax

Press Release

For Immediate Release: April 2, 2009

Contacts:

Antoinette Lech, M.A., M.B.A. – Director, Niagara County Department of Mental Health
Carol Ross, LCSWR – Supervising Social Worker, Adult Mental Health Outpatient Clinics Director

Re: April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Every 2 minutes someone in this country is sexually assaulted.

Based on the statistics from the Rape, Abuse, & Incest Nation Network (RAINN), 1 out of every 6 women in the U.S. have been victims of attempted or completed rape in their lifetime and 3% of Men in the U.S. have been victims of attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. Additionally, approximately 73% of sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows.

Based on the U.S Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey's most recent compiled data from 2007, there were 248,300 sexual assaults in that year alone.

Rape / Sexual assault is an extremely traumatic crime that affects its victims both physically and emotionally. It can leave physical injuries that may heal but emotional scars that could last a lifetime for those who have endured such a traumatic event.

Yet, even with the prevalence of sexual assault crimes as noted in the above statistics, it continues to be one of the most under reported crimes with an average of 60% of sexual assaults not reported to the police.

It is the hope that each year with the recognition of April as Sexual Assault Awareness month, there will be increased focus, attention, education/prevention, and overall awareness raised in regards to this topic. Also to honor and raise awareness for the courage and strength of all the victims/survivors who have endured such trauma and for those dedicated providers who have assisted them in their journey towards healing.

The Rape Crisis Program provides confidential 24hr rape crisis intervention, counseling, hospital/police/court accompaniments, advocacy, information and referrals, prevention/education, and community and professional presentations/trainings. Anyone in need of assistance and further information can call the 24hr Rape Crisis Hotline at 285 - 3518. Additionally any dedicated individuals interested in volunteering for the Rape Crisis Program may contact the office at 278 – 1940.

There is no charge for services provided by the Rape Crisis Program due to funding from the New York State Department of Health, New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, and the New York State Crime Victims Board.

To learn more about the statistics reported above and others related to them, visit www.RAINN.org the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network website.