

# EMPOWERMENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF FEAR 2 FREEDOM

MAY 2020



## MESSAGE FROM TRICIA RUSSELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and healthy! The Fear 2 Freedom (F2F) team returned to the office after seven weeks of teleworking. We are all excited to be back working together while continuing to implement social distancing practices.

So much has happened in our communities since our last newsletter. Mounting data suggests that cases of domestic violence, including sexual violence and child abuse, are on the rise due to COVID-19 quarantine orders, as so many survivors are stuck at home with their abusers. We continue to support survivors with our AfterCare and iCare Kits because compassion is needed now more than ever.

In my last message, I said that two of our 2020 goals were to be resilient and compassionate. I had no idea what would come in the next month! During the COVID-19 pandemic, as we have done over and over again since 2011, we have and will continue to practice resiliency and be compassionate to survivors, and our staff, partners, neighbors, friends, and families. To our friends and our F2F community, thank you for your continued support!

## RECAP OF SAAM 2020

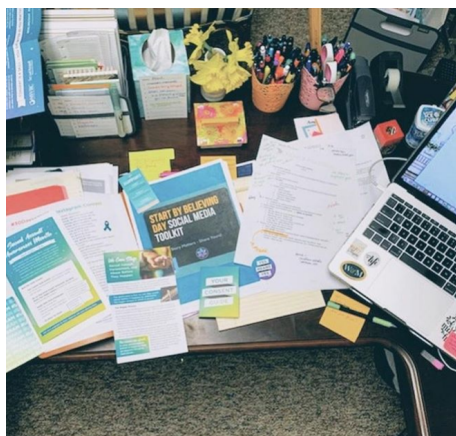
Over the month of April, F2F highlighted Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) in various ways. We launched an educational series about consent, participated in the National Sexual Violence Resource Center's 2020 Instagram Challenge, and empowered survivors of sexual assault by sharing their stories on our blog.

We are so thankful to our F2F community for their support in this time. Your actions tell survivors that they are important! If you liked or shared one of our posts, made a gift in honor of SAAM, took the F2F's pledge to combat sexual violence, or did anything else to support F2F's mission, thank you! You are a vital part of the work that we do, and we are so proud of our community of supporters.

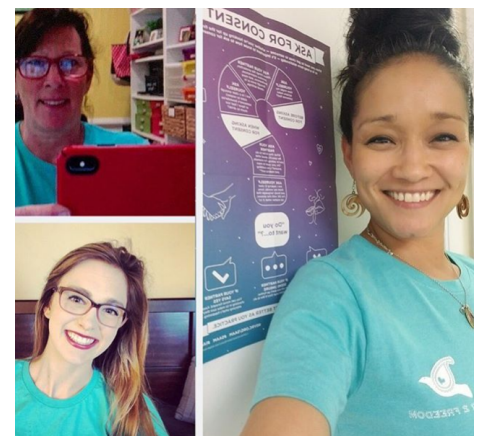
Even though SAAM is over, F2F will continue to take action to support survivors of sexual violence. Follow us on social media and subscribe to our newsletter list to stay up to date on all of our activities.



Faceless Portrait of an Advocate:  
Survivor speakers at the Shadow Event



An Advocate's Desk:  
Desk of Tricia Russell, Executive Director



Show Off Your Teal:  
F2F Staff wear their teal shirts



# COVID-19: THE HIDDEN IMPACTS

Survivors of sexual violence (SV) and domestic violence (DV) are feeling the effects of the current worldwide pandemic in ways many of us couldn't imagine. Efforts to support them are often slipping through the cracks. Join us to bring light to these issues and offer hope to survivors.

## SCOPE

According to the WHO, reports suggest DV rates are increasing significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic. As cases are increasing, survivors are accessing support services less due to stay at home orders.

Child survivors, who are no longer going to school, are seeking more help than ever. The National Sexual Assault Hotline reported that while shelter-in-place orders were being implemented, for the first time ever, half of the victims seeking their help were minors.

Once stay-at-home orders are lifted, survivors of DV and SV will have an opportunity to seek support without their abuser watching their every move. RAINN's president expressed that they expect a jump in official reports and calls to their hotline once stay-at-home orders are lifted. This means an even greater need for our F2F AfterCare and iCare Kits.

## EFFECTS

During widespread crises, SV and DV survivors face greater risks of harm and more barriers to seeking help.

Current restrictions and stressors can increase tension and violence at home, make accessing resources and support networks more challenging. Restrictions may even trigger flashbacks and/or re-traumatization.

## SUPPORT

Throughout this crisis we have come together as a world in so many amazing ways. Together, we can inspire hope and healing for sexual and domestic violence survivors as well.

If you know any survivors of SV and/or DV, you can send them an iCare Kit to aid in their healing process. These Kits are available on our website and can make a difference in the lives of those you care about. You can also check out our website for more resources on how to support survivors of sexual violence.

## Connect To Each Other

- Offer a non-judgemental listening ear by calling to talk
- Create positive social connections by setting up video chats
- Provide long term support by texting to check-in regularly

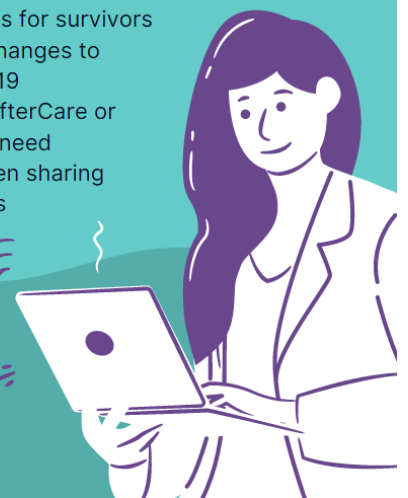


## Connect Survivors To Resources

- Research local resources for survivors
- Stay up to date about changes to services due to COVID-19
- Gift a Fear 2 Freedom AfterCare or iCare Kit to someone in need
- Keep safety in mind when sharing resources with survivors

National Sexual Assault  
Hotline: 1-800-656-4673

National Domestic Violence  
Hotline: 1-800-799-7233



### Sources:

- <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331699/WHO-SRH-20.04-eng.pdf?ua=1>
- <https://www.rainn.org/news/first-time-ever-minors-make-half-visitors-national-sexual-assault-hotline>



Fear 2 Freedom, Inc.

888-453-3059

[getinvolved@fear2freedom.org](mailto:getinvolved@fear2freedom.org)

# EMPOWER 2 GO: SELF-RUN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

F2F is proud to announce the creation of Empower 2 Go, our new educational programming option. You can now bring the Hour 2 Empower to your campus or community group for lowered rates. We wanted to make our Hour 2 Empower more accessible and cost-effective for a variety of groups, so you can now bring the Empower 2 Go to your campus.

This convenient package includes an educational presentation, several videos, and the materials to pack F2F Kits.

Lauren Brennan, Director of Programs at F2F, said that, "Empower 2 Go is a great option for Greek life, student organizations, and other groups who want to host an F2F event on a smaller scale. We've made bringing this self-run program to your area as easy and convenient as possible so that no matter where you are, you can promote sexual violence prevention and support survivors in your community." If you are interested in bringing Empower 2 Go to your campus, you can contact **Lauren Brennan** via email at [lauren@fear2freedom.org](mailto:lauren@fear2freedom.org).



## NINE YEARS BY THE NUMBERS



May 2019 marks F2F's ninth birthday! With the generous support of our incredible community, we have been able to accomplish so much. Here are just some of the things we have been able to do with the help of supporters like you.

Distribute  
18,311  
Adult Kits

Distribute  
8,121  
Child Kits

Empower  
22,494  
Students

Partner  
with 33  
Universities

Partner  
with 92 Kit  
Distributors

Work in 11  
States and 3  
Countries

Engage  
2,289  
Newsletter  
Subscribers

Work with  
100 Regular  
Volunteers  
per semester

Inspire 65  
Champions  
Circle  
Members

\*Numbers accurate as of May 18, 2020



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# COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: RIVERSIDE HEALTH SYSTEM

During the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers are on the front line handling the influx of coronavirus cases and still treating other patients. We especially want to thank all the forensic nurses who provide care to survivors, so our next community partner spotlight is on our hometown heroes: the forensic nurses of the Riverside Health System.



# RIVERSIDE

The forensic nurses of the Riverside Health System are some of the leading care providers in the Hampton Roads area. Their mission is to attend to the "physical, psychological, and social trauma that occurs in patients who have been assaulted or abused."

In the Emergency Room at Riverside Regional Medical Center, there is a separate area for patients going through the Physical Evidence Recovery Kit exam. In this private space, patients can receive a forensic exam, any necessary medical attention, and support from sexual assault advocates.

Even as hospitals and medical facilities continue to treat those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the forensic nurses of Riverside Health System continue to treat survivors. If you are in need of an examination, Riverside forensic nurses want you to know that they are conducting proper screening, employee masking, and separation from the COVID-19 area to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Unfortunately, sexual violence doesn't stop because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Riverside forensic nurses, as well as the entire F2F community, are here to support you in your healing process!



Beth Walters, Forensic Nurse Examiner Program Coordinator, receives F2F AfterCare Kits at the 2019 CNU Hour 2 Empower.

To reach the Riverside Health System Forensic Nurse Examiner Program Coordinator's office, call 757-594-3983

## WELCOME, JANUARY!

Fear 2 Freedom is excited to welcome to our team January Serda, our new Chief Operating Officer. January has more than 10 years of experience in nonprofit management and brings a collaborative, service-oriented mindset that complements F2F's mission.

When asked about what she wants to add to the F2F community, she said, "I feel so grateful to join this passionate team and do my part to promote Fear 2 Freedom's vitally important mission of helping to restore hope and dignity to survivors of sexual assault. It is an honor to work with an organization dedicated to empowering students and communities to combat sexual violence. I hope to help the organization strategically grow to continue to educate and impact more people to be the change!"

When she's not in the office, January can be found spending time gardening, enjoying the outdoors, and hanging out with her family.



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