

VOL. 1 ISSUE 3 · FEB 2021

THE CHANGE CHASER

Official Newsletter of ACASA

A Note from the Director

Happy New Year! I am not sure what 2021 has in store for us, but we hope to restore something more “normal.” What can I say but “we shall see.” The Coalition has spent more time this past quarter in team-building, personal growth, and reflection. From this, we have learned many things. One of our biggest lessons has been that it is okay to put something on hold and take a break. It is funny how aware we can be of self-care for others but tend to overlook ourselves! Par for the course of victim service employees. I want to encourage you to reflect on yourself and your agency and be mindful of the trauma we have experienced over the last year. Take time to talk to your employees and have check-ins with them. Encourage your employees to take days for self-care/mental health, because many of us have been working from home, or unable to travel, we have all tended to just work instead of taking any time for ourselves. Often, we may not recognize the toll the year has taken on us until we hit that wall. I want to encourage program directors and staff to take time to do self-reflection, making sure you are okay or taking time for yourself when you need it. I am looking forward to this new year and working with each of you!

Warm regards,

Monie Johnson, Executive Director



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Raise Your Voice Festival



On Saturday, April 17, 2021, we will hold our first Annual Raise Your Voice Festival at the Bernice Garden to celebrate Sexual Assault Awareness Month. We will gather together with the community for a day of fun, food, drinks, and music to raise much-needed funds for our non-profit organization. Bring the family out to celebrate this day and help raise awareness for our cause!

The festival will feature a variety of food trucks, a local brewery, raffle and silent auction, games, live music, and local vendors to shop while you enjoy the day. Event page is now live on our website.

Admission is \$10 and includes a raffle ticket. Your admission gets you access to the entire festival. Event t-shirts designed by local tattoo artist, Megan Ivy, will also be available for purchase (design featured below).



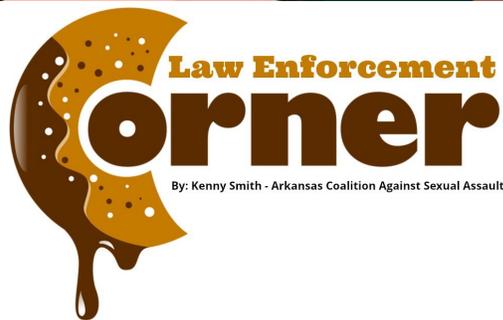
APRIL 17, 2021
1PM-5PM
THE BERNICE GARDEN
1401 S. MAIN STREET
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72202

For questions or concerns:
npress@arkcasa.org
501.246.3276 ext 108

"And still, I rise."

MAYA ANGELOU





Currently, we are working on areas of concern along with a host of several others through the use of the CoSAR Program. The main challenge we have faced with the CoSAR Program is that individuals that are a part of the team are also the very people who are first line workers in the pandemic. They are all very busy and time is not a luxury that many can spare. However, through focusing our efforts in communities that have a SA Crisis Center, we will be better able to communicate effectively with local representation to assist through an extended time frame. This effort is helping to restart and build the CoSAR Program, provide insight from a local level, but statewide, on several issues that will help to build additional LE trainings, while also helping to promote membership with the coalition from those centers who are not currently enrolled.

If you or your agency would like to be involved in a training, learn more about the about the CoSAR program, or if you have a need, questions, or just want to talk about law enforcement in general, please feel free to reach out to me anytime!

Kenny Smith
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Conference

The Conference planning committee has begun meeting monthly and has decided to plan for an in-person conference to be held in September. The committee will reassess this decision on June 1st. If it is clear that COVID-related restrictions will prohibit an in-person conference, the committee will plan for a virtual conference similar to last year.

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Anti-Human Trafficking

ACASA, along with staff from ACADV, worked with the OVC HT Capacity Building Center to enhance ACADV and ACASA's capacity to provide sustainable assistance to all survivors of trafficking. As a result of this collaborative coaching process, ACADV and ACASA developed a coalition collaboration model and are currently planning a curriculum for the coalitions to use in a coordinated way for training their respective staff. We have also started surveys and regional mapping of gaps between survivors' needs and the re-forming of a statewide advisory group.

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Prevention Education



Netflix and Consent on Instagram continues to grow; we currently have 1,169 followers. Netflix and Consent merchandise is available as a gift with donation on our online store. Little Rock Police Department G.E.M.S (Girls Educational & Mentoring Services) have signed on to be a recurring program for the foreseeable future. We have partnered with Delta G.E.M.S. to do a Teen Dating Violence Month training in February. This partnership will become a recurring training later in the grant cycle. We will continue to grow and strengthen our relationships with the community.

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Advocacy Outreach

We are currently meeting with ACADV every two weeks per the collaboration plan developed with help from OVC. We are in the works of developing a weekly call between the team and other agencies/personnel around the state to involve any necessary input and recommendations on what HT in Arkansas looks like.

Bryn Patterson
Advocacy Outreach Coordinator, ACASA
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Advocate Training

This quarter we continued to provide lots of technical assistance. The request for trainings is still down. We really believe that has to do with advocate burn out. We have assisted in providing training to advocates to aid in burn out through Crime Victims Assistance Association of Arkansas. We have created a Crisis Center listserv to allow for better networking between AR crisis centers. We have a lot of military professionals logging on to Coalition Manager to take our Basic Advocacy Training, so it seems the public has moved from our old training platform to the new one just fine.

This upcoming quarter we will be providing another Sexual Assault Advocacy Certification Course. We will also provide a couple live online webinars for advocates.

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Crisis Center Spotlight



Family Crisis Center of Northeast Arkansas

Since opening the Rape Crisis Center in 2017, we have become accustomed to fairly consistent change as we grow and seek new ways to improve services for our clients and our community. While all crisis centers maintain a certain level of preparedness, 2020 was a year that no one could have anticipated. Protocols, policies, and standards that had been established since inception were now facing changes on a daily basis as we learned from new information and the experiences of other agencies. The constant question we posed to ourselves: How can we use this information to ensure the ongoing safety of our clients and staff, without any loss to the quality of care and services we provide?

With hospitals overwhelmed, many organizations were forced to alter their operations, and with uncertainty rising, we chose to increase communications within our community and to all of our partners. This led to both an immediate and sustained increase in the number of forensic exams completed by our agency throughout 2020. In addition, we saw an overall increase in the community's awareness of our agency and the topic of sexual assault as a whole. There were additional protective measures put into place, such as PPE, to keep both our clients, as well as our staff, as safe as possible. Ultimately, we had to work toward an even greater level of preparedness than we had known before. Many of our processes had to adapt to the availability of our vendors and community supports.

Heading into 2021, we greatly look forward to maintaining the increased strength of our community partnerships as well as the opportunity to return to our regularly scheduled community events when it's safe to do so. We plan to continue learning new and better ways to express our care and compassion for our clients and each other as we move through these uncertain times, where tried and true methods may not always be available.

Send crisis center program updates to ksmith@arkcasa.org. Let's work together to strengthen our communities and better serve victims!



Advocate Shout Outs

ACASA has started doing advocate shout outs once monthly to show some much needed appreciation for our membership crisis center advocates. Our very own Kenny Smith is hand-delivering a plaque and gift card to the winners across the state. The advocates do so much for victims across the state, now is our time to do what we can in return.

We'd love to see you featured next! Directors: Please send a list of your advocates with their hire dates to khall@arkcasa.org. Advocates: Give your directors a gentle reminder to submit your information if you'd like to be acknowledged.

December 2020 Advocate: Keshia Boen - Ozark Rape Crisis Center



January 2021 Advocate: Vickie Sullivan - Women's Crisis Center of SA



WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR.

To have your voice featured in an upcoming issue, email story ideas to npress@arkcasa.org



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To see organization updates and current news

