Advocates have made progress dispelling many harmful misconceptions about sexual violence. However, there is one sexual assault myth that has embedded itself so deeply in today’s culture that it is accepted as a mainstream joke.

You can hear “Don’t drop the soap” on TV shows, in movies, and elsewhere on a regular basis. Some people even believe that inmates who experience sexual assault deserve what they get. Besides, they are criminals, they reason, so who cares?

These jokes and sentiments perpetuate the myth that sexual violence in correctional institutions is an inevitable and acceptable consequence of incarceration. Advocates know that sexual assault is always a crime, regardless of whether victims have committed crimes of their own. Simply put, rape is not part of the penalty for breaking the law.

Among other announcements and highlights, this issue of the Voice newsletter highlights WCASA’s new advocacy manual for use with incarcerated victims of sexual violence. We also highlight masculinity-in-prison programs that work with victims in confined settings.

Locked Up or Not, No One Deserves It
By Dominic Holt

PREA Advocacy Manual
By Ginger Francis

Working with incarcerated victims comes with its own unique challenges. It takes an experienced advocate with significant support and good relationships with correctional institution staff to work effectively with this specialized population. To assist advocates in these efforts, WCASA has developed a guide titled Tools for Advocates Working with Incarcerated Victims of Sexual Violence in Wisconsin.

The first half of this advocacy manual provides information on the background, prevalence, and dynamics of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and staff sexual misconduct in correctional institutions, as well as incarcerated victim responses. The second half of this manual offers best practice guidelines for advocates who are providing services to incarcerated victims of sexual violence within correctional institutions.

In 2014, Wisconsin was one of 46 states that submitted assurances to the U.S. Department of Justice that it would work toward compliance with the National Prison Rape Elimination Act Standards. Congress intended the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA) to prevent, detect, and respond to sexual abuse perpetrated in confinement settings. PREA and the standards apply to prisons, jails, juvenile facilities, military and Indian country facilities, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement facilities.

Masculinity in Prison
By Rose Hennessy

Staff at Sexual Assault Services of Lutheran Social Services provide prevention programming in Racine County. Vicki Biehn, rural services coordinator and therapist, and Annabell Bustillos, bilingual outreach advocate, provide single- and multi-session prevention training at Racine Correctional Institute.

Their one-time presentation, Masculinity 101, works to deconstruct and redefine masculinity and encourage healthy sexuality. Their multi-session program, Making The Peace, expands this programming and includes 13 sessions. They offer sessions in English and Spanish, and evaluations show positive changes in knowledge and attitudes among participants.

Says Annabell, “The program that I do in Spanish helps the men reflect on the issues that are going on in the Hispanic/Latino community. It gives them something to think about.”
Eve Bertrand has joined the organization as campus coordinator. From Madison, Eve is passionate about working for social justice in her home state. Eve’s undergraduate degree is in Women’s Studies and LGBT Studies, and her graduate degree is in Social Work, both from UW-Madison. In addition, Eve attained licensure in School Social Work. Eve has worked at the local level as a sexual assault victim advocate and counselor, and values collaboration at all levels to serve the needs of all survivors.

The position is a new one for the organization. In this role, Eve will support prevention and victim services on Wisconsin campuses. Eve aims to increase communication, support, and resource sharing between campus victim services and prevention staff across the state, as well as between individual campuses and their local sexual assault service providers.

Eve is very grateful to be surrounded by fantastic family and friends in Madison, including her “rock star” parents. Eve is also a proud aunt of two nieces and one nephew, who live in Texas with her wonderful sister and brother-in-law.

Welcome, Eve!

**Staff to Present at Symposium**

On February 5th, Kelly Moe Litke and Rose Hennessy will present “Teen Sexual Abuse: What Professionals Need to Know for Prevention & Response” at the Adolescent Health Symposium.

**Nominate Someone for a Voices of Courage Award**

Each year, WCASA honors the outstanding work of Wisconsin individuals and organizations that have exceeded the very highest standards in their dedicated efforts to end sexual violence and support survivors.

**Know someone you’d like to nominate in your community?** Its easy to nominate someone. Just choose from one or more of the following award categories and tell us why you think they should receive the award:

- Criminal Justice
- Victim/Survivor Advocacy
- Prevention Education
- Community Support
- Public Policy
- Health & Human Services
- Lifetime Achievement Courage

**NOMINATE HERE**