

## **Sexual Violence Prevention Education Programming: Creating Replicable Strategies that Impact Youth in Kansas**

### **Issue**

Sexual violence is a public health concern in Kansas that not only affects the victim but also affects friends, families and communities. Sexual violence does not discriminate, it impacts individuals of various ages, genders, race and ethnicities and socioeconomic status. Kansas statistics provide further insight:

According to statistics from the 2007 Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) report:

- 1,231 rapes were reported to law enforcement
- 76.8 % of the offenders were known to the victim
- The perpetrator of the crime is usually between the ages of 15 and 24

Johnson County SAFEHOME has created an innovative program to address sexual violence with youth that has been successfully replicated in selected school districts in Johnson County and in other communities across the state.

### **Intervention**

The Outrage: An Educational Journey Through Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Assault is an interactive theatre performance that is in its third year of implementation. This piece focuses on current statistical information about teen dating violence and sexual assault, highlighting stereotypical gender roles and bystander intervention. The Johnson County high school student volunteers perform this piece to middle and high school students after receiving 12 hours of domestic violence, dating violence and sexual assault training. After the 25-minute performance these student actors engage the audience in a question and answer session. Peer to peer communication about these topics has proven to be very successful. Currently, Johnson County is implementing this strategy in three school districts.

### **Impact**

In April 2008, Johnson County SAFEHOME was invited to present “The Outrage” at a breakout session at the Kansas Crime Victims Rights Conference. Over 120 conference participants attended this session. Feedback from the conference organizers noted that this was the largest breakout session of the conference. Several attendees expressed interest in using this program and SAFEHOME printed copies of the script and instructions and distributed to four (Salina, Wichita, Manhattan, El Dorado) agencies across Kansas. Currently, Sedgwick County, the second largest county in Kansas has adopted “The Outrage” and it is being implemented with one team of high school actors with plans to expand it in the future. Additionally, SAFEHOME has Outrage troupes at three different high schools in Johnson County with 19 student actors trained to present the material and have reached over 3700 students with this program since its inception in 2006.

“The Outrage” also received regional attention when it was highlighted in the August 25, 2008 edition of TIME magazine. One of Johnson County’s community partners “Olathe Toyota” was integral in SAFEHOME receiving this attention as the manager of “\_Olathe Toyota” received an award for their social service work at SAFEHOME and asked if the article could specifically highlight the Outrage as one of the programs he supported at SAFEHOME.

Anecdotal information from school administrators have also gleaned positive results. Jim Wink, the administrator for Indian Woods Middle School, reflected on his experience with the 3 R’s Curriculum and “The Outrage”:

“For the past two years Indian Woods Middle School has been fortunate to have had not only SAFEHOME’s staff present a comprehensive program to our students, we also have had “The Outrage” performance presented to our eighth graders. The performance is not only thought provoking, it has also given two of our students the courage to come forward and let a member of our staff know they were the victim of rape and forced oral sex. I commend the SAFEHOME staff and “The Outrage” performers for their willingness to give of their time to inform our students and parents of situations and issues that our students face, on a far too regular basis. Only through educational programs such as the ones provided by SAFEHOME can we be proactive in preparing our students to deal with the tough situations they may have to deal with.”

SAFEHOME illustrates that sexual violence primary prevention programs and CDC RPE dollars are creating replicable and successful programs in Kansas.

**Contact:**

Allison Basinger,  
Prevention Education Coordinator  
Johnson County SAFEHOME  
P.O. Box 4563  
Overland Park, KS 66204  
(913) 378-1533  
[abasinger@safehome-ks.org](mailto:abasinger@safehome-ks.org)

## **Investing in Outrageous Youth to Prevent Sexual Violence in Kansas**

### **Issue:**

Sexual Violence is a public health problem impacting Kansas youth. According to the 2009 Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) report, over 45% of the victims of rape are between the ages of 10 and 19. The KBI also reports that over 25% of offenders are between the ages of 10 and 19. KDHE has responded by providing communities in Kansas with Preventive Health Block funds to develop sexual violence primary prevention programming aimed at youth while sustaining programs and expanding promising efforts can be challenging, one program in Johnson County Kansas has been successful by leveraging funds and increasing exposure of a successful program.

### **Intervention:**

There is a movement with youth in the Kansas City area to stop sexual violence. Jeff, a 17-year-old senior said “The fact that people were getting hurt and dying from sexual assault, rape and domestic violence, made me outraged. I want to be a part of that voice to help stop it.” Jeff is a part of an interactive theater troupe called “The Outrage: An Educational Journey Through Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Assault”. “The Outrage” is an original performance piece written by the Education and Prevention Coordinator at SAFEHOME, a comprehensive Domestic Violence agency located in Johnson County, Kansas. The purpose of “The Outrage” is to provide teens with current statistical information about teen dating violence and sexual assault. Student actors deliver a series of vignettes highlighting stereotypical gender roles that support sexual violence and provide youth audiences with examples of positive bystander behavior they can use to respond to teen dating violence and abuse. Johnson County high school student volunteers perform this piece to middle and high school students after receiving 12 hours of domestic violence, dating violence and sexual assault training. After the 25 minute performance these student actors engage the audience in a question and answer session.

### **Impact:**

Sustaining “The Outrage” requires funding and exposure. Initially created in 2007 for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, demand from audiences lead to year round performances. “The Outrage” has developed into a significant initiative impacting members of the Johnson County community and also reaching into many other communities across Kansas. Since its inception, “The Outrage” has been performed over 100 times for over 14,000 people. Locally, “The Outrage” has been performed at the Kansas Crime Victims Rights Conference and Kansas Safe and Prepared Schools Conference. “The Outrage” has also received national recognition for its efforts. In April of 2010 the Safe States Alliance honored “The Outrage” with their Innovative Initiative of the Year Award. In April of 2011, “The Outrage” was selected to perform in Washington DC at the first National Summit on Gender Based Violence Among Young People. This Summit was organized by The US Department of Education and The US Department of Justice and was orchestrated through the Office of the Vice President Joe Biden.

Increased exposure has prompted requests from communities across Kansas for access to “The Outrage” script and for technical assistance in implementing the project. Currently

there are Outrage troupes in El Dorado, Hays, McPherson, Manhattan, Salina, and Wichita, Kansas. Scripts have also purchased for implementation to communities outside of Kansas. In August 2011 SAFEHOME secured funding through various sources including a Verizon grant to provide a full time coordinator for “The Outrage”. In September 2011, the State Farm Youth Advisory Board awarded SAFEHOME a \$25,000 service-learning grant to assist SAFEHOME in sustaining “The Outrage”. SAFEHOME plans to use funding to develop a media campaign and have the Outrage student actors provide examples of healthy teen relationships. Sustainability of “The Outrage” is critical in providing opportunities for students to become involved in stopping sexual violence among youth in Kansas.

**Contact:**

Allison Basinger,  
“Outrage” Coordinator  
Johnson County SAFEHOME  
P.O. Box 4563  
Overland Park, KS 66204  
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abasinger@safehome-ks.org