

SART CONNECTION

MARCH 2020
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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April 2020 - I Ask

This April marks the 19th anniversary of the designated Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Consistent efforts to bring awareness to this violence is critical to both past and current victims. While planning for events over the past year for this month, I don't think anyone could have imagined that we would find our world turned upside down by COVID-19. While communities are doing their best at emergency preparedness, and advising citizens they are "safer at home," I want to turn our attention to those individuals who are not safer at home. According to RAINN, "During natural disasters and in conflict zones the prevalence of sexual violence increases." Children are impacted, especially those who are required to stay at home with an abuser. The same applies to those in abusive relationship who are at increased danger caused by social distancing measures.

Now more than ever,
awareness is critical.

Those working in the field will need to expand their safety planning guidance to include informing survivors what to do if authorities call for "shelter in place." Plans could include reaching out to a trusted friend who could check in with them about their safety, finding other friends and family to stay with during this time or identifying who are their supports. While we may all be in uncharted territory, we have been innovative in the ways that we respond to victims. Forensic exams are still happening, advocates are still being connected to victims to provide support and therapy sessions are ongoing. Once the stay at home orders are lifted, we expect the floodgates to open and the survivors to begin seeking help. SART members will be here, reminding victims that they are not alone. Thank you for your ongoing collaboration as SART members; your hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed.

YES
MEANS
YES

NICOLE BISHOP
Director
Division of Victim Services
& Certified Rape Crisis Center





SART MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

BY **CHRISTEL BRYDEGAARD, LMHC**
Palm Beach County Victim Services Therapist

SGT. JULIANA MARTINEZ

Palm Beach County
Sheriff's Office



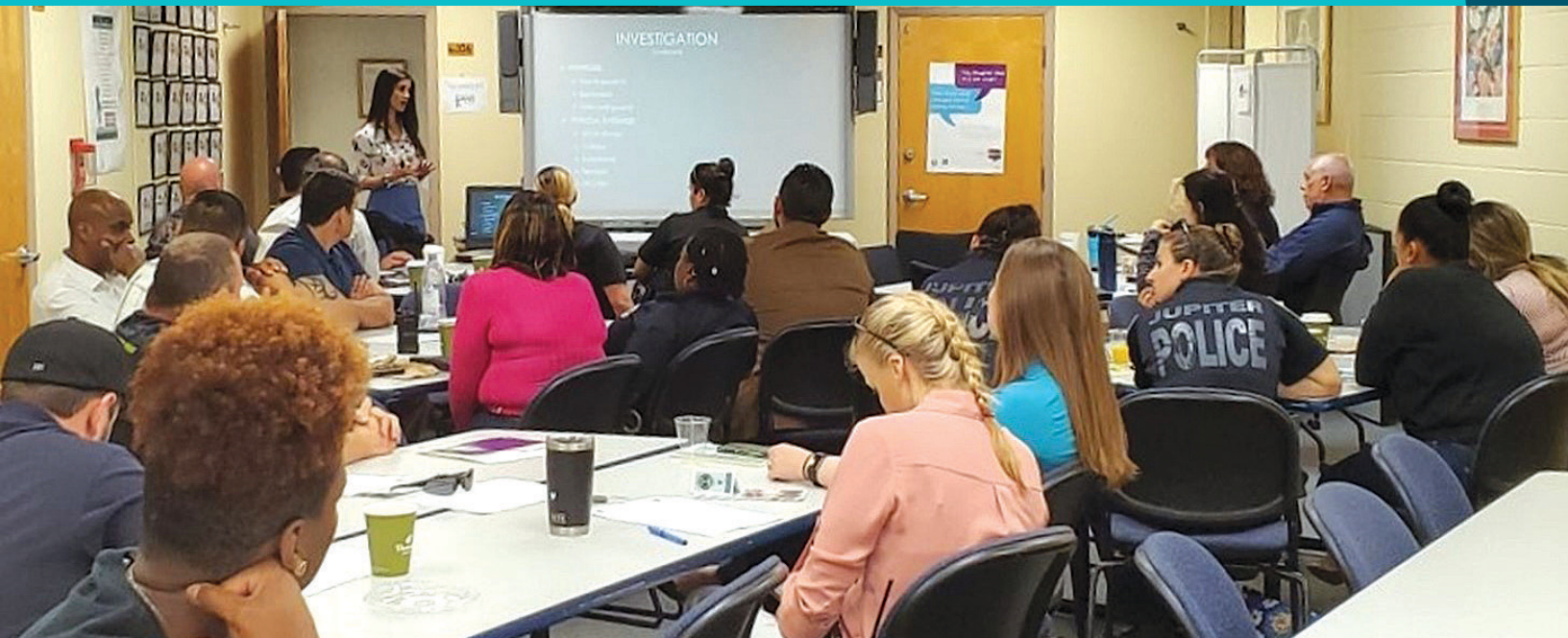
In this issue of SART Connection, meet **Sgt. Juliana Martinez.**

Sgt. Martinez has extensive experience in law enforcement with a total of 14 years on the force. During this time, Sgt. Martinez has worked as a detective in several different capacities, including Human Trafficking and Sex Crimes units, the Missing Persons Unit, and the past year as the sergeant for the PBSO Special Victims Unit, where she supervises eight detectives on a daily basis on the afternoon shift.

Sergeant Martinez expressed that the collaboration, teamwork and support between SART and the PBSO Special Victims Unit is a great asset to the overall investigation process due to the ongoing support for victims and their families. Sgt. Martinez stated that the collaboration and teamwork ensures her goal of treating victims with compassion and understanding, and stressed the importance of practicing patience when interacting with and advocating for victims. As the sergeant of the Special Victims Unit, it is of the utmost importance to her that her team understands the impact of trauma on the victims when assigned with a new case. Sgt. Martinez emphasized the importance of not revictimizing the survivors by being mindful and supportive. This in particular is something she attributes to and appreciates about the hard work of the SART victim advocates.

Sgt. Martinez described an ongoing goal and vision of reducing current barriers to a more effective response—by working on initiatives to extend the windows of protocol for DNA collection, increase open communication, and maintain transparency with victims through honest communication. When asked what Sgt. Martinez is hopeful to achieve within her current role in the Special Victims Unit, she verbalized interest in an increase in collaboration and communication between Law Enforcement and SART as well as maintaining a positive reputation based on the work with victims. According to Sgt. Martinez, it is imperative to also remain visible within the community through participation in SART events such as Field of Hope.

During the interview with Sgt. Martinez, her passion for this Task Force was evident and her care for the victims and her unit-detectives was clear. Sgt. Martinez expressed ongoing encouragement of self-care and healthy outlets to her team, and she herself expressed practicing mindfulness and enjoying activities related to the ocean as well as spending quality time with family and friends. Sgt. Martinez stressed the importance of having balance between on and off work environments and encouraged her team to engage in self-care. We are grateful for her and her team's dedication and hard work!



Thirty-three law enforcement officers, deputies and detectives attending the sexual assault response training, which provided a victim-centered approach.

Mock Sexual Assault Response Training

On October 16, 2019, Palm Beach County Victim Services in collaboration with the Office of the State Attorney designed and held their second Mock Sexual Assault Response Training. The goal of this training was to support sexual assault survivors through a victim centered approach by providing an enhanced understanding of key compo-

nents in the SART process. This training allowed the 33 law enforcement officers, deputies, and detectives in attendance to practice a victim-centered approach to sexual assault response in a low-risk environment by immersing participants in a simulated sexual assault case. The fictional case scenario depicted a domestic violence case with a sexual

assault component between an interracial same-sex couple played by staff at Victim Services. We were fortunate to have Marci Rex, Chief of the Special Victims Unit at the SAO, provide a wrap-up training to law enforcement on the prosecution process, investigative techniques, and report writing.



Actors roleplay during the mock sexual assault response training, which provided law enforcement personnel an enhanced understanding of how SART cases are processed.



Purple Pajama Party!

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. AVDA created the Purple Pajama Party to raise awareness. Why pajamas? Not everyone feels safe in their home; by taking time with your loved ones (and coworkers), you're honoring those who don't feel safe. Palm Beach County Victim Services supports our partners at AVDA to assist families in attaining safe and secure living environments.

Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse, Inc. Invites You To

get cozy and
STAY HOME
for the AVDA®
purple pajama
party

date
THE MONTH OF OCTOBER
Pick any date during the month to party with your friends and family!

place
YOUR OWN HOME
Get comfy and have fun without leaving the house!

time
THE MOST CONVENIENT FOR YOU
Early, late, or all night long!

#PurplePJsForAVDA

AVDA®
A Community of Hope
Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse, Inc.

Trauma Informed Training

Palm Beach County Victim Services, in coordination with Battered Women's Justice Project, had our much anticipated Trauma Informed Training at the Clayton Hutcheson Center for over 70 law enforcement and SART members. Harvard Medical School teaching associate Dr. Jim Hopper trained the audience on how stress and trauma can alter brain functioning during sexual assaults and other traumas. Members also had the opportunity to learn about the key brain circuitries

impacted by stress and trauma, including the prefrontal cortex and defense and memory circuitries. This presentation provided a critical foundation for learning and applying trauma-informed responses with people who have been assaulted and highlighted practical tools especially useful for law enforcement and state attorneys to utilize when investigating or trying cases in the criminal justice system.



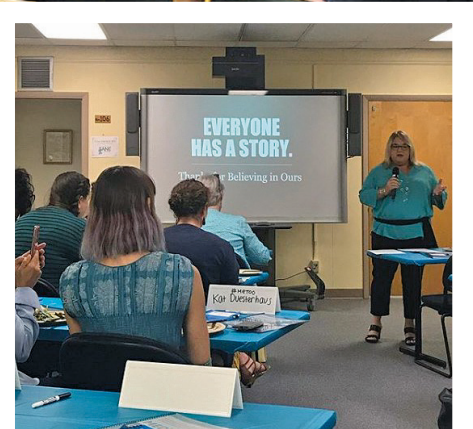
Harvard Medical School teaching associate Dr. Jim Hopper informs audience members about how stress and trauma can alter brain functioning during sexual assault and other traumas.



Media Appreciation Day

Survivor Action Team and Palm Beach County Victim Services hosted our second Media Appreciation Day in August. The purpose of the event was to build direct communications between media and survivors of sexual violence, as now—more than ever—the way in which rape and sexual violence is reported matters. Social media and news stories are seen at an accelerated pace of the 24/7 instant news cycle, and the role that journalists play in reporting rape and sexual violence is a vital one. Thirteen news anchors and

reporters from Palm Beach Post, Channel 20, CBS 12, and Channel 5 WPTV were present, representing television and print. During Media Appreciation Day, reporters were trained on the importance of delicate awareness on the issue of rape and sexual violence, and how diligence in reporting can help paint a more broad and truthful picture of the realities: what sexual violence is, what the trends are, what contributes to sexual violence, and how we can all help end it for all genders.



Top: Survivor Action Team members share their experiences with journalists during the second Media Appreciation Day held in August.

Inset and bottom: Palm Beach County Victim Services informs local media outlets about the need for delicate awareness and diligence in reporting about rape and sexual violence experiences.





SURVIVOR ACTION TEAM HIGHLIGHT

The Survivor Action Team continues to meet on a quarterly basis. This group comes together to share ideas, increase a sense of belonging among members and raise awareness about services available to victims of sexual violence. The Survivor Action Team worked with PBCVS staff to plan events for Sexual Assault Awareness Month and has submitted stories for Start By Believing Day (April 1).



Start By Believing

Sexual Assault Awareness Month Proclamation



On Tuesday, March 10, 2020, Palm Beach County Victim Services and West Palm Beach Police Department walked to the Palm Beach County Commission meeting to accept a proclamation from the County Commissioners declaring April Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Commissioner McKinlay presented the proclamation to Palm Beach County Victim Services Director Nicole Bishop and Public Safety Director Stephanie Sejnoha.



Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Violence

Victim Services Grant Coordinator Molly McConnell and Sexual Assault Program Coordinator Carol Messam-Gordon attended the 2019 Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault—Sexual Violence Justice Institute “National Institute for SART Leaders.” The Institute was a 3-day program designed for coordinators, team leaders, and state/territorial level leaders who coordinate local teams responding to sexual violence. The Institute’s primary goal was to build the capacity of team leaders to design and facilitate effective team processes. PBCVS representatives were able to receive continued education to lead multidisciplinary teams while further designing, implementing, and evaluating our community’s response to sexual violence.



Left to right: **Molly McConnell (PBCVS)**, **Eva Fiallos-Diaz (FCASV)**, and **Carol Messam-Gordon (PBCVS)**.

Hispanic Awareness Event

BY **HOLLY-LYNN CAROTENUTO**

PBCVS Sexual Assault Outreach Coordinator

Palm Beach County Victims Services and the SART Community Action Network (CAN) partnered with West Palm Beach Police Department for the 5th Annual Hispanic Outreach event at St. John Fisher Church.

The goal of the event is to prevent violent crimes including sexual assault and domestic violence. The relationship between the community members, local law enforcement and resources continues to grow each year. Future workshops and trainings for the community members have been planned throughout the year.

Over 500 community members were provided lunch by El Bodegon and received safety tips and information about local community resources. Providers who attended or supported the event included West Palm Beach Police Department, Palm Beach County Victim Services, City of West Palm Beach, AVDA, Legal Aid's Domestic Violence Project, Catholic Charities, Child Rescue Coalition, 211 – Help Me Grow, The Center for Family Services of Palm Beach County, HomeSafe, Healthy Mothers, Health Babies, CILO, Rybovich, Target and Sam's Club.





SANE SPOTLIGHT

Palm Beach County SANE Coordinator Lisa Alward coordinated a Technical Assistance Advanced Clinical Training through Clinical Skills USA, Inc. The mission of Clinical Skills USA, Inc., is to provide instructional assistance to practicing and future healthcare professionals in fulfilling their responsibility for promoting and providing comprehensive, sensitive clinical care and health promotion and to focus instruction on female gynecological and male urogenital examinations as well as meeting the needs of trauma survivors as a SANE. The trainers, also known as “Guiding Patients,” provided SANEs with instruction and feedback, as they practiced these examination skills utilizing the body of the instructor under low-risk conditions. In addition to practicing speculum evidence collection on the



*Left to right: **Via Garcia (CSUSA), Lisa Alward (PBCVS), Patty Mika (PBCVS), Linda Brock (PBCVS), and Katie Patterson (CSUSA).***

live models, this training included techniques to standardize and enhance SANE assessments and skills such as trauma-informed interviewing, forensic evidence collection standards for the State of Florida,

and documentation. The 10 SANEs who were in attendance were given practical guidance and tools to support victims of sexual assault by fine-tuning their understanding and skills in collecting forensic evidence.



*Left to right: **Patty Mika (PBCVS), Melissa Brouillette (PBCVS), Jenny Alvarez (PBCVS), Gwendalyn Levine (PBCVS), Clare McKinlay (PBCVS), Marci Rex (SAO), and Lisa Alward (PBCVS).***

Another highlight from 2019 is a collaboration between our SANE program and the State Attorney’s Office (SAO). SAO Chief of the Special Victims Unit Marci Rex provided a Court Testimony Training for the SANE team. A mock trial in the Central Courthouse in PBC was performed to allow SANEs to practice testifying for the forensic exams they regularly collect. Court etiquette, trial timelines and events, and lines of questioning regularly presented by defense attorneys and prosecutors were demonstrated, and SANEs were able to ask questions.

SANEs on the GO!

As all “SARTners” know, our SANE team is mobile. Last year, they were so mobile, they ended up in Louisiana! The Annual International Conference on Forensic Nursing Science and Practice (IAFN) was held in New Orleans where SANE Coordinator, Lisa Alward, SANE Patty Mika, Sexual Assault Program Coordinator, Carol Messam-Gordon, and Survivor Activist, Julie Weil were all in attendance. SANEs gained increased knowledge about the current state of the science in forensic nursing, strategies to influence the future of forensic nursing and the global response to violence, the risks and benefits of technological advances as they relate to forensic nursing and issues of violence, and incorporating evidence-based strategies into forensic nursing practice. During this reporting period, the SANE program has implemented regular case staffings and peer review sessions to examine and provide feedback on sexual assault patients’ charts to ensure best practices are being utilized.

Top photo (left to right): **Lisa Alward (PBC Victim Services), Julie Weil (Not Just Me Foundation), Carol Messam-Gordon (PBC Victim Services), Patty Mika (PBC Victim Services).**

Middle photo (left to right): **Lisa Alward, Carol Messam-Gordon, and Patty Mika, enjoying the sights in New Orleans.**



NO MORE

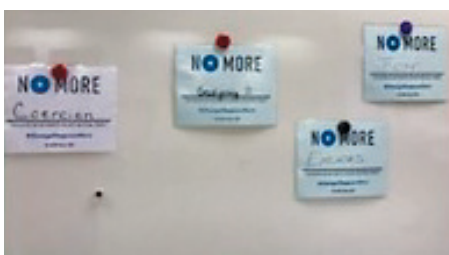
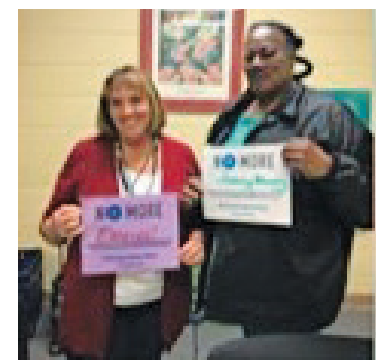
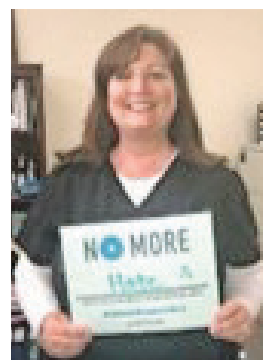
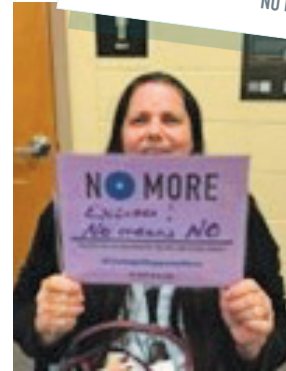
TOGETHER WE CAN END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

#ChangeHappensHere

NO MORE Week 2020

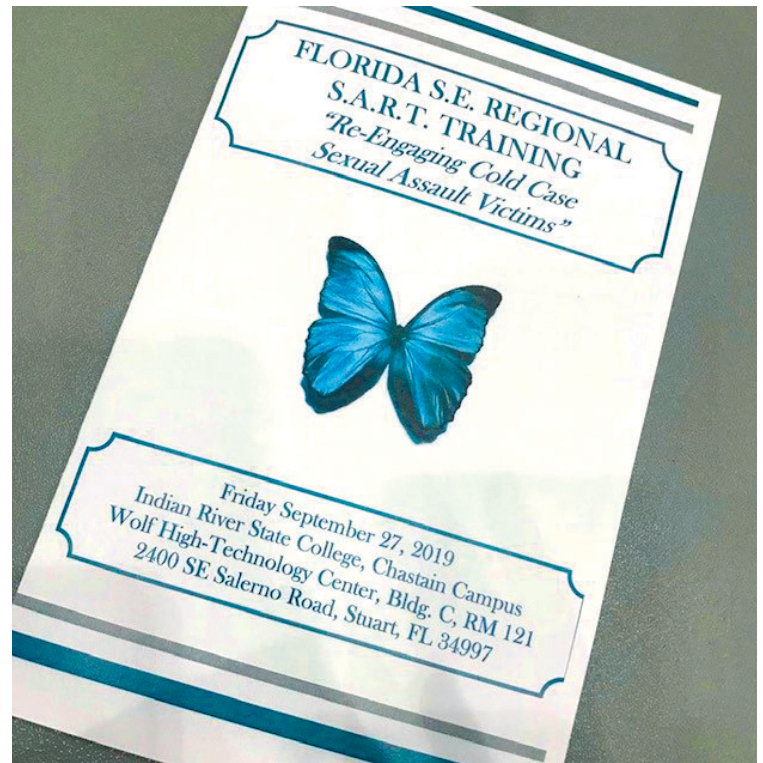
NO MORE Week

March 8–14, 2020, Palm Beach Victim Services participated in No More Week. The goal is to inspire everyone to make a change to help create a culture of safety, equality, and respect in our communities.



Southeast Regional SART 2019

On September 27, 2019, the Annual Florida Southeast Regional SART Training was hosted by the 19th Judicial Circuit (Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, and Okeechobee Counties) where the theme was "Reengaging Cold Case Sexual Assault Victims." The day started off with opening remarks from Barbara Faulkner, Director of Victim Services & Sexual Assault Assistance Program for the 19th Judicial Circuit. The keynote speakers were former FDLE agent and current Brevard County sheriff Wayne Ivey and the sexual assault survivor whose case he responded to. This brave survivor described her assault by a stranger in the early 90s and her experience with the criminal justice system ever since. Her story painted a real picture of the types of traumatic disruptions cold case sexual assault victims can go through and stressed the importance of a sensitive victim-centered approach.



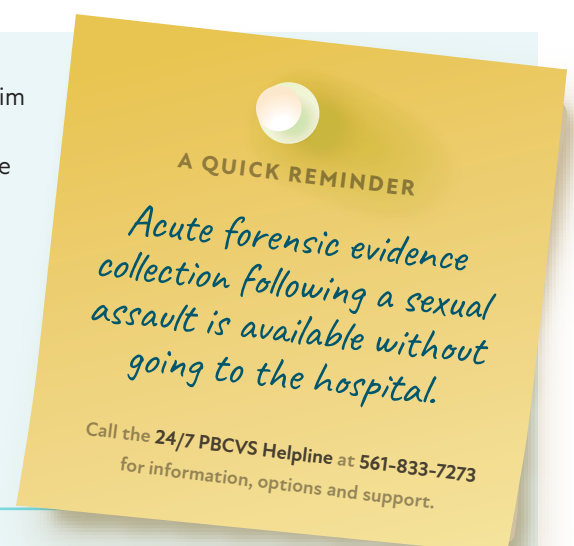
9:15 AM	St. Lucie County Cold Case Success Story <i>Sheriff Wayne Ivey, Brevard County Sheriff's Office</i>
9:45 AM	Survivor Testimony
10:00AM	Q&A Discussion for Sheriff Ivey and Survivor
10:30-10:45 AM	Break

If you were recently sexually assaulted, Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center can provide support to you. If you do not need to go to the hospital and are seeking a rape kit for forensic evidence collection, please give us a call. To avoid possible COVID-19 exposure, we want victims to avoid unnecessary trips to the hospital.

Sexual Assault services provided by PBCVS are free and in a confidential and private setting. To reach an advocate at any time, call the PBCVS Helpline at (561) 833-7273 for information, options, and support.

The ER should be used if you have injuries that would require immediate medical care and attention.

24/7 PBCVS HELPLINE (561) 833-7273



Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April 2020 - I Ask

While we are all practicing social distancing, our Sexual Assault Outreach Coordinator, Holly-Lynn Carotenuto, has come up with a way to stay involved in Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) 2020. Participate in SAAM 2020 online using this social media calendar!

APRIL 1

Start By Believing Day

#StartByBelieving
#SBBPBC

- Share your SBB story
- Share a picture with you and a SBB placard

APRIL 2

Book Club Kick-Off

#ReadtoGrowWithPBCVS

- Share book club selection with a brief introduction
- Ask participants to share picture of book/them reading via social media

APRIL 7

Day of Action

#SAAMPBC

- Staff to build teal ribbon with flags in field
- Wear teal

APRIL 9 & 16

Book Club Check-In

#ReadtoGrowWithPBCVS

- Post reminder on social media

APRIL 14

Teal Ribbon Day

#TealRibbonPBC

- Ask participants to share teal ribbons on social media/wear on clothing

APRIL 20-24

What Were You Wearing Week

#WWYWPBC

- Post picture of outfits with stories, few each day

APRIL 29

Denim Day

#DenimDayPBC

- Ask SART/CAN members to post pictures in denim

APRIL 30

Book Club Wrap-Up

#ReadtoGrowWithPBCVS

- Post a few questions for people to think about at home



PLEASE NOTE All Victim Services meetings and trainings are virtual (online) until further notice.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Start By Believing Day	2 Book Club Kick Off	3	4
5	6	7 Day of Action	8	9 Book Club Check-In	10	11
12	13	14 Teal Ribbon Day	15	16 Book Club Check-In	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Book Club Check-In	24	25
	What Were You Wearing Week					
26	27	28	29 Denim Day	30 Book Club Wrap-Up		

Victim Services SART Center

4210 North Australian Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33407
(561) 625-2568

24/7 Rape Crisis Violent Crime Hotline

HOTLINE (561) 833-7273
TOLL FREE (866) 891-7273
TTY (561) 355-1772



<https://www.facebook.com/PBCVictimServices>



<https://twitter.com/pbcdvs>

Check out our YouTube videos:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmrtj0Ju42lue8U9FvgAeOQ>

Visit us at www.pbcsart.org



VISION & MISSION

VISION

Justice for all Crime Victims

MISSION

With compassion and respect, we assist victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, homicide, and other violent crimes through crisis response, advocacy, therapy, and community awareness.

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Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners
Department of Public Safety
Division of Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center
Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)



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