



EMPOWERMENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF FEAR 2 FREEDOM

JULY 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

A big “hello” to everyone in the hot steamy month of July!

At the end of June we said a warm goodbye to Tricia Russell. We are so grateful for Tricia’s vibrant spirit and passionate commitment to our mission. As Executive Director she did so much for F2F! We are glad she’s not going far - we quickly said “hello” again as she rejoined our Board of Directors. After a month-long orientation with Tricia and the F2F team, I am excited to be the new CEO of Fear 2 Freedom.



The issue of sexual assault is close to my heart. Years ago Rosemary Tribble invested hope in my life, now I am grateful for the opportunity to share her vision of hope with other survivors. Rosemary gave me these special stones over 20 years ago. On my first day I put them in my F2F office as a reminder that restored joy is possible.

With your continued support, I look forward to all we can do together to educate, support and empower students, survivors and communities to Be The Change.

Virginia Wadward

SHARING GRATITUDE

Friends have asked, “What has impressed you so far about Fear 2 Freedom?”

The difference our educational programs and F2F AfterCare Kits make in so many lives inspires me to no end! But in the day-to-day running of things I’ve been blown away by the dedication of F2F’s volunteers. From busy Board Members who readily offer up their expertise, to high school and college students popping in to help with warehouse needs, to hundreds of community members packing our AfterCare Kits, to dedicated women who help us every week in the office wherever needed – F2F volunteers are committed and passionate about our cause.

A huge “thank you” to all our F2F volunteers! A special shout out to everyone who tirelessly helped us with our annual warehouse inventory at the end of June.



MILITARY SV SURVIVORS

Recognizing the issue

If you close your eyes and imagine someone who has experienced sexual violence, who comes to mind? Did you think of military member? Most likely not. Although our images of survivors and military members may seem incompatible, sexual violence is an unfortunately common issue in the armed forces. In 2018 the Department of Defense (DoD) received 6,053 reports from military members of sexual assaults that occurred during their service. This number is just a small part of the picture as only about 38% of female military survivors and 17% of male military survivors come forward to report their experiences. The true prevalence is estimated to be 20,500 service members.

Understanding the unique factors

Why are there so few reports compared to incidents? Military structures and cultures can present barriers to survivors that complicate reporting decisions.

COHESION

- Most of these incidents involve military perpetrators who are likely to be coworkers with, a higher rank than, or in the same chain of command as the survivor.
- Military culture strongly emphasizes group cohesion. This can be a deterrent to coming forward with a report as the survivor may be blamed for breaking this.

CONSEQUENCES

- Survivors can face negative career consequences after speaking up (job transfers, changes in assignments, loss of opportunities, etc).
- If a survivor reports another service member, they may experience retaliation (blame, ostracization, etc)

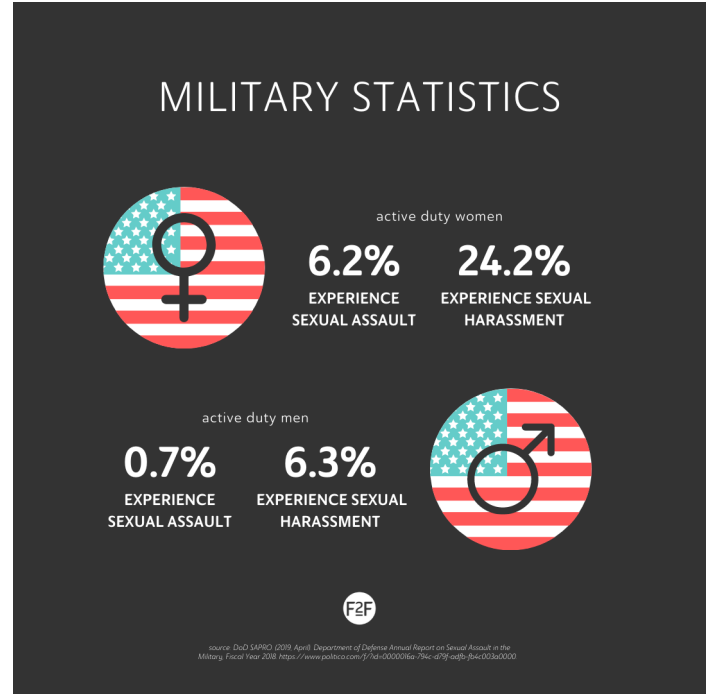
ENVIRONMENT

- Most of these assaults occurred at military installations during duty hours.
- Due to the nature of their service, military members are unable to simply leave their duty positions to avoid their perpetrator or escape unhealthy work environments.
- Survivors may be assigned to living arrangements that keep them in close proximity to their perpetrators.

Recognizing the challenges that make military survivors' experiences unique can help us provide more informed and compassionate support to these survivors.

Taking supportive action

How can we support military survivors of sexual violence? Set aside assumptions we may have about who survivors and perpetrators of sexual violence are/are not. Listen without judgement and allow them to share as much or as little as they'd like. Remember, there are real and complex barriers they may be facing that influence what they choose to disclose. Share resources that are knowledgeable in aiding military survivors such as the DoD SAFE Helpline. Military survivors and other DoD community members affected by sexual violence can call their 24/7, confidential helpline for support at 877-995-5247.



COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

United States Air Force

Captain Latetia Bland reached out to F2F in Fall of 2020 while stationed in the Middle East. As a Victim Advocate in the United States, Cpt. Bland experienced first hand the impact Fear 2 Freedom AfterCare Kits made on victims in her care. F2F was honored to send AfterCare Kits to Capt. Bland while she was on deployment to share our message of care and hope with her troops. Capt. Bland shared her testimony with us and we are excited to share it with you.



"I cannot say enough about the Fear 2 Freedom AfterCare bags that I am able to provide to clients. From the comfy sweats and disposable toiletries to the inconspicuous reusable bag and softest bear on earth, the bags provide much needed comfort to that survivor, bringing them a sense of normalcy after of the hardest nights of their lives. Sometimes clients are unsure if they want the bag until I start describing what is in it and they light up. I have seen clients hold on to the bear tight for comfort, no matter what age they may be. I truly believe these kits open the door to a trusting relationship with those care providers that are meant to convert victims to survivors because survivors see the love and care put into the contents of the bag."

- Captain Latetia Bland, Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Coordinator, LAFB

Abby
Hannah
Sarah
Leah
Lexi



INTERN SPOTLIGHT

There is no way F2F can fulfill our mission each semester without the compassionate, dedicated interns that voluntarily join our team. THANK YOU to our Summer 2021 interns! Each of you made a tremendous impact in such a small amount of time to help us continue our mission of empowering students & supporting survivors. With the help of each of you, we are able to Be The Change!



RED ZONE

Did you know there is a period early in a student's first year of college when they may be at higher risk for unwanted sexual experiences? This "Red Zone" period typically occurs during the start of the fall semester through Thanksgiving break, when a majority of sexual assault occurs on college campuses. F2F will be kicking off our Red Zone campaign next month. Please join us in working to end the Red Zone by following us on social media, sharing our campaign posts, and helping us spread awareness.

10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Winery Event

FRIDAY | OCTOBER 22ND, 2021 | 5:30PM

We are looking forward to a fabulous evening at the Williamsburg Winery this autumn. Come celebrate our Ten Year Anniversary with a guided wine tasting from a seasoned winemaker, delectable food pairings, music from a jazz ensemble and much more!



Unable to join us in-person?

Do not despair. This is a hybrid event so you'll be able tune in virtually to celebrate with us from anywhere.

CONNECT WITH US LIVE!

Facebook Live

FRIDAY | JULY 30TH, 2021 | 3:00PM

Kelly Martin McGowen will join us to discuss her past role as the Vice Wing Commander at MacDill AFB overseeing their Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program as well as what the military is doing on issue.

Instagram Live

WEDNESDAY | JULY 28TH, 2021 | 2:00PM

The moments after someone discloses experiencing sexual violence to you is one of the last you want to be unprepared for. Tune into our next Instagram live to learn how to respond appropriately to these disclosures.

