



EMPOWERMENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF FEAR 2 FREEDOM

AUGUST 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

August is a time of excitement on college campuses, especially for first year students as they begin their collegiate adventures. They look forward to a host of new things as they engage in different facets of student life and (parents hope) find time to study. But this time of year is also the start of the Red Zone - a heightened time of sexual violence that stretches from now thru November, when over 50% of sexual assaults on campus occur.



F2F is working hard to educate & empower students to combat sexual violence. But everyone is needed to step up & raise awareness - parents, teachers, friends, families, colleagues. We can all join together to Be The Change, to turn the tide of the Red Zone into a sexual-violence free zone!

Learn what you can do by checking out our website, Fear2Freedom.org, where you will find resources, blogs & more.

MISSION MOMENT: FREEDOM BEARS

In the spring F2F received a shipment of 5,000 Freedom Bears for our F2F Kits. What makes Freedom Bear extra special (& a trademarked therapy tool) is the magic paper in its backpack. Survivors can write their fears, worries & pain on these slips of paper to tuck away in Freedom Bear's heart. When they're ready to let go of their fears - months or years later - they can watch these slips of paper dissolve in a glass of water, a tangible release.

F2F can't do what we do without our volunteers! Each of our 5,000 new Freedom Bears required assembly. Magic paper needed to be cut into 50,000 precise slips to tuck (10 each) into Freedom Bear's backpack, then put on each Bear. Over 50 volunteers worked tirelessly the whole month of June to cut, tuck & assemble before our Annual Inventory Day on 29 June. On June 28th a group of committed High School volunteers got us to our goal - just in time! Seeing groups of volunteers fill our offices & warehouse all month & then turn out for our Annual Inventory day, truly was a kaleidoscope of mission moments!

Virginia Woodward



"Freedom Bear helps those wounded identify and process the 'terrible thing they are trying to forget' and begin the healing process." - Rosemary Triple



PREP YOURSELF FOR THE RED ZONE

We're Entering The Red Zone

You have probably heard of Title IX, the federal law that prevents sex-based discrimination in schools receiving federal funding. You may have even heard of the Clery Act, which requires colleges and universities to provide sexual violence awareness and prevention programs. But have you heard of the Red Zone (RZ)?

The RZ lasts from August until November & is the period wherein 50% of sexual assaults on college campuses occur. This aligns with the start of the fall semester, when many students celebrate the return to campus with parties.

Students who are especially vulnerable during the RZ are freshman & new transfers, who are more likely to be unfamiliar with the campus. Since they have just arrived, they may also not know about resources they can seek out for help.

Do this BEFORE Going to College

The first step to addressing the Red Zone is to raise awareness about it. If students are informed about the increased risk in their first few months at school, they can better protect themselves and their peers. To learn more, check out our past blog post: "What All Students Should Know About Their Campus & Sexual Violence Before Starting College". This blog contains important questions students need to be able to answer before heading off to college, such as:



- If someone comes forward to report sexual violence, are there amnesty protections or will they also be punished by "zero tolerance" policies for infractions?
- Are there confidential campus resources that students can turn to for support?
- What crisis services are available (on & off campus)?
- Is there a local medical facility that offers the Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE)?

After finding answers to all the questions posed in the blog, download & fill in the [Campus Resource Cheat Sheet](#) so you have all the critical reporting & support contact information in one convenient place, just in case.

Practice this DURING College

While it can be scary to learn about, the Red Zone should not cause you to lock yourself in your room and never leave. You are at college primarily to learn, but also to gain experiences and make connections. With some extra effort, you can have a great time at school and stay safe too! The best way to protect yourself and your friends is to make little tweaks, not entirely close yourself off. Read our latest blog: "Addressing The Red Zone: Changing College Cultures", to get practical safety tips for students as well as prompts for parents/caregivers to start open conversations about safety. Safety topics addressed include:



- Socializing & dating
- Partying & drinking
- Studying abroad
- Going out alone or at night

Although it is completely unfair that anyone feels like the burden of staying safe is on themselves (the only people responsible for SV are the perpetrators), the unfortunate reality is that we will come across people who try taking advantage of opportunities to cause harm.

Despite this, we should still feel free to live our lives however we choose, without any blame for others harmful actions being turned towards us. While we're doing this, we can implement small safety changes that don't hinder us, yet add up to a huge result. Get all the tips you can use to live your best campus life, safely, by checking out the blogs below.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Educational Events

Over the spring semester F2F brought education and awareness about sexual violence to communities across the country through our innovative programming.

The Catholic University of America's campus came together to learn how to better support survivors & then put that knowledge into action by packing 50 F2F Kits that went to their local forensic nurses in DC.

Students from across Tidewater Community College's campuses diligently packed 100 AfterCare Kits for Chesapeake Forensic Specialists, while also learning about the realities of intimate partner violence.

It was inspiring to see the CalvertHealth Medical Center team's commitment to providing more compassionate services. During their H2E they broadened their understanding of trauma-informed support & packed AfterCare Kits for their forensic team to share with patients.

We're honored that Randolph College included us in the inauguration day events for their new president. To underscore their commitment to service, attendees packed 150 AfterCare Kits for survivors in their local community & on campus.

During their "ASPIRE" week events, the University of Mary Washington incorporated an H2E to help their students learn how to become better support people for survivors & pack 115 F2F Kits for agencies in their community to share with survivors in need.

The AmeriCorps program at Hiram College put their commitment to service into action by hosting an H2E event. First their members learned about how consent is an essential part of all relationships. They then packed 50 iCare Kits for survivors both on & off campus.

Seeing students taking initiative & engaging with this issue brings us so much hope! The Feminist Alliance at Fordham University are a great example of this. Their H2E event equipped their members with the knowledge to offer compassionate support to survivors & gave back to their community by packing 49 F2F Kits for local agencies.



SPRING 2023



VA IAFN CONFERENCE

The Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Forensic Nurses held their annual conference this past spring & F2F was humbled to take part in this year's event. F2F kicked off the day's programming by speaking on the ways in which we can all provide better care to survivors (who are not just patients, but also our teammates, partners, & even ourselves) by integrating trauma-informed & survivor-centered practices into our policies & practices.

Engaging with so many Forensic Nurses from across VA was truly inspiring. They are some of the true heroes on the front lines of these issues & whom so much of our work here at F2F is done to support. Thank you!



COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Summer 2023 Kit Partners

Fear 2 Freedom would love to highlight some of our amazing partners that received kits this summer. CHKD is one of the largest hospital centers in the Tidewater region, and its focus is just for kids! We were able to provide 25 AfterCare Kits to the CHKD Child Advocacy Center in Newport News. These kits were financially covered by the Southeast Virginia Community Foundation Grant. We are so grateful for the opportunity to work with organizations to bring awareness and support to survivors in our community.

F2F is also excited to announce our partnership with Freekind. Freekind is an organization working to prevent human trafficking in our community. They bring awareness to the different forms of human trafficking and give exploited people the tools they need to move forward in their lives. Freekind received 25 of our AfterCare Kits to use for survivors of human trafficking.

We are also glad to continue our relationship with the Riverside Health System. This summer, we were able to provide 17 iCare Kits for Riverside Hand in Hand. This is Riverside's violence intervention program and is a program intended to promote patient advocacy in the hospital. F2F's iCare Kits are wonderful tools for survivors of all types of trauma. The F2F Kits for Freekind and Hand in Hand were generously paid for by the Newport News Shipbuilding, bringing advocacy to the Hampton Roads area.

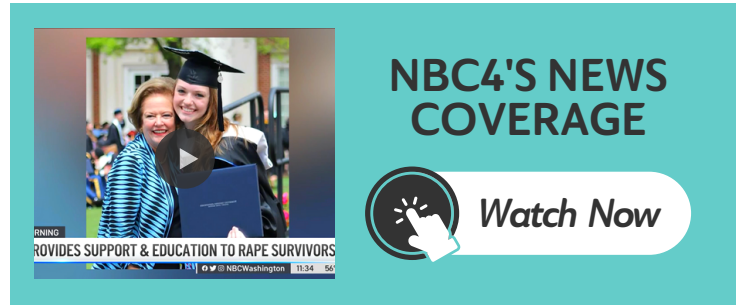


DONOR SHOUTOUT

NOVA Champions Luncheon

F2F's first NOVA Champions Luncheon was an incredible time of inspiration and compassionate impact! Over 200 guests gathered at the Westwood Country Club in Vienna, VA, during SAAM (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) to shine a light on the issue of sexual violence. We are grateful to Virginia's First Lady, Suzanne Youngkin, for her compassionate remarks followed by Grace Nelson and Rosemary Triple. When Lauren Bechtel Populus shared her survivor story, the spontaneous standing ovation given by all present is a testament of her courage and resilience.

We are happy to report that with NBC4 Susan Hogan's enthusiastic help during our Paddle Raise, along with the incredible generosity of event sponsors & hosts, we raised over \$100,000 for F2F's mission! Of equal importance, guests left the event transformed with a deeper understanding of SV issues & packed over 100 F2F Kits for survivors. A big thank you to Kristen Shiveley & our Champions planning committee for an amazing event!



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Ferguson Enterprises

Dedicated Ferguson Enterprises employees in their sleek Newport News headquarters turned out to Be The Change with F2F in the spring. After hearing a powerful message from F2F Board member (& former Ferguson VP) Denise Brown, 30 participants packed 200 F2F AfterCare Kits. A shout out of thanks for the \$10K grant from Ferguson Cares that sponsored these Kits sent to the Forensic Unit at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis, MD. The Forensic Nurse supervisor was overjoyed to receive these Kits that will support SV survivors!

Newport News Shipyard

F2F's CEO presented Admiral Wettlaufer & Military Sealift Command Victim Advocates with 200 F2F Freedom Stones sponsored by a grant from Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS) during an event on the Norfolk Naval Base. MSC Victim Advocates said survivors present requested Freedom Stones!

Coastal Fermentory

In May Coastal Fermentory's Drink Beer & Do Good night for F2F raised \$580! We're so grateful for Coastal's corporate mindset to "do good" for survivors of sexual violence. Thank you Seth, Sarah, & the entire Coastal team!

GiveLocal 757

F2F is grateful for the local donors who supported us during GiveLocal757. We surpassed our \$1,000 goal with \$1,625 in contributions. But, there's more! A generous donor matched each gift doubling our total to \$3,250!!! Thank you Kelly - & our local 757 donors - for helping us Be The Change & Restore the Joy for survivors.

Prosper Insurance

In June Prosper Insurance in Va. Beach hosted an all-day Marketplace event that raised \$587 from "dunk tank tickets" for F2F programs. A big thank you to Prosper leadership for Being The Change (& enduring all those dunkings to support our cause!)

Northwest Federal Credit Union

F2F gives a big shoutout of thanks to Northwest Federal Credit Union in Herndon, Virginia! Last month over 20 NWFCU employees packed 60 F2F Kits & wrote personal notes of comfort for SV survivors served by LAWS Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Services in Loudoun County. Thank you, NWFCU, for sponsoring these Kits & for the generous corporate contribution in June!



VOLUNTEER SHOUT OUT

Fear 2 Freedom is always grateful for every volunteer that assists us in our mission! This summer was a busy time for our volunteers. Because of a large shipment of Freedom Bears, we needed a cavalry of volunteers.

We would love to give Volunteer Hampton Roads and the Youth Volunteer Corps of Hampton Roads (YVCHR) a huge shoutout for their help in processing over 5,000 new Freedom Bears. They assisted with the cutting of Freedom Bear's "magic paper", the assembly of Freedom Bear's backpacks, and counting thousands of Freedom Bears. Thank you for your help as every one of Fear 2 Freedom's Kits includes a Freedom Bear for a survivor.

Serve the City Peninsula also was a great help on our Annual Inventory Day as they helped count (and double count) thousands of our Kit Materials. In addition, Serve the City Peninsula volunteers also helped write over 350 personal notes to survivors. These notes will be included in F2F's Kits and will be read by a survivor. These notes include encouragement, support, and love for adults and children. If you are interested in writing a note to survivors of sexual violence, check out Fear 2 Freedom's website for your message to be shared.





MEET OUR NEW TEAM MEMBER

F2F welcomes Kaitlyn Abbott as our Development Manager!

She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Christopher Newport University, and is currently undergoing an M.A. in Strategic Communications with a focus on Social Advocacy from American University. An Army veteran, she has worked with policy changes that positively impacted women service members and SV survivors.

Kaitlyn brings a passion for our mission & depth of experience to our F2F team!



THANK YOU SUMMER INTERNS

We are grateful for our two amazing interns who joined our Development team this summer, Tracy Johnson & Rachel Thornton. Tracy has assisted with our communications & donor database migration efforts while Rachel has researched & identified new grant opportunities for F2F's programs. We have enjoyed working with these trailblazing women & wish them great success in their future endeavors!

Internship opportunities are available for the fall semester starting September 11, 2023. You can find the applications on F2F's website or on your school's Handshake account. The application deadline is September 6, 2023.