

Website Tips

When creating a website, keep in mind the following tips and suggestions:

- Google your organization’s name to make sure it comes up near the top of a listing. If your organization doesn’t come up in a Google search near the top, you may want to look into what’s known as “search engine optimization.” Most website services like Wix or Wordpress will have options for search engine optimization if you contact them directly.

We also recommend doing a Google search of your region, town, or county along with the search term “sexual assault” and/or “rape” to see what comes up. For example: “Warren County Sexual Assault.” If this search brings up something other than your program, this implies that you’ll need to work on your search engine optimization and key search terms. As you can imagine, it may be difficult for a survivor in crisis to find you if your organization doesn’t come up in a basic Google search.

For more information about search engine optimization, visit this beginners guide: <https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>.

- Sometimes organizations rely only on Facebook instead of having a website. There are some barriers that exist if your organization only exists on Facebook. Survivors who need to access resources and/or services have to “like” or follow your organization online before they can engage with you. This is especially problematic if the survivor does not have a safe space to connect online or does not want to publicly interact with your page. It can also be difficult to access all the resources and information one may need to if your organization *only* exists on Facebook. We highly recommend having a working website, even if it’s something simple.
- Don’t forget to have a “quick escape” or “escape” button as part of your website. For survivors who may need to leave your website quickly, this should always exist somewhere prominently on your website. The escape button should redirect to something like Google.com.
- If you choose to use photos on your website, make sure you use a variety of photos that express different identities. This includes people of color, men, LGBTQIA couples and people, older adults, people with disabilities, etc. Also



avoid photos that are triggering or perpetuate common stereotypes about sexual violence and survivors of sexual violence.

- Make sure your contact information is listed prominently on your website. If you have a crisis and support line, make sure to include the time(s) people are available to offer support to survivors.
- Avoid jargon. Buzzwords, acronyms, and jargon can easily confuse those who are not familiar with our work. Most people don't know that when we refer to "SA" or "DV" we are referring to "sexual assault" and "domestic violence." Be clear and concise, and explain acronyms like "SART" and "SANE," or avoid using the acronyms altogether. Ask friends not familiar with our work to review your website to see if there is anything that they don't understand, and then make changes.
- Your program or organization supports survivors of sexual violence. Therefore, we need to talk about sexual violence prominently on the homepage. Don't skirt away from it. Be intentional and clear about the services your organization is able to provide to survivors.
- Ensure all information on the website is up-to-date. We recommend a "website audit" every 6-8 months where staff members review the website to ensure accuracy and relevancy.
- Make sure your website is accessible to all. This includes avoiding putting text over colors or having busy backgrounds that make your information difficult to read. It may be tempting to fill up the white space on a web page with images and graphics, but studies show this makes the information more difficult to absorb.
- Refer to our style guide for more tips and suggestions.

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