



The National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project

ReShape Newsletter

Working together to end sexual violence.

May 2019 – Survivor Voices in the #MeToo Movement



The movement to end sexual violence has always been for and about survivors. As [Tarana Burke reminds us](#), it is easy to get caught up in the high drama of accountability for people who commit sexual violence. But the real power of the #MeToo movement is in helping survivors find each other. In an interview to mark the anniversary of #MeToo becoming a global phenomenon, Ms. Burke said, “What #MeToo allowed people to do was create community with these shared experiences.”

Since October 15, 2017, there has been no shortage of media coverage on sexual assault. There is even a [map](#) to track how the hashtag continues to shape conversations throughout the world. As a result, coalition staff are fielding an increase of media requests about legislators, culture makers, church leaders, and others who have committed sexual violence. To be always ready with an appropriate response to these stories, coalition staff are consuming high levels of traumatic material. Coalitions are also seeing more survivors searching for support.

As a counterbalance to this media and cultural landscape, this edition of ReShape features resources that highlight the beauty of survivor resilience, empowerment, and organizing. Making time to take in the good, to remind ourselves of the power of survivors working together, is an important part of nourishing ourselves in this movement. As [Yuri Kochiyama](#), a peace activist shared, “people in the movement sustain each other. It’s because their spirit is so contagious.”



Survivor Love Letters

Creating art can be a form of activism. When rooted to a specific place, it can remind a community about their values, aspirations, and collective stories. When shared online, it can decrease feelings of isolation and identify broad networks of like-minded support. This crowd-sourced art installation does both.

The Survivor Love Letter project, developed by Tani Ikeda, combines a wall mural, digital prints, and downloadable art for distribution that highlights survivor love letters shared through social media and interviews. All parts of the installation are viewable online.

[Survivor Love Letter social media and mural project](#)

[News article: Valentine’s Day 2018 Letter Writing Campaign](#)

[Mural project write up and pin sale](#)



March for Black Women

On September 29th and 30th of 2018, Black Women’s Blueprint, the Marsha P. Johnson Institute, DC Rape Crisis Center, and National Economic & Social Rights Initiative organized thousands of Black women and their allies to participate in marches calling for the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and an end to violence against Black women and girls, both cisgender and transgender.

Fourteen sexual assault coalitions signed on to support this powerful mobilization. The marches may be over for this year, but their energy and power live on in pictures, videos, and tweets under the banner #marchforblackwomen.

[Twitter photos under the hashtag #March4BlackWomen](#)



“It Takes Bravery to Speak Out” – Utah Survivor Town Halls

There is something powerful about gathering with sexual assault survivors to share stories and ideas about how to move forward. In 2018, UCASA traveled the state to meet survivors and hear their stories in person. As shared by UCASA staff shared in their September 2018 email newsletter, “As we pause to reflect on what we have learned, it is clear that the Me Too movement is a tipping point in the collective

consciousness of our society because it has exposed the pervasiveness of sexual harassment and assault and has let survivors know that they are not alone. As we have seen from the high attendance in our Me Too town halls – survivors want to be heard and are ready to take action.”

[Hear survivors in their own voices](#)

Please note: Video does not have captions. The video does include live ASL signing.

Organizing to End Sexual Violence at HBCUs

In this episode of the “Making Contact” podcast, students and alumni from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) talk about how they are shifting culture on campus. Kyla Wright, a sexual assault survivor currently attending an HBCU, talks about her experience learning to navigate the reporting process and starting a peer advocacy project. A transcript of the conversation is available at the bottom of the webpage.

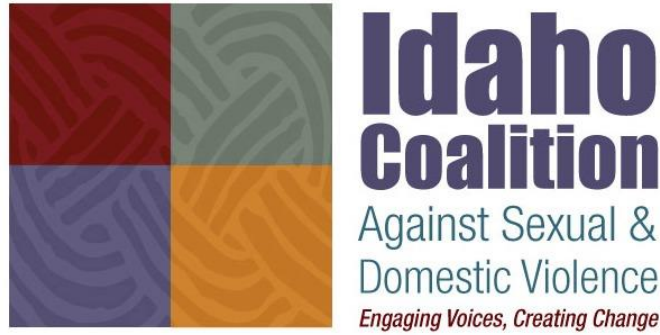
[Listen to the podcast episode](#)

#SurvivorsVote project

Electoral organizing is one strategy to create social change. As the leaders of the #SurvivorsVote campaign note, “While the national conversations are deeply personal and traumatic for survivors of multiple forms of oppression and violence, we are coming together to tell our stories. Stories of triumph and stories of resilience matter. It’s time to make our voices heard.” The links below show why some sexual assault survivors and allies vote and how to participate in the project as well. As 501(c)3 organizations, we cannot take positions on any specific candidates or influence legislation. However, we can demonstrate that sexual assault survivors are part of every constituency across the country.

[Read more about #SurvivorsVote](#)

[See why #SurvivorsVote](#)



Moving Beyond Consent Education

Though this isn't a story from a sexual assault survivor, this reflection from Jeff Matsushita of the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence speaks to the power of #MeToo and survivors' stories. In this article, Jeff reflects on his experiences as a prevention educator and male-identified person. He shares his thoughts on the importance of moving beyond consent education to create spaces where men and young people can "determine what their own values around sex and relationships are."

[Read Jeff's story](#)



Before #MeToo

Our movement has always been about survivor healing, resilience, and organizing. The #MeToo movement represents a recent opening in public awareness and discussion but women, particularly women of color, have been organizing their communities for many, many years. The California Coalition Against Sexual Assault has preserved some of their stories in this two-part video (includes closed captions). Total run time is approximately 18 minutes.

[Watch part one](#)

[Watch part two](#)

What are your stories of survivor healing, resilience, and organizing? How are you celebrating survivors' strength? We would love to hear from you.

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