

We hear you. There are resources.

Dear friends in Wakefield: As stories of sexual assault dominate the news cycle, and our social media feeds overflow with friends' personal struggles, the world is again reminded that violence and sexual assault is still a reality in our world and right here in Wakefield. Nationwide, studies show that one in four women has survived a sexual assault, with many

more unreported, and that every 98 seconds, another person experiences sexual assault.

We see it all the time in our professional lives, and while the statistics and stories paint a dismal picture, there are local resources that offer support and hope.

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The Wakefield Alliance Against Violence (WAAV) is a community-based volunteer organization dedicated to creating a lifestyle free of violence through prevention awareness, education and support for survivors. It is doing amazing work helping our community engage in constructive civil dialogue and we encourage you to review its comprehensive list of helpful resources at waavonline.org.

Wakefield is also served by the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC) with its mission to end sexual violence through healing and social change. BARCC provides free, confidential support and services to survivors of sexual violence ages 12 and up and their families and friends, assisting thousands each year, regardless of sex, gender identity, race, physical/developmental disabilities, income, ethnicity, class, religion, or sexual orientation and in multiple languages. Their 24-7 hotline can be reached at 800-841-8371.

Resources exist. You are not alone. If you or someone you love is suffering, please reach out to these organizations. If you want to help those in need, consider supporting the critical work of WAAV and BARCC so that they can continue to serve us all.

WAAV is holding its annual the Race to End Domestic Violence 5K on Saturday, October 6 at 9 a.m. with all proceeds supporting community awareness and assisting survivors of violence. We hope you'll join us.

Sincerely,

June Peterson, President, WAAV
Councilor Mehreen N. Butt, Associate Member, WAAV
Councilor Julie Smith-Galvin, Associate Member, WAAV
Officer Amy Rando, Family Services Officer, WPD and
Past President, WAAV