



Public Policy Positions

The Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, KASAP, is the coalition of Kentucky's 13 regional programs that provide support, education, and counseling to individuals (plus their families and friends) who have been sexually harassed, abused, or assaulted. KASAP's mission is to speak with a unified voice against sexual victimization.

Oppression in all of its forms is the root cause of sexual harm. Our initiatives are committed to addressing the causes and consequences of inequality, discrimination, social exclusion, oppression, and violence. Our aim is to build a society that is founded on the principles of justice, equality, human rights, human dignity, social inclusion, and nonviolence.

Because sexual violence impacts individuals and communities on every level, public policy advocacy is a critical part of KASAP's work. Our Public Policy Positions reflect a wide range of issues. We welcome your input and support on related initiatives. Contact us at (502) 226-2704 or Eileen Recktenwald, executive director, at erecktenwald@kasap.org and Laela Kashan, staff attorney, at lkashan@kasap.org.

State and federal level funding for prevention and response services are paramount to combat sexual harm.

Kentucky must fund the regional sexual assault crisis centers. The centers conduct community prevention and awareness activities, offer therapy and advocacy services for survivors, and provide a confidential 24/7 crisis line for those seeking resources and support.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) are critical laws that ensure basic victims' rights are protected and victims' services are available throughout the US. These laws give law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges tools needed to hold offenders accountable and keep communities safe while supporting victims. They must be reauthorized to ensure continuation of lifesaving programs and laws.

Promote Prevention Strategies to End Sexual Harm

Sexual harm is a public health concern and must be addressed with prevention efforts. We support various prevention efforts including but not limited to, those that address sexual harm at all levels of the social-ecological model, promote bystander intervention programs, address the intersections of oppression, and education for youth about consent, boundaries, and healthy relationships.

Address Survivor Needs

Individuals who have been sexual harassed, assaulted, or abused have a multitude of needs following the harm. KASAP supports efforts to address these needs including, but not limited to, employment protections, accessibility to core services, privacy, and survivor choice in how to seek healing and justice.

Improve System Responses (Criminal, Civil, Campus, Prisons, etc.)

If a survivor either chooses or is forced to engage with a system as part of the response, we support systems that are inclusive, choice-driven, and trauma-informed. These systems must be set up in a way where they are prepared to work with survivors and to hold offenders accountable.

Promote Public Safety

KASAP supports evidence-based sex offender policies. It is important that we rely on research and are not driven by emotion when creating requirements for people who are convicted of sex offenses.

Require Professional Education

KASAP understands that many citizens, even professionals, who may interact with survivors, do not have the skills and knowledge necessary to respond. We support education and training requirements so that professionals are equipped and ready when they encounter a survivor. This includes, but is not limited to, training on sexual harassment, assault, and abuse, legal requirements, and trauma-informed care.

Protect Non-Profit Needs

KASAP and its member programs all hold a non-profit status. It is important that our services are accessible and neutral for all community members. We support policies, including but not limited to, those that promote and support tax policy that empowers community solutions through nonprofits, promote and support executive action or legislation that furthers the sector's efforts to streamline nonprofit contracts with government, and promote, support and protect the advocacy rights of nonprofit organizations.