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Rape Crisis Center: Launches new PSA in partnership with Madison Police Department: We Believe You

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CONTACT: Beth Shippert-Myers
Rape Crisis Center
Director of Marketing and Development
608-251-5126
Beth@theRCC.org

(MADISON,WI) Recent reports of high-profile cases of sexual assault, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment have drawn national attention to a very important issue. Many survivors of sex crimes have only reluctantly come forward after many years of silence. Madison Police Department (MPD) and the Rape Crisis Center (RCC) want to make it easier for people to get support. To that end they have launched a new PSA entitled We Believe You to encourage survivors to use RCC's free services for counseling, support, and healing. As Special Victims Unit Detective Julie Johnson says "MPD and RCC are launching a Public Service Announcement that encourages survivors of sexual assault, harassment and abuse to reach out for support—no matter when that assault occurred, and whether they want to report to police or not."

MPD and RCC have a long history of working closely to meet the needs of survivors of sexual assault. The message they hope to send to survivors is that it is never too late to get help, and never too late to tell your story. If survivors are unsure of whether they want to involve the police, they want to be clear that survivors can always call the RCC (the RCC never requires adult victims to report to law enforcement). "Our only role is to support survivors of sexual assault—to ensure all survivors understand their full range of options to make informed decisions

about their physical and mental health as well as engagement with law enforcement," says RCC Executive Director Erin Thornley-Parisi.

The motivation for developing the PSA came from cases where there could be additional survivors who have chosen to not come forward as yet; coupled with the number of victims who may feel that once weeks, months or years have past since their assault, no one is interested in helping them. Thornley-Parisi says "The RCC is always interested in and always believes victims of sexual assault."

In partnership between MPD, RCC, The American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation, and the john urban production company, the public service announcement has been released and is currently circulating on social media and youtube.

We Believe You PSA Link: www.tinyurl.com/RCCBelieves

More about the statute of limitations regarding Sex crimes: https://www.wcasa.org/file_open.php?id=176

RCC's 24-hour, 7-days-a-week Helpline: 608-251-7273