



One of "America's 100 Best Charities"
—Worth magazine

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The National Sexual Assault Hotline Helps One-Millionth Person

Milestone Reflects Significant Progress in the Fight against Sexual Assault

July 18, 2006 – (Washington, DC) – RAINN, the nation's largest anti-sexual assault organization, today announced that the National Sexual Assault Hotline has helped its one-millionth caller. This milestone represents an important shift in the national perception of sexual violence and treatment of victims.

"The world was a different place when RAINN created the National Sexual Assault Hotline 12 years ago," said Scott Berkowitz, president and founder of RAINN. "Sexual violence was not part of the public discussion, and many victims were not getting the help they needed."

In response, RAINN created, and continues to run, the National Sexual Assault Hotline, the country's only national hotline for sexual assault victims. The hotline, which provides free, confidential live help, 24/7, is a partnership with 1,102 local rape crisis centers in 50 states and DC. Tens of thousands of volunteers and staff from these local partners help callers every hour of every day, playing a direct and positive role in the recovery process.

Calls to the National Sexual Assault Hotline have quadrupled to more than 11,000 a month, from 2,800 a month in its first year (1994). In 2005, the hotline helped a record 137,039 people.

Fortunately, the increase in calls does not reflect an increase in sexual violence. In fact, sexual assault has decreased by 58 percent since the hotline started, according to the latest data from the U.S. Department of Justice. Meanwhile, the percentage of victims who report their attack to police, a necessary first step towards getting repeat rapists off our streets, has increased by about one third.

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RAINN attributes this progress in the fight against sexual violence to several factors. First, the stigma surrounding rape and sexual assault has steadily decreased. "Thanks to public education programs and media attention," observed Berkowitz, "Americans increasingly understand that rape is a violent crime. In fact, the FBI ranks it as the second-most violent crime, trailing only murder." Education has also provided young women with a better understanding of their risk of being sexual assaulted, leading many to take steps to reduce that risk.

Second, "tough-on-crime policies adopted by Congress and the states in the last decade have put more criminals behind bars for longer periods, leaving fewer criminals free to commit additional attacks," Berkowitz continued. In addition, DNA technology is helping police solve more cases.

Despite this progress, much work remains to be done. Every 2.5 minutes, another American is sexually assaulted. To honor the first one million callers to the National Sexual Assault Hotline and continue raising awareness, RAINN is launching a special version of its website, which premieres today. Those interested in learning more and spreading the word about sexual assault among their friends should visit rainn.org.

RAINN will also participate in today's NASDAQ Closing Bell ceremony, dedicated specifically to this important milestone in the fight against sexual assault.

About RAINN

RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) is the nation's largest anti-sexual assault organization and was named one of "America's 100 Best Charities" by *Worth* magazine. RAINN created and operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE) in partnership with 1,102 local rape crisis centers across the country. The hotline has helped more than one million people since its start in 1994. RAINN will soon launch the National Sexual Assault *Online* Hotline, the web's first secure hotline offering live help. RAINN also carries out programs to prevent sexual assault, help victims and ensure that rapists are brought to justice. For more information about RAINN, please visit rainn.org.

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