



VICTIM ADVOCACY ACTION KIT

ADVOCATES START BY BELIEVING

Based on their supportive role, advocates are already taught to Start by Believing when someone discloses sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, or child sexual abuse. An advocate’s core value is to be present with victims in the aftermath of their assault or abuse, and to provide emotional support, reassurance, and validation.

Essentially, advocates cannot do their job if they do not Start by Believing.

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My name is Beth. I am a community-based advocate and I see firsthand the suffering endured by survivors when they tell their story and are met by doubt and criticism. I pledge to always Start by Believing when a survivor tells me they were abused or sexually assaulted.

My name is Halley. I am a survivor of sexual assault, and no one believed me. I became a sexual assault advocate to effect change for other victims. Survivors deserve to feel seen, heard, believed, and supported. When someone tells me they were sexually assaulted or abused, I Start by Believing.

My name is Alicia, and I am a Domestic Abuse Advocate. I am pledging to end the silence of victims. We need to believe their stories and support them with empathy and love.



Start by Believing



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ADVOCATES TAKE THE LEAD

We have all the tools advocates need to launch a Start by Believing campaign. Visit the website for Start by Believing resources like a [pledge placard](#), [brochure](#), [proclamation template](#), [social media graphics](#), [posters](#), and more.

Start with your own advocacy agency. Do you work for a nonprofit sexual assault or domestic violence advocacy organization? Or a dual services agency? Get everyone on your team to take the pledge – staff, volunteers, and the Board of Directors. Or are you a system-based advocate? Spread the word to others in your organization, including police officers and prosecutors who can help victims pursue justice.

The Blue Bench
Denver, Colorado



Challenge other service providers to join you by taking the Start by Believing message to your next community roundtable or presentation. Inform them to Start by Believing when their clients disclose an assault or abuse.

Travis County,
Texas SART



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Give a presentation to other community members or organizations. Use the Start by Believing [research-based presentation](#) to build your own PowerPoint slides, and begin your presentation by showing the [Start by Believing video](#), which introduces the philosophy and offers inspiring examples of local initiatives.

Display posters, fliers, banners, and signs where survivors and their loved ones will see them, including in front of your building, in the lobby or waiting area, in counseling and intake rooms, and on your website.

Orange County Rape Crisis Center
Orange County, New York



Set up a pledge station where people can learn about the Start by Believing campaign and make a personal pledge. Target different populations within the community, for an inclusive campaign that benefits all survivors.

East Texas Crisis Center
Tyler, Texas



Make a video to let victims know: “If you come to us with a disclosure of sexual assault, we will Start by Believing.” Need an example? Take a look at this [bilingual video](#) from Family Resources in the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois.



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Share on [social media](#). Broadcast your agency's commitment to Start by Believing survivors. Our [social media toolkit](#) and [graphics](#) are designed to help, and don't forget to use #StartbyBelieving to join the global movement.



YWCA
St. Louis, Missouri

Then take your campaign to the next level! Use our [campaign toolkit](#) for inspiration and creative ideas.

Need more support? Submit a request for [technical assistance](#). Thank you for being a Start by Believing partner!

