

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 30, 2008
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Source: National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)

National Press Conference in New Orleans Announces Book about Sexual Violence in Disasters

(Enola, PA) On Thursday, August 7, 2008 at 2PM the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) and the Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault (LaFASA) will hold a press conference to introduce their new joint publication, *Sexual Violence in Disasters: A Planning Guide for Prevention and Response*. The event will take place at the Cabildo Museum in New Orleans, LA.

Judy Benitez, Executive Director of LaFASA explains, “The impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 focused our attention on a need for better disaster planning that includes responding to sexual victimization and working to decrease, and even prevent it. This book grew from our mutual concern for victims in disaster.”

Karen Baker, NSVRC Director says “We believe that this ‘planning guide’ has real potential to help communities in working together to be more effective when planning for impending disasters. It is important that we don’t forget about sexual assault victims.”

Several prominent individuals in the anti-sexual violence field will speak at the press conference: Levette Kelly, Executive Director of the Mississippi Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Judy Benitez, Executive Director of LaFASA, Susan Lewis, NSVRC Communications Director, Alisa Klein, author of the book, and Deb Travis, SANE Program Manager for Louisiana State University Interim Hospital.

This book offers recommendations to help communities in preparing for all stages and kinds of disasters. It can assist in developing helpful responses for sexual assault victims, creating comprehensive plans, and coordinating far-reaching policy change that would ultimately serve to prevent sexual violence.

The Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault is a membership organization of sexual assault crisis centers across Louisiana. The coalition provides a collective voice to the state of Louisiana of survivor concerns and needs. For more information call 888-995-7273 or visit www.lafasa.org.

The NSVRC provides resources and information on sexual violence. Phone toll free: 877-739-3895 or visit www.nsvrc.org.

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