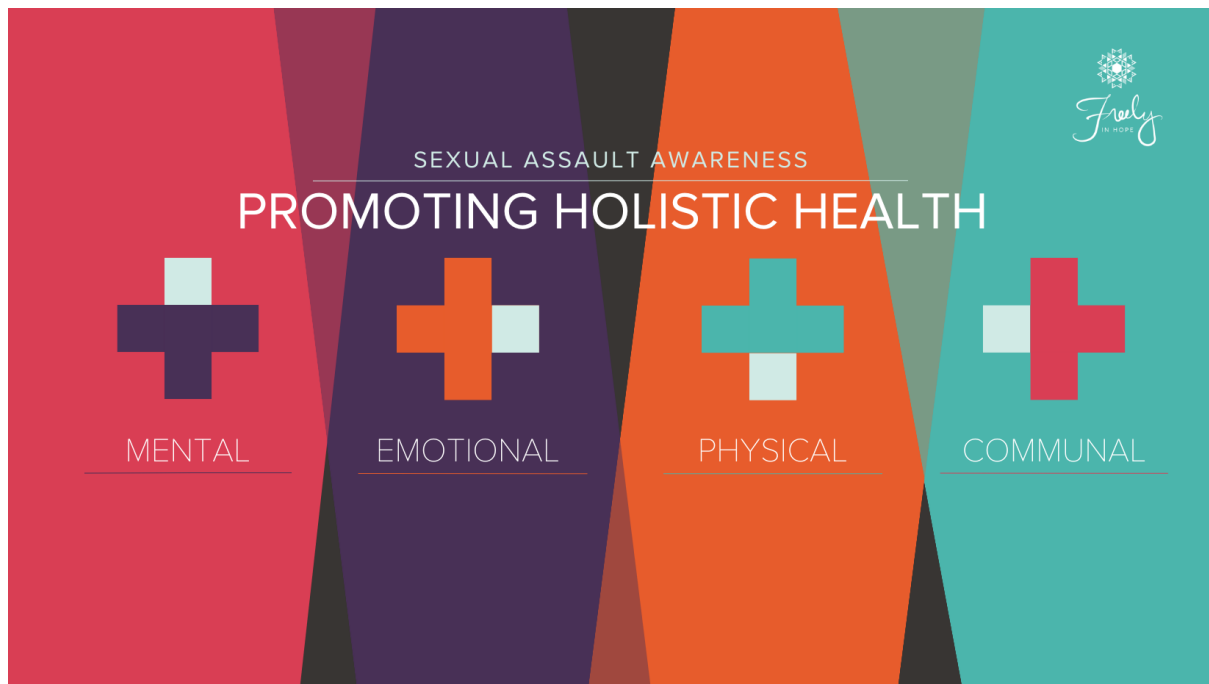




Hello fellow advocate,

Whether you're an organizational leader, pastor, or friend of survivors of sexual violence, we are grateful that you're choosing to share our resources with your community. You can use these email templates during the month of April (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) or October (Domestic Violence Awareness Month), or any time of year to provide support to your community members.

Below, you'll see 5 emails that can be sent out weekly:

1. Introduction to Holistic Health
2. Mental Health
3. Emotional Health
4. Physical Health
5. Community Health

[You can download email headers here.](#)

[You can download the poster series \(24x46\) here.](#) Put them on your office walls as a constant reminder of how we can support survivors in our community.

At the end of the month, we recommend hosting a community awareness gathering to help survivors realize that the community they are connected to is safe, caring, and supportive.

To strengthen both internal and external advocacy in your organization, adapt our [Survivor Protection Statement](#). Make it public on your website and provide staff and community-wide training to share what your organization is doing to protect survivors of sexual assault in your community.

Have more questions on how to use this resource? Email us at info@freelyinhope.org. We'd love to share more resources with you.

EMAIL #1

Subject: Promoting Holistic Health For Survivors of Sexual Assault

Image:



Body:

1 in 3 women are survivors of sexual assault worldwide. As many of our community members may have experienced sexual violence, we believe it's essential for all of us to know how to promote holistic health for survivors of sexual assault.

As an organization, we stand with survivors of sexual violence by raising awareness to support survivors in the best way possible—whether they be our family members, friends, colleagues, or community members.

A holistic approach ensures that all parts of us can thrive after experiencing trauma.

We can promote holistic health for survivors in four ways:

- Physical health,
- Emotional health,
- Mental health,
- Community health.

Each week, we'll send you resources to help you support survivors wherever you are. For survivors in our community, we hope you experience healing, feel support from us as your community, and experience a thriving life after sexual assault.

To get started, read: [3 Powerful Ways to Advocate with Survivors of Sexual Assault.](#)

Thank you for standing with survivors.

EMAIL #2

Subject: Healing the mind helps us reclaim our identity.

Image:



Body:

Sexual assault affects the psychological health of survivors causing behavioral changes. These are some ways psychological effects can show up:

Post-traumatic stress disorder: Survivors may struggle with nightmares or flashbacks that cause destabilization.

Depression: Survivors may experience persistent sadness or loss of interest in things that bring joy.

Eating disorders: Survivors may develop eating disorders as a coping mechanism that helps them cope with intense emotions after trauma.

Dissociation: Survivors may feel like they are watching themselves live outside their bodies. This coping mechanism protects them from connecting with their physical body that experienced the trauma. Disassociation often distorts the survivor's perspective of themselves because of their sense of disconnection.

Promoting Mental Health

1. Find a therapist that can help you through tough moments and provide professional support. Looking for a therapist? Check out [Inclusive Therapists](#).
2. Practice breathing exercises
3. Find enjoyable practices that help you feel connected to yourself
4. Practice rhythmic movements
5. Be kind to yourself as you're on the healing journey.

Here are helpful resource to support your mental health:

- [Mental Health Practices for Survivors by Survivors](#)
- [Nurturing Your Child's Mental Health](#)
- [Destigmatizing Mental Health with Rev. Dr. Monica Coleman](#)

Thank you for standing with survivors.

EMAIL #3

Subject: Healing is a practice of reconnecting with ourselves.

Image:



Body:

From survivor to survivor, the effects of sexual violence may look different for every experience. Sexual assault may affect survivors emotionally in how they feel about themselves.

Shame: "My body is dirty because I was touched without consent. I hate my body. I don't like myself."

Self-blame: "It's my fault that the assault happened to me. I was assaulted because of how my body looks, how I walk, and how I speak."

Guilt: "I should have done something different. I should have fought back. I shouldn't have been in that place."

Promoting Emotional Health:

Therapy: Having someone you can talk to about your emotions will help you feel supported and not alone. Therapy will give you a space to process what happened, undo harmful thoughts and self-talk, and notice what will help you move forward. Looking for a therapist? Check out [Inclusive Therapists](#).

Breathing exercises: Intentional breathing helps you regulate your emotions after a difficult experience, memory, or trigger. Your body keeps count of the trauma which creates tension in the body. Because trauma may make you feel like you're suffocating, doing breathing exercises will help you feel lighter in that moment. [Try this breathing exercise called the Butterfly Hug](#).

Journaling: After facing assault you can get stuck with overwhelming voices about the incident. Having a safe space to process what you are feeling on a daily basis will help release any tension. This will allow you a moment to always process what you are going through as it is happening. We love Rupi Kaur's journal, [Healing With Words](#).

We hope these practices support your emotional health as you heal.

EMAIL #4

Subject: Healing the body brings release, relief, and rest after trauma.

Image:



Body:

After experiencing sexual assault, survivors may experience issues with their physical health. The body keeps count of the trauma and trauma that is not processed will show up and affect the body. These are some ways that physical effects show up:

1. Chronic headaches
2. Digestive problems
3. Extreme fatigue
4. Sexual dysfunction

Promoting Physical Health:

Validate what the survivor is feeling in their bodies because it is a manifestation of pain that needs healing. Encourage them to reach out to a healthcare professional to get the adequate care needed during the healing process.

Anger or grief may be associated with the traumatic incident, causing the mind and body to hold stress. Rhythmic, body-based movements like exercise, yoga, and dance can provide space for the body to release anger and grief.

The effects of sexual assault may show up in different ways, be kind, patient, and understanding with survivors as they move through their healing journey.

Recommended Reading:

- [The Body Keeps Score](#), Bessel Van der Kolk
- [Rest is Resistance](#), Tricia Hersey
- [What My Bones Know](#), Stephanie Foo

Thank you for standing with survivors.

EMAIL #5

Subject: Healing together means building safety together.

Image:



Body:

After experiencing sexual assault, the connection between self and everyone else may feel rocky. Survivors may experience feelings of helplessness, fear, and lack of safety because they do not know where the harm would come from. These feelings may affect behavior and show up in ways like:

Isolation: "It is safer to be in my own space. I do not trust anyone; no one understands how I feel. I will be in control of what happens in my space now."

Anger: "Why didn't anyone do something about what happened?"

Rejection: "I'm tired of people feeling pity for me. My community makes me feel stuck in my trauma instead of uplifting me."

Promoting Community Health

A supportive community will help survivors reconnect with themselves and look forward to life after sexual trauma. However, your community might not know how to support survivors, so community awareness and education are critical. Healing together means building safety together.

- **Listen to the needs of the survivor** to help loved ones show up in ways that the survivor will receive.
- **Provide access to therapy** for survivors to help remove any socioeconomic barriers. As an advocate, access therapy for yourself to process the secondary trauma you may experience as a supporter. [Access a therapist.](#)
- **Promote holistic health** in your community space by putting up [these posters](#) on your walls. Talk about these essential concepts with your families, staff, and community members.
- **Host community awareness events** to help survivors realize that the community they are connected to is safe, caring, and supportive. We do not need to heal from our pain alone. To get started, download this free guide for churches: [From Silencing to Uplifting the Survivor's Voice.](#)