

10 reasons to Start by Believing



I told my mom that I was sexually assaulted by someone we knew, and she immediately started defending him and questioning me. Never once did she support me or ask me if I was okay.

- Amy

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Research shows that just 2-8% of reports of sexual assault are false.

When my two siblings told me they had been sexually molested by my father, I took my father's side. All these years later, I realize that I had been in the best position to get them help if I had just started by believing.

- Tori

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Most victims of sexual assault never report the crime to law enforcement, often because of the responses they receive from friends and family members.

My mother first revealed the sexual abuse she endured as a 5-year old when she was 95. For 90 years of her life, she thought no one would believe her.

- Pat

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A negative response can worsen the trauma and foster an environment where perpetrators face no consequences for their crimes.

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My daughter Jenny was raped by a serial predator. It should never have happened. Several years earlier the perpetrator was caught assaulting a woman, and he was acquitted because "the jury didn't like the victim." Thousands of lives were impacted by one jury's presumption that a victim was lying. We can change. We can help victims recover and put away predators if we simply start by believing victims who have the courage to come forward.

- Steve

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Statistics show that rapists don't just attack once – many re-offend, often multiple times. Start by Believing stops this cycle by improving how we respond to survivors.

From the patrolman who arrived at my door, the officers who searched for my cat, to the detective who worked my case for over two years, I felt believed and supported.

- Tony

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Every response matters. Your response matters. Stop the cycle of silence and Start by Believing.

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