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Volunteers Needed to Assist Victims of Sexual Violence: How You Can Make a Difference

One victim is one too many. According to the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault, one in five women and one in 71 men have been sexually assaulted in their lifetime. The number of LGBTQI+ survivors is even higher. Fear for one's safety, fear of not being believed, self-blame, and shame are just a few of the reasons why survivors don't disclose, thus making sexual violence a highly under-reported crime. Perpetrators use sexual violence to harm, degrade, and exert power and control over other individuals. Sexual violence includes non-consensual penetration, even the slightest, criminal sexual contact, lewdness, sexual harassment, childhood sexual assault, and sexual abuse of vulnerable populations. Perpetrators and victims are of all ages, familial and supervisory relationships, socio-economic backgrounds, education levels, ethnicities, religions, and professions. Due to the adverse effects of the trauma caused by sexual violence, survivors often experience long-term physical and mental health issues. Sexual violence is never the victim's fault.

180 Turning Lives Around (180) stands with survivors of sexual violence. For over forty-years, 180, a private non-profit organization in Monmouth County, continues to provide support and advocacy for victims of sexual violence in the aftermath of a highly emotional and traumatic experience with the assistance of its dedicated Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) volunteers. Since 1996, 180's specially-trained, confidential victim advocates, who are members of the community, with countywide law enforcement and the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners program, provide emotional support and assistance to victims, and their significant-others, during accompaniments for timely and sensitive hospital medical examinations, and police and grand jury procedures. The volunteers also provide telephone support, which includes at the time of crisis, addressing medical and emotional needs, information regarding the criminal justice system, and referrals for services. The advocates also provide support and advocacy to the survivor's significant-other and adult survivors of childhood sexual assault.

You can be the change you want to see in the world by joining 180's life-changing mission today. 180 is conducting the mandatory, 40-hour SART training course June 5-28, Mondays/Tuesdays/Wednesdays, 6:00pm-9:30pm, at Wall Township Police Headquarters, 2700 Allaire Road. Basic requirements for volunteers to apply include that applicants must be eighteen years of age or older, have access to reliable transportation, possess a valid driver's license, be willing to serve on an on-call shift basis, participate in an interview process, submit to fingerprinting and background checks, and successfully complete the mandatory training. 180 Turning Lives Around is committed to a culturally diverse team to better serve the community, so bi-lingual capability is helpful. Prior knowledge of or training in sexual

violence is not required. To obtain an application visit <http://180nj.org/give-help/volunteering/sexual-violence-program-advocate/> or contact Tina Morgan at tinam@180nj.org or 732 264-4360, Ext. 4272. Deadline to apply is Friday, May 26th.

180 is dedicated to providing safe housing, counseling, support, prevention, education, and advocacy for residents of Monmouth County who are affected by domestic violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking. 180's caring staff provides immediate and long term support in assisting clients with the trauma they have experienced through sexual violence, while supporting them in obtaining services and making decisions that will turn their lives around. 180's Court Advocates are available to assist and support survivors through the Sexual Assault Protection Order process at State Superior Court in Freehold. If you, or someone you know, is a victim of sexual violence, you can call the 180 Turning Lives Around Confidential Hotline at 732-264-7273 or 1-888-264-7273, 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. For more information, visit www.180nj.org. In an emergency, dial 911.