



Safe Passage Monthly Update

Sexual Assault Legal Advocate, Emily, and Sexual Assault Intern, Jasmine, lead the annual Take Back the Night Rally in downtown DeKalb.



April at Safe Passage

Your monthly update:

April was Sexual Assault Awareness Month and our agency hosted a number of events for our community to stand with survivors and help do their part to end sexual violence.

On April 4th, we kicked off the month with our fourth annual Walk a Mile event. Here, we offered appetizers, drink specials, and honored our 2019 "Shoe-per Heroes." This year, two local officers were awarded.

To learn more about the event, click [here](#).

On April 16th, we hosted Take Back the Night, an awareness rally followed by an open mic night for survivors to share their stories. The Egyptian Theatre kindly donated their space for the event. More survivors than ever spoke out and shared their experiences with sexual abuse and harassment.

Finally, we ended the month with "Voices," an art gallery display at the DeKalb Area Women's Center. Sexual Assault Counselors, Kate and Liz, worked with their clients to create the artwork on display. Before creating their

pieces, the survivors were asked questions about their stories, growth, and feelings. To view the artwork, visit our Facebook @safepassagedvsa.

Counselor's Column

Written by Safe Passage's Domestic Violence Counselor, Erika Montes

Why doesn't my client accept that is she living with mental illness?

I've listened over and over again why my client doesn't accept that she is living with a mental illness. Why doesn't she get treatment? Is she denying the fact that all the symptoms are right there?

These can be the most challenging clients and working through the denial requires some time, but eventually, they are able to get the help they desperately need. So why won't they get the help? Several reasons, but for many we are talking about anosognosia, the clinical term for the lack of insight necessary to understand you have a mental illness. Anosognosia is a neurological disorder thought to be caused by abnormalities in the frontal lobes including traumatic brain injury. In other words, the client is not merely in denial; but is experiencing a neurological deficit, and sadly, the person has no control over it.

Understandably, anosognosia is one of the more troubling symptoms of severe mental illness as it prevents a person from getting the help they need. So how can I help clients with anosognosia?

- I can listen to the client.
- I can empathize with the client.
- I can agree with the client.
- I can partner with the client.

Working with a client living with anosognosia is challenging. Use your own framework to reach them. Instead of working with the condition, find out what problems they believe they have and address those. These steps will reinforce the therapeutic relationship and hopefully move forward in a more holistic treatment.



Upcoming Events

Give DeKalb County: May 2

Consider supporting Safe Passage and survivors of domestic and sexual violence by participating in DeKalb County's 24-hour giving day on May 2! Donations can be made online by credit card from midnight to midnight by visiting www.GiveDeKalbCounty.org and searching for Safe Passage. Walk-in donations by check or cash will be accepted from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the DeKalb County Community Foundation.

[For more information on upcoming](#)

[events, click here.](#)



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