

The Virgin Islands Consortium

'Silence Speaks, Secrets Revealed': Radio Drama On Child Sexual Abuse To Premiere On September 4

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The Women's Coalition of St. Croix's (WCSC's) new 26-episode radio series and talk shows will premiere on 95.1 – Isle 95, on Tuesday September 4, according to a release the coalition issued Friday. The two-minute episodes, featuring the stories of three survivors of child sexual abuse, will continue airing weekly on several local radio stations, and will be made available for streaming as podcasts on WCSC's website and social media channels, according to the release.

"Child sexual abuse affects survivors and communities. Education is a key part of prevention efforts and offering support to survivors," said Clema S. Lewis, executive director of WCSC.

Silence Speaks, Secrets Revealed focuses on the experiences of three young people: a 7-year-old boy, a 16-year-old pageant queen and a 15-year-old girl whose family relocated to St. Croix recently. There will be a live, 30-minute talk show following the first broadcast of each episode on Isle 95. "Our after shows will feature experts in related fields, victim advocates and survivors. The discussion of the themes can continue, we'll take calls and provide listeners with helpful resources. These shows will be available as podcasts too," said Carolyn Forno, assistant director of WCSC.

Sayeeda Carter and Regina Keels collaborated on the scripts for Silence Speaks, Secrets Revealed. "This is a project that really touches me. Having been an educator for 25 years and having children tell me their stories. I thought it was just the most important work we could be doing at this moment," remarked Ms. Carter. The writers are also educators at a high school on St. Croix. Ms. Keels was named Teacher of the Year for 2018, according to the release.

Listeners will learn about the devastating effects of child sexual abuse through this creative, entertaining programming, the release said. The writers and staff of WCSC hope community members will be encouraged by what they hear to change their experience, the experience of a child or of an adult who was sexually abused in childhood.

WCSC assisted 426 survivors of sexual violence last year, including those who experienced child sexual abuse, child pornography and sex trafficking, according to the release.

"We need to dispel the myths surrounding child sexual abuse. It's happening right here in the USVI. We must talk about it. We must educate our children on comfortable touch/uncomfortable touch. We must believe our children. Perpetrators need to be held accountable for their actions. Survivors need support," Ms. Lewis also noted.

The creation and production of Silence Speaks, Secrets Revealed was supported by a grant from Raliance, a collaborative initiative to end sexual violence in one generation, made possible through a commitment from the National Football League (NFL), according to the release. It noted that the radio series' contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of the NFL. WCSC is the first nonprofit in the U.S. Virgin Islands to receive a Raliance grant, according to the release.

For more information about child sexual abuse and WCSC's programs and services for people impacted by violence, including 24-hour crisis intervention, call 340.773.9272 or email info@wcstx.org. For more information on Silence Speaks, Secrets Revealed, email WCSC at events@wcstx.org