

PROCLAMATION



April 19, 2022

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Survivor Awareness Month is intended to draw attention to the fact that sexual assault is a widespread crisis and has both public and personal health implications for every community member of Prince William County, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse and sexual harassment impact our community as seen by statistics indicating that every 73 seconds an American is sexually assaulted (2018 National Crime Victimization Survey); and

WHEREAS, in the United States, a person is sexually assaulted every 68 seconds; 1 in 5 women and 1 in 38 men have been a victim of an attempted or completed assault in their lifetime; and 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 4 boys first experience attempted or completed sexual assault between the ages of 11 and 17; and 47% of all transgender people are sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime; and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, members of the LGBTQ+ community experience sexual violence and stalking at similar or higher rates than heterosexuals; and 20,500 military service members (13,000 women and 7,500 men) have reported a sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with 2018 National Crime Victimization Survey approximately 70% of rape or sexual assault victims experience moderate to severe distress, as well as increased problems with bosses, co-workers, family, and friends; and victims of child abuse are four times more likely to develop symptoms of drug abuse and three times more likely to experience a major depressive episode; and 81% of women and 35% of men who have experienced sexual assault will develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms; and

WHEREAS, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, 70,252 survivors received help from hotline services and 25,061 adults and 6,406 children received advocacy services in 2020; and stealth methods for accessing crisis services became vital due to stay-at-home orders, resulting in an increase of contact via email by 89%, an increase of contact via text/chat by 223%, and an increase of contact via mail by 60%; and

WHEREAS, with leadership, dedication, and encouragement, there is compelling evidence that we can be successful in reducing sexual assault in Prince William County, Virginia through prevention education, increased awareness, and holding perpetrators who commit acts of assault responsible for their actions; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Office of the Chair of the Prince William County Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims April 2022 as Sexual Assault Survivor Awareness Month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Prince William County Government will continue partnerships with local organizations to create a protective and empowered environment for all survivors;

**A Proclamation to Recognize Sexual Assault Awareness Month
BOARD OF COUNTY SUPERVISORS**

**Ann B. Wheeler
Chair**