

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Whereas, Sexual Assault Awareness Month is observed to shed light on the pervasive issue of sexual violence, to honor and support the resilience and courage of survivors, and to engage our community in meaningful actions towards the eradication of sexual assault and the cultivation of a safe environment for all individuals;

Whereas, sexual violence affects people of every age, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, socioeconomic background, religion and we recognize the added barriers and long-term impacts faced by survivors with historically excluded identities; and

Whereas, it is essential to acknowledge the profound impact of sexual violence on individuals and communities, and to reaffirm our collective responsibility in supporting survivors, respecting their experiences, and facilitating their paths to healing and justice;

Whereas, enhancing public awareness about the dynamics of sexual assault, the importance of consent, and the resources available to survivors and their allies is crucial in building a culture of respect, support, and prevention;

Whereas, at every level we must work to provide necessary resources to survivors of every circumstance, including medical attention, mental health services, relocation and housing assistance, and advocacy during the criminal justice process; and

Whereas, education and community engagement in support of sexual assault prevention are imperative in shifting societal norms, challenging harmful stereotypes, and reducing the incidence of sexual violence;

Whereas, partners at the Buncombe County Family Justice Center collaborate to offer a safe location for survivors of sexual assault to receive multiple types of support in one location; and the Buncombe County Family Justice Center served 27 survivors in FY2023; and

Whereas, we are committed to supporting survivors, participating in educational efforts, and contributing to a culture that prioritizes consent, respects survivors, and works tirelessly towards the prevention of sexual violence. Together, we can make Buncombe County a safer, more supportive, and compassionate community for everyone.

NOW THEREFORE, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim the month of April as **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**.

This 16th day of April, 2024.

Brownie Newman
Chairman, Buncombe County Board of Commissioners