



CITY OF KIRKLAND
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Lynn Zwaagstra, Director
Leslie Miller, Human Services Supervisor
Regi Schubiger, Youth Services Coordinator

Date: March 25, 2021

Subject: 2021 SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Mayor proclaim April 2021 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Kirkland, Washington.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

Sexual violence is a major public health, human rights and social justice issue. The national theme for this year's Sexual Assault Awareness Month is "We Can Build Safe Online Spaces." Sexual harassment, assault, and abuse can happen anywhere, including in online spaces. As we connect online, we can learn how to practice digital consent, intervene when we see harmful content or behaviors, and ensure that online spaces - whether they be workspaces, classrooms, social media platforms, or otherwise - are respectful and safe.

The pandemic has pushed many online for work, education, and for essential services. While there are upsides and opportunities inherent in our online spaces, the expanded presence of technology has also presented risks, in particular for young people. As savvy as many young people are at navigating this space, community stakeholders need to make sure young people know how to respectfully interact and engage with others, how to be savvy media consumers, and to know where resources exist for fact-based information, both "in real life" and how those lessons apply to online interactions. To be effective in shifting attitudes and behaviors, those lessons must be reinforced and supported at home, in school, and in our neighborhoods. By proclaiming this month of awareness, we help engage the whole community in this important conversation.

You can find more information about national Sexual Assault Awareness Month efforts and resources [here](#) on the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) website.

The King County Sexual Assault Resource Center provides services to Kirkland residents and all of King County. Its purpose is to alleviate, as much as possible, the trauma of sexual assault for victims and their families. KCSARC offers resources for victims, their families and the community. KCSARC is available 24-hours a day through their Resource Line, which is staffed by professional advocates. This is the only resource of its kind in King County. 888.99.VOICE KCSARC asks the community to join them in demanding change. They encourage supporters, leaders, and the community to speak up about sexual violence. Demand a world without sexual violence. Challenge norms by taking a stand in difficult conversations about sexual violence. Don't excuse victim-blaming. Information to access services or to support KCSARC's mission is available at kscarc.org.

Prevention is possible when everyone gets involved. KCSARC encourages us to talk to the young people in our lives about consent and healthy relationships. Use [He Told Me Not To Tell](#) (for conversations with children) and [100 Conversations](#) (for conversations with youth) to guide your discussions.

To bring awareness to this issue in Kirkland, staff will share this proclamation and links to KCSARC resources via the City of Kirkland website and social media.

Marinx Brinkhoff representing the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center will accept the proclamation.

Attachments: Proclamation



A PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND

Proclaiming Sexual Assault Awareness Month April 2021 in Kirkland

- Whereas:** In Washington State, 45% of women and 22% of men report having experienced sexual violence in their lifetime; and
- Whereas:** In King County, 7,152 adults and children received specialized assistance from organizations with programming for sexual assault victims in 2020; and
- Whereas:** Rape is among the most underreported crimes for reasons that include victim's fear of being disbelieved or further traumatized within systems designed to support them. Additional barriers, such as language, immigration status, gender bias, and systemic racism further oppress and silence victims; and
- Whereas:** Individual and community impacts of sexual violence are rooted in and compounded by racial, gender, sexual orientation and other forms of oppression. Black, Indigenous and other people of color; people living in poverty; LGBTQ people; elders; people with disabilities and other people targeted by oppression are affected by sexual violence in significant and complex ways; and
- Whereas:** Statewide, 29% of the survivors who were supported by a community sexual assault organization identified as Black, Indigenous and people of color in 2019. Of those identifying ethnicity, 21% identified as Latinx/Hispanic;
- Whereas:** King County is home to many organizations that provide culturally and linguistically specific services for survivors from various racial, ethnic, faith, and cultural communities, who are immigrants and refugees, who are LGBTQ, and who live with disabilities. These culturally specific services are critical to effectively respond to the specific needs and barriers many survivors face; and
- Whereas:** Sexual harassment, assault and abuse happen in all communities, and that includes online spaces. With this increase in virtual connection comes an increase in online abuse and harassment. Consent and boundaries can be violated online in a number of ways, and the trauma of online abuse is all too real for many survivors; and
- Whereas:** Working together as a community, we can alleviate the trauma of sexual violence by ensuring supportive resources are available to all survivors, while standing up to harmful attitudes and behaviors seen online and elsewhere; and
- Whereas:** 2021 marks the twentieth anniversary of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and the theme of this year's campaign is "We Can Build Safe Online Spaces." The campaign

calls on us to create online spaces that are built on the foundational values of practicing consent, keeping kids safe, and supporting survivors.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Penny Sweet, Mayor of Kirkland join advocates and communities throughout King County in taking action to prevent sexual violence by standing with survivors and proclaiming April 2021 Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Together, we commit to a safer future for all children, young people, adults, and families in our community.

Signed this 6th day of April, 2021

Penny Sweet, Mayor