

City of Petaluma

Proclamation

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH – APRIL 2024

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Awareness Month is intended to draw attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and has a profound and lasting impact on every community member of Sonoma County; and

WHEREAS, Verity, Sexual Assault Prevention, Intervention & Healing Center, worked with over 1,300 survivors in Sonoma County in 2023; and has further contributed to community education and outreach in 2023 by hosting 64 presentations and events, reaching a total of 8,404 community members with valuable information and resources; and

WHEREAS, national research indicates that one in five women will be raped at some point in their lifetime, and nearly half of all women will experience some form of sexual violence; and at least 1 in 6 men have experienced sexual abuse or assault, whether in childhood or as an adult; and

WHEREAS, young people are at greatest risk of sexual violence, and youth aged 12 to 17 are two and a half times more likely to be raped, sexually assaulted, or sexually than their adult counterparts; and disabled people, people of color, queer people, homeless people, transgender people, undocumented people, youth in foster care, and people of other marginalized identities are even more likely to be victimized by sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, over 18,000 members of the military and over 80,000 people who are incarcerated experience sexual violence every year; and

WHEREAS, with leadership, dedication, and encouragement, there is evidence that we can be successful in preventing sexual violence in Sonoma County through increased education, awareness, and community involvement; and

WHEREAS, the City of Petaluma strongly supports the efforts of Verity, and encourages every resident to actively engage in public and private efforts to end sexual violence, including conversations about what sexual violence is, how to prevent it, how to help survivors of all backgrounds connect with crucial counseling and other support services, and how every segment of our society can work together to better address sexual violence.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Kevin McDonnell, Mayor of Petaluma, along with the members of the Petaluma City Council, formally designates the month of April 2024 to be **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**.

Kevin McDonnell, Mayor

Caitlin Corley, City Clerk