



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

A MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR WALSH KEEPING SUMMIT COUNTY SAFE

The past month has been a difficult time for the nation, Ohio, and Summit County.

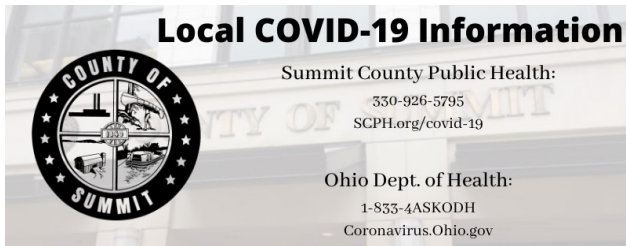
We continue to battle one of our toughest opponents; one which we cannot see or hear; one where the best way to fight it is to physically distance yourself from others.

This can be a scary time. But I hold onto the words of Dr. Amy Acton, the Director of the Ohio Department of Health. Dr. Acton said "I am not afraid. I am determined."

I am also determined - determined to make our community safe for everyone. That means doing our part to continue to care for each other and watch out for each other. Don't let what we have been through for the past two months be forgotten. Once we are done with self-quarantines and physical distancing I feel our community will be stronger than ever.

I have made temporary changes to how the Prosecutor's Office operates during this pandemic.

Following guidelines set out by federal, state, and local health officials, I decided to temporarily close the Prosecutor's Office to the public to limit face-to-face interaction. This is the current situation at the Summit County Safety Building where my criminal



and civil divisions are located, as well as the Juvenile Division and my Child Support Enforcement Agency. However, that does not mean you cannot connect with my office.

The public can always call and connect with an assistant prosecutor, victim advocate, or child support case worker. If you have questions for my criminal or civil division, you can call 330.643.2800 or email us at info@prosecutor.summitoh.net.

My Child Support Enforcement Agency is also hard at work

fighting for families. I know many of you are concerned because of the current situation. Thousands of Ohioans are currently out of work because businesses have closed as a result of the pandemic. We are willing to work with you on possible solutions, including the possibility of modifications to your child support order. If you have a question or concern about your child support please call 330.643.2765. You can also access your case information

or correspond with my child support staff by going through the Ohio Child Support Customer Service Portal - <https://ifs.ohio.gov/Ocs/CustServWebPortalWelcome2.stm>.

By working together and abiding by the suggestions of health officials to keep at least six feet from people, wash your hands, and if possible, stay home, we can overcome this crisis and become a closer, and better community.

Even more than ever, stay safe.

Sherri B. Walsh



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START BY BELIEVING

I believe you. I am sorry this happened to you. I'm here for you. It's not your fault. What can I do to help. Simple words—but they can mean the world to a survivor of sexual assault. Since being sworn in as Summit County Prosecutor nearly 20 years ago, I have focused on the needs of victims. That is why I want to remind people of a public awareness campaign about sexual assault. We must end the cycle of silence.

"I'VE BEEN RAPED"
What will your reaction be?
Start by Believing

Rape Crisis Center Hotline:
(330) 434-7273

OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR
SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO
PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH
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START BY BELIEVING

Start By Believing is a public awareness campaign started by End Violence Against Women International. It was created to end the cycle of silence and change the way society responds to sexual assault.

I have found that in my nearly 20 years as Summit County Prosecutor, many survivors of sexual assault are reluctant to come forward. Several confide in family and friends. This program reaches those people to help them express belief and support, rather than doubt, shame, or blame. If sexual assault survivors do not come forward, then the offender remains free to potentially assault additional victims.

As Summit County Prosecutor, my mission is to keep the community safe and fight for victims. Start By Believing does that.

I first introduced the Start By Believing program in Summit County one year ago. My office applied for and received money through a grant to help pay for the public awareness campaign. We wanted to let the community know that we can help and they are not alone. Our campaign included billboards, bus ads, and ads on local news websites.

This year, we are taking a different approach. You will continue to see billboards and bus ads. This year, you will see several videos from a sexual assault survivor. Kayla talks about her own personal experience and why your reaction needs to be one of belief, support, and help.

Kayla's story is compelling. She discusses what it was like to tell family members and friends and how it felt when they started questioning her. They didn't start by believing.

Your response makes a difference. We want to end the cycle of silence. Changing how we respond to victims and survivors of sexual assault is as simple as saying, "I'm sorry this happened to you," "What can I do to support you?" or "It's not your fault." We can make a difference. It's as simple as Start By Believing.

The criminal justice system can be intimidating and overwhelming. As Summit County Prosecutor, I am focused on helping victims as they make their way through the criminal justice system. That is one of the reasons I became the first Prosecutor's Office in Ohio to have a facility dog. There was concern and even opposition when we got Avery nearly seven years ago. After seeing all the good work Avery has done, I know it was the right thing to do. And Start By Believing is the right thing to do.

Don't mistake the Start By Believing program as a desire just to believe everything someone says and put innocent people in jail. Local law enforcement will still begin each case with an open mind and conduct a complete investigation. They will follow the evidence wherever it takes them. That's why the word "START" is there. Start By Believing simply shows survivors and the accused that they will benefit from a thorough, evidence-based investigation.

"ME HAN VIOLADO"
Cuál será tu reacción?
Empieza Por Creer

Victim Assistance Program
24 hora línea directa:
(330) 376 - 0040

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The first Wednesday of April was Start By Believing day. It preceded National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which was April 19th through April 25th, and sponsored by the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime. April is also Sexual Assault Awareness Month. According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, Sexual Assault Awareness Month is a campaign to raise public awareness about sexual violence and educate communities on how to prevent it.



AVERY'S CORNER

CRIME & PUNISHMENT



Hi everyone. I hope you're doing well. I miss you all. I have been coming to work with my human but I was told I can't really get that close to people, which makes me sad.

Thank you to everyone who is working to keep us safe and healthy!

I'm glad I got to see my friend Sophie at Pet Supplies Plus before we were all stuck at home.

Sophie took real good care of me and gave me a nice hair cut and helped me look pretty.



I hope I get to see her again soon.

I like meeting people who help people.

I got a chance to say hi to people involved in what's



called "Restore Court". They help people who are victims of human trafficking.

Assistant Prosecutor Samantha Hardin, who's on the far right, supervises our Delinquency Division.

Follow Avery II on Facebook at:

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[SummitCountyProsecutorAveryII](https://www.facebook.com/SummitCountyProsecutorAveryII)



Help Us Go Green!

Contact Melanie Hart at hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net to receive this newsletter by e-mail

TOUGH PROSECUTIONS

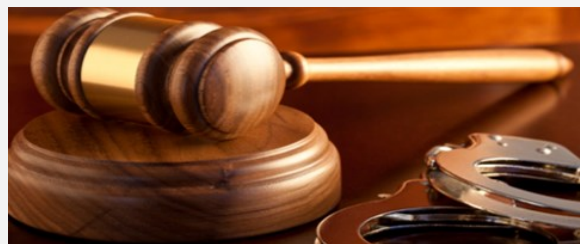
These defendants will be locked up for a lengthy period of time thanks to our dedicated Assistant Prosecutors:

Shannon Ingol, 22

- Murder
- **LIFE IN PRISON**

Kevin Blanchard, 53

- Aggravated Theft
- Grand Theft
- **10 YEARS IN PRISON**



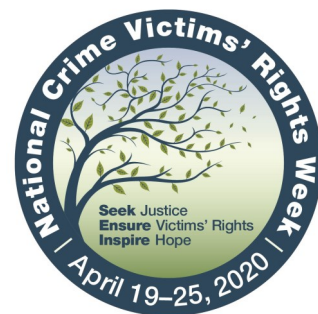
NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

The numbers can be staggering. The Summit County Prosecutor's Office handles around 4,000 felony crime cases each year from homicides, to robberies, to assaults, to scams, Summit County Prosecutors and Victim Advocates work with thousands of victims each year.

Victims are our sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, partners, and parents.

April 19 through April 25 is National Crime Victim Right's Week. Established in 1981 by President Reagan, the week promotes the rights and services provided to victims of crime.

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office is very proud to support crime victims with highly trained victim advocates to help them navigate the criminal justice system.



TOP COPS

ALL LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT!!

NOMINATED BY SUMMIT CO. PROSECUTOR SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

Each month in our Prosecutor’s Office criminal newsletter, we say thanks and pay tribute to a law enforcement officer who went above and beyond while investigating a case which we prosecuted. These are officers that without their help and expertise, our jobs would be much more difficult.



Summit County has close to 30 separate law enforcement agencies, all with varying responsibilities and employees. All play a vital role in our safety. We want to thank each and every one of them for their commitment and service to our community.



But times have changed. We are all impacted by COVID-19. Many of us are working remotely. Many more have unfortunately lost their jobs because of the pandemic.



However, those in law enforcement are still there, protecting us and working hard to keep us safe. Prior to the pandemic we probably never knew how truly essential our law enforcement community was. The men and women who put on the uniform and patrol our neighborhoods each day are more essential now than ever before.



One recent positive encounter involved the Akron Police Department. They helped celebrate an Akron girl’s 8th



birthday by having a few cruisers parade by the girl’s house, blaring horns, sirens and music to help celebrate. The truly wonderful gesture helped put a smile on the girl’s face.

Officers want to remind you to wash your hands and be safe.

Thank you for all that you do to keep our community safe!!

DISTRACTED DRIVERS

The Summit County Prosecutor’s Office strives to find the latest information to help keep our communities safe. That includes making sure drivers keep an eye on the road and not their cell phones.

April is Distracted Driving Awareness month. Did you know that every day one person dies and 100 more are injured in distracted driver crashes?



Safe driving should not be a one month thing. When behind the wheel, know what is going on around you.

That decision could save a life—maybe even your own.

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Did you know over seven million children in the United States are referred to their local child protective services agency? A report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds.



It may be difficult to tell if a child is being abused or neglected. Abusers oftentimes convince and manipulate a child to be silent about their abuse.

You can help stop the abuse of these innocent children. If you think a child may be abused or neglected, monitor the situation as closely as you can and contact authorities. In Summit County, call 330.434.KIDS (5437) to report abuse or neglect. Together we can stop child abuse.

WHY I'M A PROSECUTOR

MATT KUHN

"Why I'm A Prosecutor" gives our prosecutors the chance to tell their own story and why being a prosecutor is so important to them. It also helps the public better understand how we approach our jobs.

Assistant Prosecutor Matt Kuhn, who works in our Criminal Division, talks about why being a prosecutor is so important.

• WHY DID YOU BECOME A PROSECUTOR?

I became a prosecutor because I've always had an appreciation for public service. I've seen and worked with some great leaders and have gained an appreciation for what they do. There's a dignity to what they do. I've been lucky enough to work with some great prosecutors who were mentors to me and set a high standard and excellent example. It was something I wanted to do to help the community. My dad is an attorney and that probably had something to do with me also wanting to become a lawyer.



• WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF BEING A PROSECUTOR?

The best part of being a prosecutor is when you work on a case where you can have a positive impact. Sometimes that means handling a tough case or winning a tough trial and having justice served. It can also be giving someone a second chance or helping a defendant to possibly change their life for the better.

• WHAT'S THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF BEING A PROSECUTOR?

The most difficult part of being a prosecutor is when you have a case where you can't make a positive impact. It's those times when you feel that justice may not be served.

You can watch Matt's complete video on our website, Facebook and YouTube page.

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

April is also Autism Awareness month. The nationwide effort was launched over 25 years ago to promote awareness, inclusion, and ensure that each person on



the Autism Spectrum is given the opportunity to achieve the highest possible quality of life.

It's also a good time to remind you about our Take Me Home program.

Take Me Home is a secure database, accessible only by law enforcement, which is used to help reconnect

caregivers with children and adults who have a difficult time communicating and may wander from home. This includes people who may suffer from Alzheimer's disease.



If you know someone who could benefit from this program and is not registered, please have them contact Leslie at knoblauch@prosecutor.summitoh.net, or 330-643-2800.

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