



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

A MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR WALSH
STOPPING SEXUAL ASSAULT

One of the most difficult things facing our society is stopping crime before something happens.

We often give people advice on ways to stay safe and minimize a person's chance of becoming a crime victim.

We tell people to be more aware of their surroundings, and make sure you lock the doors in both your home and your vehicle.

But there's another way you can help prevent crime in your community. It's as simple as Start By Believing.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. It is a time set aside each year for communities to re-focus their efforts in fighting sexual assault. This is also a perfect month to remind people that the Summit County Prosecutor's Office Starts 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.

Start By Believing simply shows survivors and the accused that they will benefit from a thorough, evidence-based investigation.

WHEN SOMEONE TELLS YOU THEY WERE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

What will your reaction be?

Start by Believing

PROSECUTOR SHERRI BEVAN WALSH
CO.SUMMITOH.NET/PROSECUTOR

Rape Crisis Center Hotline: (330) 434 - 7273

End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI) www.startbybelieving.org

Research has shown that the majority of rapists assaulted more than one victim. That is why it is so important to Start By Believing when someone discloses that they are a survivor of sexual assault. When you Start By Believing, more survivors are open to reporting their assault to police. That could lead to more arrests and getting more rapists off the streets. More rapists off the streets means fewer victims.



Right now only about 20 percent of all sexual assaults are reported to law enforcement. That means 80 percent of rapists are free. I urge you to support and believe someone when

they disclose that they are a survivor of sexual assault. Doing so will prevent rapists from attacking again.

You may also see these billboards throughout Summit County. These billboards ask a simple question—When someone tells you they were sexually assaulted, what will your reaction be? Survivors typically disclose what happened to friends and family first.

Are you responding with support or are you asking “why” questions such as “why would you go to that place alone?” or “why would you wear that?”

Why questions can sound accusatory and make survivors blame themselves.

I want to make sure crime victims and survivors of sexual assault are supported. And that starts with you.

If you are a survivor of sexual assault, please tell someone. And call the Rape Crisis Center at 330.434.7273.

As always, stay safe.

Sherri B. Walsh

AMBASSADOR'S CORNER

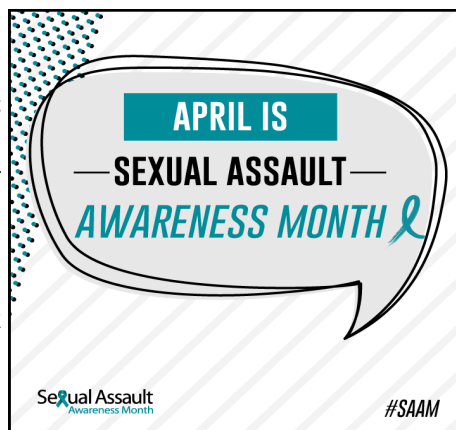
INEQUITIES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE FOR WOMEN OF COLOR

As we mentioned, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The Summit County Prosecutor's Office Ambassadors of Equity and Social Justice took a closer look at the inequities of sexual violence for women of color in this month's "Ambassadors Corner".

During April there is a significant focus on educating our community about sexual violence, as well as organizing numerous prevention efforts. The prevalence of sexual violence in communities across the U.S. is staggering. The rates at which survivors are reporting their victimizations to law enforcement are dismal. The effects of these crimes are devastating, and often debilitating, to the survivors. Unfortunately, as in other areas of our society, these outcomes become more severe for women of color who experience sexual violence.

- The US Department of Health and Human Services reports one in five girls (20%) is a victim of childhood sexual abuse. Yet, in 2012 a community sample of Black rape survivors reported at least 34% experienced childhood sexual abuse.
- In regards to all sexual assaults, approximately 17% will be reported to law enforcement. However, only 6.3% (one in 16) of sexual assaults against Black women will be reported to law enforcement.
- For all survivors of sexual assault, the fear of not being believed is significant. Unfortunately, one study of mock jurors indicated that when provided few case facts, people are more likely to believe the White victim than they were the Black victim, implying that people enter jury duty with potentially devastating biases.

In addition, the history of systemic and institutional racism in our country has played a substantial role in the national response by Black women to sexual violence.



- Many Black women report coping with their victimization in silence due to the cultural expectation of remaining a "Strong Black Woman." Survivors feel compelled to display a perceived inner strength and minimize the effect of their rape, which unfortunately interferes with the survivor's ability to seek help and recover from their trauma.
- When the sexual assault of a Black girl or woman is perpetrated by a Black man, survivors indicated a hesitancy to disclose for fear of "betraying their race." In many instances survivors feel that the negative consequences of racism far outweigh the consequences of sexism.
- In general Black Americans seek mental health services at low rates. Because few Black survivors of sexual violence tend to engage in treatment, a disproportionate number will suffer long lasting effects on their health.

So as we focus on Sexual Assault Awareness Month, let us all consider educating ourselves not just on the general effects of



sexual violence. We must consider the additional barriers faced by communities of color, their cultural influences, and life experiences that affect survivors' journey to healing.

To learn more, visit www.VAWnet.org and www.nsvrc.org.

Start by Believing





AVERY'S CORNER

IN THE COMMUNITY

I'm so happy when I get to help hoomans. It's so nice that I spend time with them and they feel better.

I got to spend time with some new friends recently. They both came to visit me in my office. They had bad things happen to them and I sat with them as they talked to my very smart co-workers.



I even went with one of them to court! I haven't done that in a while.



I sat still while they testified about what happened to them. It helped put a bad hooman in a place where they can't hurt anyone.

The hoomans I work with spend a lot of time talking about me and putting information on something called Facebook. My hooman friends say I have a Facebook page. I don't know much about what it is, but I hear there are lots of fun things about me on there.

You can find out what I'm doing in court or my adventures at different places.

You can even learn more about me in a video called "Ask Avery". You get to ask questions about me and my hooman friends answer them!



Check out the latest "Ask Avery" video on Facebook by searching my name (Avery II) - and maybe even ask your own question!

Follow Avery II on Facebook at:

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

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



Prosecutor's Office employees are hard at work keeping the community safe. Even though groups are not meeting in person, that doesn't mean we can't speak to people and provide safety information.

Community Outreach Prosecutor Tania Nemer and John Galonski, who's head of our Civil Division, spoke to members of the Barberton Kiwanis virtually about the latest scams and ways to minimize their chances of becoming a crime victim.

It was a great group with lots of insightful questions. Thanks to the Barberton Kiwanis for having us as guest speakers!

If you would like a representative from the Prosecutor's Office to speak with your group, contact our Community Outreach Prosecutor Tania Nemer at tnemer@prosecutor.summitoh.net.



The Summit County Prosecutor's Office also focuses on helping prevent those under 18 from becoming crime victims. Several Assistant Prosecutors spoke about internet safety to students at Tallmadge Middle School.



The two-day presentation for 5th and 6th grade students included information about the dangers of sexting as well as advice on how to safely interact with others on the internet.



Tania Nemer, John Galonski, and Tristan Serri, who works in our Juvenile Division, led the presentation.



Help Us Go Green!

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



TOP COP

AKRON POLICE DETECTIVE JERRY GACHETT

NOMINATED BY ASST. PROS. ELISABETH JACKSON & JOE MCALEESE

Child sex abuse cases are some of the most difficult to investigate. This case in particular involved deeply disturbing circumstances. Thanks to Akron Police Detective Jerry Gachett's excellent police work, we were able to achieve justice for the victim in this matter. That's why we nominate Det. Gachett as this month's TOP COP.



Det. Gachett's instincts resulted in the defendant, Craig McClellan, being held accountable to the fullest extent. After seeing certain questionable images on Mr. McClellan's phone, Det. Gachett had a gut feeling to have the pictures forensically examined. By doing so, Det. Gachett believed the pictures would show evidence confirming McClellan's guilt. After Akron Police retrieved deleted images from McClellan's phone, it proved he was guilty of Gross Sexual Imposition. Det. Gachett obtained additional information which lead to McClellan being charged and convicted of rape and unlawful use of a minor

in nudity oriented material or performance. The victim never disclosed the rape to police during her initial interview, so if we did not have the data from the phone, the most serious crimes may have never been discovered.

From the first police report to the final sentencing, this case took over two years. The initial investigation included numerous interviews, search warrants, and evidence collection before the case was presented to the grand jury. Then more evidence was obtained, there were numerous court hearings, and several trial dates pushed due to COVID. There was hours of trial prep, then trial itself, where Det. Gachett testified.

Throughout the entire process, Detective Gachett displayed professionalism and dedication. He is always willing to go the extra mile, and he has a great attitude while doing so.

Congratulations Detective Gachett!

CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS

Although the Summit County Prosecutor's Office supports crime victims year-round, there is one week in April where our efforts are re-energized.

This year, National Crime Victims' Rights week is April 18th through the 24th. In 1981, President Reagan established Crime Victims Week as part of an expanding initiative to help victims of crime.



In Ohio, Marsy's Law guarantees specific rights to victims of crime. Those include:

The right to be treated with respect and the right to be notified about developments in your case.

For more information, use the following link - www.marsylawforoh.com

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. Put your phone down and pay attention, especially in construction zones.

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

WHY I'M A PROSECUTOR

ARIANA ZIMCOSKY

"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.

Ariana Zimcosky, who's an assistant prosecutor in our Civil Division, talks about why being a prosecutor is so important to her.



• WHY DID YOU BECOME A PROSECUTOR?

I always wanted to be a lawyer. When I was seven I walked around with a briefcase and asked for a filing cabinet as a holiday gift! As a teenager I researched which law school I wanted to attend. For a while I looked into other types of law, such as environmental law. Then in law school I did an externship at the United States Attorney's Office and from that point on I knew I wanted to be a prosecutor. I was fortunate to be hired by the Summit County Prosecutor's Office and have been here ever since.

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

The best part of being a prosecutor is that no matter what part of the Prosecutor's Office you work in, every job is focused on bettering the community. It's a way to give back and be part of something that is greater than yourself. It's the best way to make a change in your community.

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

The most difficult part of being a prosecutor is not taking cases home with you. The cases we see can be emotionally and mentally heavy. Prosecutors handle some awful situations. Finding balance can be tough.

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

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

April is Autism Acceptance Month. Since the 1970's, April has been known as Autism Awareness Month. This year the Autism Society of America shifted from awareness to acceptance. This year's campaign is to celebrate differences.

Designed to build a better awareness of the signs, symptoms, and realities of autism, Celebrate Differences focuses on providing information and resources for communities to be more aware of autism, promote acceptance, and be more inclusive in everyday life.

We join them in this effort. Our Take Me Home program helps reunite caretakers with people who may wander and have a difficult time communicating. Take Me Home is for Summit County residents with someone in their family who lives with Autism, Alzheimers, and dementia.

For more information, email our TMH Director Leslie Knoblauch at knoblauch@prosecutor.summitoh.net. To learn more about the Autism Society of Greater Akron, visit their website at <https://autismakron.org/>.



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