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NEWS RELEASE



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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

VENTURA, Calif. - In recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the Ventura County District Attorney's Office is working to raise awareness about sexual violence.

Sexual assault is a pervasive and deeply harmful crime that affects individuals and communities across our country. In fact, every 68 seconds someone in the United States is sexually assaulted, according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network.

"In Ventura County, we are fortunate to have the Family Justice Center that can be a resource for victims of sexual assault," said Victim and Community Services Chief Deputy District Attorney Michael Jump. "The Ventura County Family Justice Center is staffed by District Attorney victim advocates, partners like Coalition for Family Harmony, Interface Children & Family Services, Ventura County Health Care Agency and many other governmental and nonprofit partners. The Family Justice Center assists victims of sexual assault with a free medical exam, assistance obtaining a restraining order, updates about the status of an investigation and accessing other local and state resources to help survivors recover and heal."

The Ventura County Family Justice Center (VCFJC) brings together the services of multiple community agencies to serve victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder and dependent adult abuse, human trafficking and hate crimes. The purpose of the center is to help save lives, reduce trauma, and empower survivors as they recover, heal, and break the cycle of abuse. The VCFJC and its partner agencies can assist victims in learning about and asserting their rights as well as:

- Access crisis counseling and linkage to long-term counseling.
- Connect with social services such as shelter, housing, child support, and services for elderly or dependent adult clients.
- Obtain legal assistance or referral to legal aid and many other services.

For more information, victims of sexual assault can reach the VCFJC at (805) 652-7655 or visit the center at 3170 Loma Vista Road in Ventura. The VCFJC sees clients on a first come, first served basis and is open Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Please visit www.vcfjc.org if you or someone you know has suffered a sexual assault.

Survivors can contact Coalition for Family Harmony to receive specialized supportive services, including counseling and information regarding your rights and options. The Coalition's Rape Crisis Advocates hold privileged communication and are confidential advocates that provide emotional support and advocacy to victims of sexual violence 24 hours a day. Survivors can reach Coalition at their 24-hour bilingual crisis hotline (800) 300-2181, or learn more about programs and services at www.thecoalition.org. Survivors can also contact Ventura County 211 by dialing 211 or at www.211ventura.org. For Interface Children and Family Services, call (800) 636-6738.

The Ventura County Family Justice Center and District Attorney's Office social media accounts will share educational information and resources throughout the month. For more information about Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the efforts to end sexual violence please visit nsvrc.org.

