

PROCLAMATION DECLARING APRIL AS “CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH” AND “SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH” IN CITY OF BAY CITY

The month of April signifies our commitment to supporting survivors of sexual assault and child abuse, encouraging strong criminal justice responses to these crimes, ending the epidemic of sexual violence and the cycle of abuse and/or neglect in our homes and communities.

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Awareness Month is intended to draw attention to the fact that sexual violence, child abuse and neglect are widespread and have public health implications for every community member of the City of Bay City. Sexual assault and child abuse is an appalling and dehumanizing form of violence. Even after physical injuries of a sexual assault and/or child abuse and neglect have healed, emotional and mental trauma can persist. Survivors often struggle with lingering anxiety, fear, anger, shame, and depression. The devastating aftermath of sexual assault and child abuse and neglect can also harm a survivor’s relationships with their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, the crime of sexual assault is a broad term and includes: rape incest, child sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, unwanted sexual contact, sexual harassment, exposure, and voyeurism; and

WHEREAS, rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment impact our community as seen by statistics indicating that one in five women and one in 67 men will be raped at some point in their lives. Child sexual abuse prevention must be a priority to confront the reality that one in six boys and one in four girls will experience sexual abuse before the age of 18; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, over 100,00 reports of abuse or neglect were made to the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that we must work together as a community to increase awareness about child abuse and contribute to the social and emotional well-being of children and families in a safe, stable, nurturing environment as our children are our most valuable resources and will shape the future of the City of Bay City; and

WHEREAS, effective child abuse prevention programs succeed because of partnerships among The Crisis Center, multi-disciplinary partner agencies, community organizations, local government support, businesses and members of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Crisis Center and the City of Bay City strongly support the efforts of national, state, and local partners, and of every citizen to actively engage in public and private efforts, including conversations about what sexual violence and child abuse and neglect are, how to prevent them, and how to help survivors connect with services; and

WHEREAS, in the past year, The Crisis Center of Matagorda and Wharton County provided services to 164 adults survivors of sexual assault and 805 victims of child abuse; and

WHEREAS, during the month of April, The Crisis Center will be promoting public awareness of sexual violence and child abuse and neglect. On April 5th, ‘Start by Believing Day’ is an opportunity for

communities across the country to unify for those who have been the victims of sexual violence. Join the center and show survivors you believe by wearing teal. On April 7th, we encourage the citizens of the City of Bay City to participate in ‘Go Blue Day’ by wearing blue to support awareness of child abuse and neglect. On April 26th citizens may participate in ‘Denim Day’ by wearing denim in support of survivors of sexual violence. On April 21st, we will recognize survivors of abuse at our Light up the Square Event at the Matagorda County Courthouse; and

Month of April 2023
“Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Awareness Month”
in Bay City, Texas.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the City of Bay City, Texas to be affixed on this XX day of April, 2023.

Robert Nelson
Mayor
City of Bay City, Texas