



City of Mercer Island, Washington

Proclamation

WHEREAS, in Washington State, 45% of women and 22% of men report having experienced sexual violence in their lifetime; and;

WHEREAS, rape is among the most underreported crime for reasons that include victim's fear of being disbelieved or further traumatized within systems designed to support them. Additional barriers to reporting, such as language, immigration status, or gender and racial bias, reduce reporting even further; and

WHEREAS, in King County, more than 7,400 adults and children received specialized assistance from organizations with programming for sexual assault victims in 2019; and

WHEREAS, demand for services to help survivors heal has increased significantly since 2016, reflecting the cultural shift that is taking place that has prompted many survivors who have remained silent to now speak up and seek the help they need to heal; and

WHEREAS, King County is home to many organizations that provide culturally and linguistically specific services for survivors from various racial/ethnic, faith, and cultural communities, survivors who are immigrants and refugees, survivors who are LGBTQ, and survivors with disabilities, and these culturally specific services are critical to effectively respond to the specific needs and barriers many survivors face; and

WHEREAS, negative impacts of sexual violence trauma on women, men, children and youth include fear, concern for safety, symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, injury, and missed work or school; and

WHEREAS, working together to support our community's response to sexual violence, supporting survivors when they come forward, speaking out against and working to change harmful attitudes and actions, and engaging in sexual violence education and prevention work helps end sexual violence

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Benson Wong, Mayor of the City of Mercer Island, do hereby proclaim April 2020 as

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

in the City of Mercer Island and urge all residents to join advocates and communities throughout King County in taking action to prevent sexual violence by standing with survivors and proclaiming April 2020 SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH.

APPROVED, this 21st day of April 2020

Mayor Benson Wong

Proclamation No. 250

