



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month *Department of Health and partner agencies plan statewide sign-waving*

HONOLULU, HI – On March 20, Governor Josh Green, M.D., proclaimed April 2023 as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” (SAAM), which is part of a nationwide campaign to raise awareness about the issue of sexual violence. A statewide SAAM sign-waving is planned for Tuesday, April 4, including an event at the Hawai'i State Capitol from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. and at other locations and times across the islands.

This year's theme, “Foundations for the Future,” aims to envision a future without sexual violence through healthy relationships and safer communities. During the month of April, the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) and partner agencies are providing statewide trainings, events, and activities to bring awareness to the continuum of sexual violence from primary prevention to response and intervention.

“Sexual violence is common and starts early,” said Joanne Higashi, coordinator of the DOH Sexual Violence Prevention Program. “Stopping all forms of sexual violence before it begins is the goal of primary prevention activities.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- More than half of women, and almost one in three men, have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetimes.

- One in three women and about one in nine men have experienced sexual harassment in a public place.
- One in four women and one in 26 men in the United States have experienced rape or attempted rape.
- More than four in five female rape survivors reported that they were raped before age 25 and almost half were raped as a minor.

In Hawai'i, 1,714 adults and children received specialized services from sexual assault centers and 2,472 calls were made to the state's sex assault center hotlines in 2022.

“SAAM is our opportunity to recognize that sexual violence is preventable and impacts everyone in our community regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or disability,” said Paula Chun, executive director of the Hawai'i Coalition Against Sexual Assault (HCASA).

This year's partner agencies include the HCASA; Community and Crime Prevention Branch of the Department of the Attorney General Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division; University of Hawai'i Prevention, Awareness and Understanding (PAU) Violence Program; Sex Abuse Treatment Center of Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children; Child & Family Service Maui; Molokai Child Abuse Prevention Pathways; YWCA Hawai'i Island; YWCA Kaua'i; and Wai'anae Neighborhood Place.

SAAM Day of Action sign waving locations:

Location/Contact	Island
<p>State Capitol Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 415 South Beretania Street • 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. <p>Wai'anae Neighborhood Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85-888 Farrington Highway • 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. • (808) 696-4598 	O'ahu
<p>Location: TBD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact: Anthony, YWCA Hawai'i Island • (808) 854-0322 	Hawai'i Island
<p>54 South High Street, Wailuku (In front of the State Building)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. • Contact: Lindsey, CFS Maui Sexual Assault Center • (808) 264-3630 	Maui
4396 Rice Street, Lihue Kaua'i County Building	Kaua'i

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. • Contact: Amber, YWCA Kaua'i • (808) 245-5959 ext. 238 	
<p>Kaunakakai Library (Every Wednesday in April)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. • Contact: Titi, MCAPP • (808) 658-9629 	Moloka'i

To learn more about SAAM Sign-Waving events and about statewide sexual violence prevention and treatment services, visit the Sex Abuse Treatment Center at satchawaii.org.

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