

PROCLAMATION

Start by Believing Campaign

Whereas, the [City/County/Organization/Institution of ____] shares a critical concern for victims of sexual violence and intimate partner violence and a desire to support their needs for justice and healing; and

Whereas, sexual assault, rape, child sexual abuse, and domestic violence is of epidemic proportions with Utah having higher rates of these crimes than U.S. national rates. 1 in 3 Utah women experience sexual assault and/or domestic violence in their lifetimes and 1 in 7 Utah children experience child sexual abuse; and

Whereas, current estimates suggest as few as 1 in 5 sexual assaults will be reported to law enforcement and less than 3 percent will result in the conviction and incarceration of the perpetrator; and

Whereas, research documents that victims are far more likely to disclose their sexual assault to a friend or family member, and when these loved ones respond with doubt, shame, or blame, victims suffer additional negative effects on their physical and psychological well-being; and

Whereas, the Start by Believing public awareness campaign (a program of End Violence Against Women International) is designed to improve the responses of friends, family members, and community professionals, so they can help victims to access supportive resources and engage with the criminal justice system;

Whereas, A Bolder Way Forward supports the Start by Believing public awareness campaign to improve our collective response to survivors across Utah;

Now Therefore, Be it Proclaimed by all members of the [City Council/County Board/Board of Directors] that they support the Start by Believing public awareness campaign with A Bolder Way Forward and do hereby declare the first Wednesday of April each year to be **Start by Believing Day**.