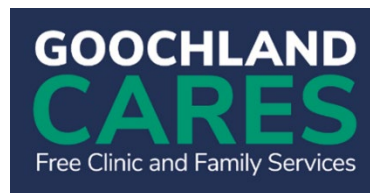


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For Immediate Release

Goochland, VA

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM).



Sexual Assault Awareness Month aims to raise public awareness about sexual violence and educate communities on how to prevent it. Sexual Assault happens when conduct of a sexual nature that is nonconsensual occurs through threat, coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation, and/or power of authority. It can range from cat calling, to unwanted touching, or to other forms of sexual violence, such as rape.

Sexual violence impacts everyone of all ages, races, genders, religions, people with or without disabilities, and regardless of social and economic status. According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center nearly 1 in 5 women in the U.S. have experienced rape or attempted rape some time in their lives. Nearly 1 in 71 men have experienced rape or attempted rape in the U.S.

GoochlandCares Sexual and Domestic Violence Program (SDV Program) serves survivors of sexual and domestic violence using their 24/7 hotline, court advocacy program, housing programs, shelter, and providing one on one support. "GoochlandCares Advocates work with survivors to address their trauma in a way that feels safe to them and at their own pace." says Krista Riggleson, MSW, SDV Program Coordinator.

Every March and April, The GoochlandCares SDV Program advocate staff teach a "Healthy Relationships" session for the Goochland High School 9th and 10th grade health classes. The purpose is to talk to teens about sexual consent when they are young to prevent sexual violence.

In 2022 the GoochlandCares SDV Program provided services and support for 118 Goochland County residents and managed 48 hotline calls. "Without this program many Goochland County residents would be in crisis without a lifeline for help," Krista reported.

DID YOU KNOW?

If you have questions or feel that yourself, a friend, or a coworker might be experiencing sexual violence please call the 24-hour **confidential** hotline - **804-980-6267** - to receive resources, information, and support.

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GoochlandCares is a private, 501(c)(3), non-profit organization that provides basic human services and health care to our Goochland neighbors in need. GoochlandCares envisions an equitable community in which all persons have their basic needs met, empowering them to lead lives of self-dignity and well-being.