

Preserve the ohana, live our values: Step up to stop sexual assault

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Every day the Air Force is committed to preventing sexual assault, but one month a year, there is a special observance. This April, the military will observe its 10th Annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month with the theme, "Live Our Values: Step Up and Stop Sexual Assault."

Sexual violence is a devastating and intolerable crime, affecting men, women and children of all races, ages, cultures, economic situations and abilities in homes, schools and communities. Therefore, we have chosen as our Hickam theme, "Preserve the Ohana."

Here at Hickam we are actively joining the campaign. It takes everyone getting involved to put an end to sexual assault in our community. This year's SAAM campaign event kicked off April 1 with a joint proclamation signing at Hickam Memorial Theater by Col. Johnny Roscoe, 15th Wing commander; Capt. Mark Manfredi, chief of staff of Navy Region Hawaii.

Other opportunities to get involved include the monthly wing fun run, youth education program, motorcycle ride along with the Ruff Ryders, teal ribbon campaign and the single Airmen retreat.

Commanders and leaders can help by having purposeful engagement, providing a space for informational displays, recognizing victim advocates in the unit, and encouraging participation in SAAM planned activities.

Finally, the SAPR office is working in our community to coordinate and provide quality services and assistance to sexual assault survivors by providing 24-hour hot-line services, offering crisis intervention and advocacy during medical exams, criminal proceedings, and throughout the healing process. This is done with the outstanding support of leadership and nationally certified unit victim advocates.

Team Hickam and our partner units, I challenge us to end sexual assault and to know that every Airman has the inherent right to safety and respect. Let's "Live Our Values: Step Up to Stop Sexual Assault; thus we can 'preserve the ohana.'" For more information or to volunteer, contact the SAPR office at (808) 448-3192.

