

START BY

believing

startbybelieving.org

A program of End Violence Against Women International

DA asks: 'Start by Believing' to end sexual violence

From staff and news service reports

District Attorney Matt Ballard is heading up an effort to fight sexual assault with a simple but effective campaign called "Start By Believing".

Ballard said he is asking victims, the public and the media to gather on the Rogers County Courthouse steps at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 6, to kick off the program.

Research shows if a person discloses a sexual assault and the first reaction he or she receives is negative the

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likelihood the victim will seek professional help or report to police plummets, the prosecutor's office said.

It is a terrifying given that, on average, a rapist will attack six people, so every attack that goes unreported could well mean five more rapes and victory for the perpetrator.

Law enforcement, survivors, victim advocates and members of the community will all attend the Courthouse event.

The DA's office said, "Show your support for victims of sexual assault and take a stand by taking the pledge that if someone tells you he or she has been sexually assaulted **START BY BELIEVING.**"

Start by Believing pledge sheets to sign and show support will be provided.

Ballard says "Making sure all victims receive proper treatment and are encouraged to report is key to a safer and healthier community."

For more information contact: michelle.lowry@dac.state.ok.us or visit www.startbybelieving.org.