



NEWS RELEASE

CITY OF HOPEWELL

300 N. Main Street, Hopewell, Virginia 23860 • (804) 541-2243 • fax (804) 541-2412
www.hopewellva.gov • email: info@hopewellva.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Media Contact:
Shantae Wheeler, Executive Director
swheeler@hopewellva.gov

Bridging the Gap Gun Violence Awareness Day Community Event

Hopewell, Virginia - The Healthy Families Department, in collaboration with community partners, is proud to sponsor the upcoming "Bridging the Gap - Gun Violence Awareness Day" community event. This event aims to educate the community on gun safety and awareness while providing a safe and enjoyable environment for children to play. The event will take place on Friday, June 2, from 3-6 PM at the Atwater Soccer Complex.

With a mission to reduce gun violence and promote safe and healthy households, the event promises to be a free, family-friendly resource fair. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities and access valuable resources throughout the day.

One of the event highlights is the captivating "Storytime Live" featuring live performance poetry by Patrick Mamou and the Petersburg Symphony Ensemble, proudly sponsored by the Petersburg Symphony Orchestra through Culture Works. Children can also enjoy interactive activities with author Theresa Caldwell and other authors.

To address community questions and concerns, two educational panels will be held. The "Law Enforcement Support" panel will provide insights into law enforcement's role in addressing gun violence, while the "Community Support in Time of Need" panel will focus on the collective efforts of the community to support those affected by gun violence. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in Q&A sessions with panelists.

Ensuring firearm safety, the event will distribute gunlocks to attendees. Hopewell Police will conduct a demonstration on the proper use of gunlocks, emphasizing responsible gun ownership and storage. The event will also feature guest speakers, including community and faith-based leaders, grief counselors,

and a support group specifically tailored to families who have experienced the impact of gun violence. Additionally, a dedicated memorial area will be set up to honor and remember loved ones lost to gun violence.

"Bridging the Gap - Gun Violence Awareness Day" has garnered support from various community partners, including public safety officials from Petersburg, Prince George, and Hopewell. Over 20 community partners and resource vendors will be present to offer valuable information and support to attendees.

In addition to the informative sessions, the event will feature food truck vendors, ensuring that attendees can enjoy a variety of refreshments. Children will have the opportunity to engage in fun activities, including a bouncy house, with assistance from Hopewell and Petersburg Recreation & Parks.

For more information about the "Bridging the Gap - Gun Violence Awareness Day" community event, please reach out to Shantae Wheeler, Executive Director, at swheeler@hopewellva.gov, or Keisha Pettaway, Program Supervisor, at kpettaway@hopewellva.gov.

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The Department of Healthy Families
(Petersburg, Hopewell, & Prince George)

 **Healthy Families**
Hopewell and Prince George County

 **LOVING STEPS**
Living Well - Together Better

BRIDGING THE GAP

Gun Violence Awareness Event

June 2, 2023 3-6PM

ATWATER SOCCER COMPLEX
101 Atwater Road, Hopewell

For more information, call 804-352-4018

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