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## **Holding Adults Accountable: Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine Announces New Indictments in Steubenville Rape Case**

Four adults affiliated with Steubenville City Schools have been [indicted](#) by a special Grand Jury in connection with the [2012 rape](#) of a teen girl for which two football players were found delinquent in March. In a press conference held today in Steubenville, Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine announced that Michael McVey, Superintendent of Steubenville City Schools, has been indicted on 5 counts including tampering with evidence and obstruction of justice. Matthew Belardine, a former assistant high school football coach for Steubenville City Schools, has been indicted on 4 counts including allowing underage drinking. And Seth Fluharty and Lynette Gorman, both school employees, have been indicted for failure to report child abuse or neglect. Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine stated, "This started out being about the kids, but it's also just as much about the parents, about the grown-ups, about the adults." DeWine also stated, "There was an attempt to protect institutions...rather than worrying about the actual victim...We must treat rape and sexual assault as a serious crime of violence that it is...and not hide the truth."

Today's announcement comes on the heels of the same Grand Jury indicting William Rhinaman, director of technology for Steubenville City Schools, on charges of tampering with evidence, obstruction of justice, obstructing official business, and perjury.

"This case has demonstrated that we all play a role in preventing sexual violence and supporting survivors," says Katie Hanna, Executive Director of the [Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence](#). "While teens were responsible for committing the crime of rape, adults played a role in allowing the social conditions to exist that support rape culture. Rape culture exists when sexual violence is minimized, excused or even encouraged as part of 'boys being boys.' Student survivors not only deserve justice, but they also deserve to live and study in a community of

responsible adults whose job is to support them and to intervene before, during or after a crime has been committed. Accountability is a crucial component to ending sexual violence."

DeWine also stated that "What happened here in Steubenville can and does sadly happen across this nation...it is not unique to Steubenville." Rape is an epidemic that happens far too often in every community. Nationally, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old.<sup>1</sup> In Ohio in 2011, 60% of all victims reporting to law enforcement were juvenile victims and the average age of victimization was 15.<sup>2</sup>

Many youth and adults chose to do nothing the evening a teen girl was raped. We have to equip youth with the tools to help prevent sexual violence, and we have to educate our teachers, coaches, school administrators and parents with tools to talk with youth about sexual violence and their responsibilities as adults to report these crimes and intervene.

The Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence hosted training on [Coaching Boys into Men](#) with Futures Without Violence on October 23. Coaching Boys into Men equips high school coaches with the tools and resources they need to build strong teams, and teach their athletes that violence *never* equals strength. During the 12-week curriculum, young athletes learn the importance of respect and nonviolence amongst themselves and their peers, and that rape is wrong and a criminal act. Hanna states that "Coaches and schools play an important leadership role in preventing sexual and intimate partner violence. This training is a first step in building a network of coaches and schools around the state who are committed to prevention. We invite other coaches, parents and school administrators to get involved in prevention. We owe it to survivors and all of our communities."

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### **About Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence**

As Ohio's statewide coalition, OAESV advocates for comprehensive responses and rape crisis services for survivors and empowers communities to prevent sexual violence.

For more information, visit [www.oaesv.org](http://www.oaesv.org), [www.twitter.com/OhioAllianceESV](https://twitter.com/OhioAllianceESV) and <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Alliance-to-End-Sexual-Violence/333035558365>.

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<sup>1</sup> Finkelhor, D., Hotaling, G., Lewis, I. A., & Smith, C. (1990). Sexual abuse in a national survey of adult men and women: Prevalence, characteristics and risk factors. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 14, 19-28. doi:10.1016/0145-2134(90)90077-7

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Department of Public Safety, Office of Criminal Justice Services, Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System. (2013). Retrieved from [http://portals.ocjs.ohio.gov/oibrs\\_portal/faq.aspx](http://portals.ocjs.ohio.gov/oibrs_portal/faq.aspx)