

Statement of Principles

Breaking Men's Silence to End Men's Violence

If it were between countries, we'd call it a war. If it were a disease, we'd call it an epidemic. If it were an oil spill, we'd call it a disaster. But it is happening to women, and it's just an everyday affair. It is violence against women and girls. It is sexual harassment at work. It is the beating or the blow that millions of women suffer each and every day. It is rape at home or on a date. It is murder.

There's no secret enemy pulling the trigger, no unseen virus that leads to death. It is only men. Not all men, not most men, but far too many men.

And just who are these men? They are regular guys; men from all social backgrounds and of all nationalities and ages; rich men and poor men; men who work in factories and men who sit behind desks.

Regular guys, however, have helped create a climate of fear and mistrust among women. Many of our sisters, our mothers and our daughters, our girlfriends and our wives do not feel safe. At night they can not walk to the store for groceries without wondering who's walking behind them. It's hard for them to turn on the television without seeing displays of brutality against women and other men. Often, even the sanctuary of the home is not safe, as violence against women is disproportionately committed by men they know intimately. All women are imprisoned in a culture of violence.

Men's violence against women isn't deviant behaviour. We have created cultures where men use violence against other men, where we wreak violence on the environment, where we see violence as the best means to solve differences between nations, and where men enjoy forms of power and privilege that women do not have.

Men have been defined as part of the problem. The White Ribbon Campaign believes that men also have a role and a responsibility to be part of the solution. Confronting men's violence requires nothing less than a commitment to full equality for women and a redefinition of what it means to be men. To discover a meaning to manhood that isn't about power, control or violence.

With all of our love, respect and support for the women in our lives:



**WHITE RIBBON
CAMPAIGN**

- We urge men around the world to wear a White Ribbon each year or organize activities between November 25 and December 10, or at other times of the year. Wearing a White Ribbon is a personal, public pledge *to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women and girls*. The White Ribbon is a catalyst for change, change which must start from within.

- Violence against women and girls is one of the most serious human rights violations in the world. We ask unions, professional associations, student groups, corporations, religious institutions, the media, non-governmental and governmental organizations to make this an issue of priority.
- We support comprehensive laws against all forms of violence against women, funding for programs for survivors of this violence, such as shelters for battered women and rape crisis centres. We believe in services to help violent men change their behaviour.
- We call for large-scale educational and awareness campaigns to bring attention to this issue.
- We believe that respect for girls and women and equality between men and women are preconditions to ending the violence.
- We urge people to organize local and national White Ribbon Campaigns, open to all men and boys, across the political, social and economic spectrum. Violence against women has been one of the longest wars, the greatest epidemics, the biggest disasters. With strength and love, we commit ourselves to working for a future with no violence against women.

THE WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN
Our Future Has No Violence Against Women
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Visit our blog at:

ourfuturehasnoviolenceagainstwomen.blogspot.com

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