



16 Days of Activism Day 10

Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in our world today. Sadly, such violence remains largely unreported due to the impunity, silence, stigma and shame surrounding it. In general terms, this violence manifests itself in physical, sexual and psychological forms, including:

- intimate partner violence (battering, psychological abuse, marital rape, femicide);
- sexual violence and harassment (rape, forced sexual acts, unwanted sexual advances, child sexual abuse, forced marriage, street harassment, stalking, cyber-harassment);
- human trafficking (slavery, sexual exploitation);
- female genital mutilation; and
- child marriage.

Raising awareness about the prevalence of gender-based violence and its devastating effects on individuals and society as a whole is key to spreading the clear message of zero tolerance of all forms of gender-based violence. It is also key to informing survivors of their rights and the support services available to them. In addition to international campaigns such as the 16 Days of Activism, there are ways that everyone can help raise awareness:

- Tell your own story; listen to others' stories.
- Buy a book about peace, kindness and respect for a local school or library.
- Help publicize efforts in your community to end violence against women, such as participating or sponsoring a Red Sands event, a Take Back the Night march, a What Were You Wearing display, or a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women event.
- Use social media to raise awareness about violence against women and girls and programs working to end it.
- Donate to local domestic violence shelters.
- Attend public forums about public safety, changes in the law, sexual harassment and stalking.
- Lobby for stricter laws relating to all forms of violence against women and girls and enforcement of those laws.
- Give to organizations working to end gender-based violence.

It will take more than the 16 Days of Activism to end gender-based violence, but we can take steps each day to make a more peaceful and gender-based violence free world.



