



HISTORY OF DENIM DAY

ROME – ITALY, 1997

MORNING

An 18-year-old girl is picked up by her 45-year-old instructor for her very first driving lesson. An hour later, raped and abandoned by him in an alley, she has to make her way back home. Undeterred, she reports the incident and the case is prosecuted. The driving instructor is convicted of rape and sentenced to jail.

MONTHS LATER

The perpetrator appeals the sentence. The case makes it all the way to the Italian Supreme Court, where the case against the driving instructor is overturned and the perpetrator is released.

In a statement released by the Head Judge, he argued, "Because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them...and by removing the jeans...it was no longer rape but consensual sex." Enraged by the verdict, the women in the Italian Parliament launched into immediate action and protested by wearing jeans on the steps of the Italian Parliament building. This call to action motivated and emboldened the California Senate and Assembly to do the same—and a movement was born.

This year Womanspace, Inc. is participating in Denim Day in NJ, a rape prevention education campaign. We are asking community members, elected officials, businesses, and students to make a social statement with their fashion statement—and wear jeans as a visible protest against myths that surround sexual assault.





BREAK IT DOWN: A SEXUAL ABUSE/ASSAULT DICTIONARY

SEXUAL VIOLENCE includes all acts of sexual violation such as rape, forced sodomy, forced oral copulation, acts committed with foreign objects and any other unwanted or unwelcome sexual activity. Sexual assault or rape can happen to anyone. People of any age, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation or physical ability can experience sexual assault.

SEXUAL ABUSE can be defined as forced, coerced, unwelcome, unwanted sexual contact. It may include physical and non-physical sexual acts.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/RAPE is a sexual act of forced penetration, no matter how slight, by a penis to the vagina, anus or mouth; or penetration to the vagina or anus by a finger, tongue or foreign object. It is important to note that, in the State of New Jersey, penetration with a finger, tongue or foreign object is considered the same as with a penis.

CONSENT IS...

- Willing participation
- Based on choice
- Active not passive
- Based on equal power
- Only possible when neither party is incapacitated due to drug or alcohol consumption
- Is given not assumed
- Is not the absence of a "no"
- Is given during each experience and can be withdrawn at any point

CONSENT IS NOT...

- A drunken "yes"
- Given when one person is under the influence of substances
- Giving in because of fear
- Agreeing to sex because of fear or threats
- Purchased
- Going along in order to gain approval
- The absence of a "no"
- Capitulation
- Silence
- Coercion

RESPECTFUL SEXUALITY is about how we honor ourselves and how we treat others. It is about having knowledge of all the risks and ramifications of engaging in sexual behavior and choosing a path that is respectful of both parties involved. Consent and communication is essential to respectful sexuality.





FACT SHEET DID YOU KNOW?

- Every two minutes, somewhere in America, someone is sexually assaulted. (www.rainn.org)
- 1 in 4 teenage girls who have been in relationships reveal they have been pressured to perform oral sex or engage in intercourse. (Liz Claiborne Inc. study on teen dating abuse conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2005.)
- Twenty-four percent of 14 to 17-year-olds know at least one student who has been the victim of dating violence, yet 81% of parents either believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they don't know if it is an issue. (Survey commissioned by the Empower Program, sponsored by Liz Claiborne Inc. and conducted by Knowledge Networks, Social Control, Verbal Abuse, and Violence Among Teenagers, December 2000)
- 1 in 5 female students reported being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner. (JAMA Vol. 286 No. 5 2001.)
- Teens 16 to 24 were three and one-half times more likely than the general population to be survivors of sexual abuse/assault. (U.S. Department of Justice, 1996.)
- In 3 out of 4 incidents of sexual assault, the offender was not a stranger. (DOJ, 1997)
- One in 3 girls and one in 4 to 5 boys will be sexually abused at some point in their childhood, according to most reliable studies of child sexual abuse in the United States (Finkelhor, 1994).
- Only 3% of high school students who had been physically or sexually abused by a dating partner reported the abuse to an authority figure; only 6% told a family member. 61% of the respondents indicated that they told a friend and 30% indicated that they told no one at all. (The Prevention Researcher, 2000.)
- **Most people know at least one person who has experienced or will experience sexual assault or rape. Everyone has a role in preventing sexual assault.**





BYSTANDER EDUCATION: ASSESS SAFETY, BE WITH OTHERS & CARE FOR SURVIVORS

Questions to ask before I take action:

- ✓ Am I aware there is a problem or risky situation?
- ✓ Is it safe to help?
- ✓ Do I recognize someone needs help?
- ✓ Do I see others and myself as part of the solution?

Questions to ask during the situation:

- ✓ How can I keep myself safe?
- ✓ What are my available options?
- ✓ Are there others I may call upon for help?
- ✓ What are the benefits/costs for taking action?

Decision to take action:

- ✓ When to act?
- ✓ Are resources available (people, phone information)?

How to intervene safely:

- ✓ Call police or someone else in authority.
- ✓ Tell another person. Being with others is a good idea when situations look dangerous.
- ✓ Yell for help.
- ✓ Ask a friend in a potentially dangerous situation if he/she wants to leave and then make sure that he/she gets home safely.
- ✓ Ask a victim if he/she is okay. Provide options and a listening ear.
- ✓ Call the local crisis center for support and options.





PLEDGE FOR NON-VIOLENCE

I, _____, hereby pledge to use my strength for efforts of non-violence and commit as best I can to become a nonviolent person.

I will actively engage in my community to ensure that it is a safe space that is free of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that justify violence.

I will challenge misperceptions that promote violence within myself and others.

I will use my voice to stand up for and educate others.

I will listen carefully to others, including those who disagree with me, and to consider their feelings and needs rather than insist on having my own way.

I will respect individuals' rights to choice.

I pledge to make my community a place of equality and justice, and freedom from oppression and violence.

I pledge to make non-violence a way of life in my dealings with people.

I recognize and accept the definition of consensual sexual activity. I will wait for a continual yes and make sure that my partner understands consent.

I will not engage in any sexual activity without first getting the consent of my partner(s).

X: _____
My Strength is NOT for Hurting

