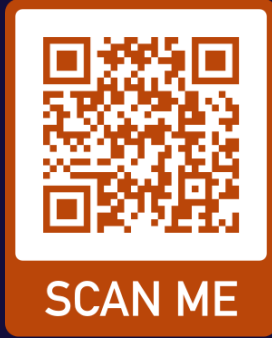




# 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

NOV 25<sup>TH</sup> – DEC 10<sup>TH</sup>



## Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

16 Days of Activism is the UN Women's annual global campaign against gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence requires everyone to take a stand to prevent it from happening. Because there is #NoExcuse and it is everyone's issue.

There's more than one way to get involved – we've put together a few events, but you can also advocate for change by knowing what support is available, understanding the scale of the problem and speaking out against harmful behaviour.

If someone doesn't use physical force (e.g., hitting), then it's not really gender-based violence – this is **false**.

Gender-based violence includes a broad spectrum of abuse, harm and violence such as emotional/psychological abuse (e.g., threats, humiliation), economic abuse (e.g., controlling access to money), social abuse (e.g., harming relationships or reputation), sexual abuse (e.g., sexual assault) and physical abuse (e.g., strangulation).

Only gay men rape other men – this is **false**.

People of all sexual orientations can rape, whether they are a certain sexual orientation is irrelevant.

At a certain point, sex is just going to happen – this is **false**.

Consent to sexual activity is not implied by behaviour or the relationship between individuals. Consent in the morning does not mean consent in the evening and you can always change your mind.

I met her on Tinder so she must be up for it – this is **false**.

Online dating or hook-up apps are a common way to meet people, but this does not equate to consent to have sex (or other sexual activities).

If someone was *actually* raped or sexually assaulted, they wouldn't seek out sex so soon – this is **false.**

People process trauma in different ways, they may not always act how you expect but this doesn't mean they haven't experienced trauma.

He didn't say no, he must have wanted it – this is **false.**

Whilst consent can be communicated in different ways, the *absence* of consent communication is not the same as *communicating* consent. Assuming what someone's wants to do from what they *didn't* do is never okay.

He must be innocent, the jury said he wasn't guilty – this is **false.**

A 'not guilty' verdict doesn't automatically mean someone is innocent, it means that, based on the evidence presented, their guilt could not be proven *beyond a reasonable doubt.*

If it was really that bad, they'd leave the relationship – this is **false.**

There are many reasons that people of any gender stay in abusive relationships. Staying is not a reason to excuse the abuser's behaviour nor an opportunity to blame the person staying for the abuser's behaviour. The only person to blame is the abuser.



What happens between two people in a relationship is private and no-one else's business – this is **false**.

Violence against women and girls and gender-based violence comes at high economic cost to society. This does not account for the psychological and physical impact to the individual and their children. Viewing these forms of violence as a 'private' matter, excuses, condones and permits the behaviour. Gender-based violence is everybody's business.

Most people who are raped or sexually assaulted don't know the perpetrator – this is **false**.

Typically, the perpetrator, or abuser, is known to the person. They may have an existing relationship or friendship with them or, they might be a former sexual partner. Regardless of the relationship, it is still sexual violence.

Online threats and insults about sexual violence is just harmless trolling – this is **false**.

Online or 'cyber' sexual violence is no less serious than sexual violence that occurs 'offline'. Normalizing online violence, sexual or otherwise, excuses it and makes other people think it's okay. Cyber sexual violence is still violence and can cause actual harm – sometimes this amounts to violence in real life.

Women often lie about their experiences – this is **false**.

False allegations about gender-based violence are rare. Indeed, the number of women making false allegations of sexual violence is estimated to be no higher than those making false reports about other crimes.

My partner needs to know where I am all the time because they love me and are very protective – this is **false**.

Controlling behaviours like needing to know where a person is all the time is a form of coercive control. Coercive control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation or other forms of abuse that harm, punish or frighten someone. This is a type of violence. Coercive behaviours can deprive someone of their independence and make them feel isolated from any form of support – this increases the chance they will stay with their abuser.

Sexual harassment is something that only happens to women – this is **false**.

Sexual harassment happens to everyone, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. Gay and bisexual men, for example, may face harassment by other men to reinforce traditional male stereotypes.

If he's turned on, then he must want to have sex – this is **false**.

Sometimes we have physiological reactions that we can't control that have nothing to do with whether we want to have sex with someone. This doesn't mean that the person is to blame for what happened. Physical arousal does not mean it's okay to assume consent.

Consent is only for sex, anything else is fair game – this is **false**.

There are no activities that are consensual by default. Any sexual activity, kissing, touching someone over their clothes and so on, requires consent. Consent doesn't have to be transactional (one person asks and one person gives), it can be on-going communication with your sexual partner about what you both like/dislike, what you're both comfortable with and how you both communicate.