

"From this day forward, I promise to be part of the solution in ending violence against women."



Massachusetts White Ribbon Day 2009

A Men's Initiative Project of Jane Doe Inc.

Press Conference Remarks by Craig Norberg-Bohm, Coordinator of the Men's Initiative for Jane Doe Inc.

Governor Patrick, Mary Lauby, Representative Koutoujian, Jarrett Barrios, Juan Carlos Arean, and other respected guests and allies, I am proud to stand together with you today, for this most important declaration.

Today as men, we are taking responsibility. And we are celebrating men who hold to the highest standards of manhood, for respect and safety.

By declaring MA White Ribbon Day, we have opened a new chapter in the wider work for making peace and men ending men's violence against women. This is a chapter that includes men and is our promise that we have opened the door to deeper steps.

And our first act is simple and straight forward and public. To make this promise for safety and respect.

I am a father and I'll be damned if I will raise my son in our world, as violent as it is, and not do something about it.

Today, I am very proud, to be that father to my boy. Today he will experience the conviction of hundreds of men to find a solution to violence against women, and in so doing, find the way to be better men. This is what I want my son to see and to be influenced by. To see men who care to be better. Thus, to be himself better, and therefore to make the world a better, safer place.

If anyone asks if a simple white ribbon can have an impact, the answer is a resounding yes.

Over 300 ambassadors have joined our campaign. Across the state, activities are taking place in more than a 20 cities and towns and at more than 30 Middle Schools and High Schools

With each new ribbon that is put on, we have encouraged another man and boy to take this pledge for himself, those he cares about, his community and our world.

Social norms are defined by what values we share as a community, what we teach our children and what we personally help one another live up to. They guide our education.

Imagine eight entire High Schools in one county alone, holding assemblies with all of the students taking the White Ribbon Pledge and learning about how they can personally help end violence against women.

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Imagine one High School where all of the students are wearing White T Shirts to mark White Ribbon Day.

Imagine all of the police cars in one entire county with white ribbons on their antenna, and what a message that will convey.

Imagine numbers of hospitals, town councils and universities marking the day with proclamation ceremonies.

Imagine a day long conference for Brazilian Men on the question of manhood and ending violence.

Imagine a basketball tournament where for half time at center court the audience is led in the White Ribbon Day Pledge.

And now imaging that all of this is taking place right now, this week and today!

Be proud, this is our greatest celebration!

If today is the first you have heard of this, take a moment with us and consider how you can help end violence against women. Visit our website, janedoe.org, where you can send a Valentine's Day card with the message of peace at home, safety and respect, romance and love.

Thank you!