

Enter a Parade Float



July 4th Parade, Chesterfield, MA
Photo by Gail Kielson

What's a Parade Float?

Many communities have parades holidays such as St. Patrick's Day, Veterans Day, or July 4th and invite local groups to participate with banners and floats. High schools and colleges have homecoming floats as do many gay pride celebrations. Whether on foot carrying signs and banners or on a decorated float, these are opportunities for creative messaging about ending sexual and domestic violence in the community.

Why would I want to participate?

As with all of these projects, visibility is the key element that impacts our social norms. Marching together in a parade is a fun and practical way for men and boys to work together and speak out against sexual assault and domestic violence. Women and men of all ages and backgrounds will see an example of a peaceful, caring masculinity, and recognize that there are men looking to stop violence against women. The entire process of organizing and gathering the volunteers, building the float and the march itself can be orchestrated and performed by men and boys of the community. Parades are great fun, great visibility and a great recruitment opportunity.

Massachusetts Examples:

Currently two towns in Massachusetts organize floats by men and boys with the message of "Strong Men Don't Bully, Our Hands are Not for Hitting." Both are part of July 4th parades, one in Gloucester in Northeast MA and the other in Chesterfield in Western MA. The Gloucester example was the first and operates in support of HAWC (Help for Abused Women and Children), located in Salem. Now in its 7th year, this float is a welcomed addition to the parade and an annual tradition. The float in Chesterfield is in its 3rd year and is operated by the Hilltown Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Websites and Resources

www.strongmendontbully.com

The Hilltown Coalition Against Domestic Violence, dqweeds@gmail.com or 413-296-4088