



# What is the White Ribbon Campaign (WRC)?

The WRC is the largest effort in the world of men working to end men's violence against women. In 1991, a handful of men in Canada decided they had a responsibility to urge men to speak out against violence against women. They decided that wearing a white ribbon would be a symbol of men's opposition to men's violence against women. After only six weeks preparation, as many as 100,000 men across Canada wore a white ribbon. Many others were drawn into discussion and debate on the issue of men's violence.

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**It relies on volunteer support and financial contributions from individuals and organizations.**

#### **How did the WRC get started?**

In 1991, a handful of men in Canada decided they had a responsibility to urge men to speak out against violence against women. They decided that wearing a white ribbon would be a symbol of men's opposition to men's violence against women. After only six weeks preparation, as many as one hundred thousand men across Canada wore a white ribbon. Many others were drawn into discussion and debate on the issue of men's violence. There are now White Ribbon Campaigns operating in many countries around the world.

The UK Branch of WRC was started in 2004.

#### **What does it mean to wear a white ribbon?**

Wearing a white ribbon is a personal pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women. Each year, we urge men and boys to wear a ribbon for one or two weeks, starting on November 25, the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women

#### **What happens during White Ribbon Week?**

We urge men and boys to wear a ribbon, including one on their coat so the ribbon will be visible while they're outdoors. We encourage men to talk in schools, workplaces, and places of worship about the problem of violence.

The problem does not stop with physical violence. There are forms of emotional violence—from sexist joking, to sexual harassment at work, to other domineering forms of behaviour. By remaining silent about these things, we allow other men to poison our working and learning environments.

The good news is that more and more men want to make a difference. Caring men are tired of the sexism that hurts the women around them.

**We're not male bashers because we're men, working with men, who care about what happens in the lives of men.**

## **Violence against Women...**

**If it were between countries, we'd call it a war.**

**If it were a disease, we'd call it an epidemic.**

**If it were an oil spill, we'd call it a disaster.**

**But it is happening to women, and it's just an everyday affair.**

**It is violence against women.**

**It is sexual harassment at work and sexual abuse of the young.**

**It is the beating or the blow**

**that millions of women suffer each and every day.**

**It is rape at home or on a date.**

**It is murder.**

**There's no secret enemy pulling the trigger.**

**No unseen virus that leads to death.**

**It is only men.**

**Not all men, but far too many men...**

**... and just who are these men?**

**Just regular guys.**

**Men from all social backgrounds and of all colours and ages.**

**Rich men and poor men,**

**men who toil in the fields**

**and men who sit behind desks.**

*Michael Kaufman*

*Founder Member of The White Ribbon Campaign (WRC)*



**An end to violence towards women**