

Help end sexual assault on women

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A young woman is gang-raped walking home from a party. Her life and the lives of her friends and family changed forever. Another stain on the community and inevitable commentary that "she should have known better" and "what was she thinking walking alone after drinking?" One consistency with every other story of assault and domestic violence we've seen in recent years: the violence is perpetrated by men. Why should this young woman be blamed for doing something that men do every night? Sure, she could have been more careful but that fact doesn't give any man the right to rape her. Carelessness does not justify sick brutality.

This will not stop until men take responsibility for their own actions, and for the actions of other men. This will not stop until we take responsibility for the pain, anguish and daily fear that our sisters, partners, daughters, mothers and friends have lived with throughout their lives. This will not stop until men decide to acknowledge that 1 out of every 4 women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime. Most often it will be by a man.

MESA, Moving to End Sexual Assault, has been doing good work for years attempting to deal with the aftermath of this epidemic, to comfort, to guide, to educate. For too long the responsibility for this effort has been borne by good, caring women but there are growing numbers of men who are also involved: as volunteers on the only 24/7 rape crisis hotline in Boulder county, as peer educators, as discussion leaders with other men, as advocates and activists. As friends. If this most recent example of violence moves you, if you have women in your life for whom you care, you should check out www.movingtoendsexualassault.org.

Another woman assaulted on our streets. Life unalterably affected.

Someone's daughter, someone's sister, someone's friend. This is NOT a women's problem; It's a problem FOR women. This is a men's problem.

Help end it.

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