Denim Day Shows Support for Sexual Violence Survivors

Statement of Alderwoman Chantia Lewis
April 24, 2019

Every April, millions of people across the world show their support for sexual assault survivors by participating in Denim Day (today - April 24, 2019), a sexual violence prevention and education campaign. Wearing jeans on Denim Day has become an international symbol of protest against the damaging attitudes surrounding sexual assault in our communities and in the judicial system. In 1998, the Italian Supreme Court overruled a rape conviction on the grounds that the victim wore tight jeans and may have helped her attacker remove them, implying the attack on her was consensual sex. Outraged by the decision, women in the Italian Parliament wore jeans the next day, standing in solidarity with the victim and sparking a worldwide movement and discussion on sexual violence.

On this day, I encourage residents to reflect on how individuals, institutions and elected officials talk about sexual assault and how we treat survivors. Denim Day is a reminder that no matter how far we have come in recent years, we still have work to do to combat the misconceptions that surround sexual violence.

The simplest way to make an impact is to start in your own community. As a member of the Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, I have seen the transformative impact of protecting victims and survivors of sexual violence and holding perpetrators accountable. Today, I stand in solidarity with victims and survivors, and I encourage residents to do the same.

If you or someone you know has experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, these agencies can help:

24-Hour Crisis Help Lines
IMPACT 211
Safe Path (Questions about Youth Sexual Violence) 414-271-9523
Sexual Assault Treatment Center 414-219-5555

-More-
Shelters
Sojourner Truth House 414-933-2722
Milwaukee Women’s Center Refuge 414-671-6140
Milwaukee Rescue Mission 414-344-2211

For a complete list of available resources and more information about sexual violence prevention, please visit the Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault’s website at https://city.milwaukee.gov/health/staysafe/health/mCDVSA#.XMB_WrdKgdU