

16 DAY OF ACTIVISM CAMPAIGN

2015 THEME: "FROM PEACE IN THE HOME TO PEACE IN THE WORLD: MAKE EDUCATION SAFE FOR ALL!"

Line of Hope Project

A major campaign to help protect children from sexual abuse is underway in all provinces of Zimbabwe. Line of Hope Program, the country's only campaign solely dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse, is undertaking the project to spread prevention messages and ensure the communities and adults are equipped with the right information to help them protect children from sexual harm. These are ambitious plans, but we are an ambitious campaign. We want as many trainees as possible to become aware of child sexual abuse issues, including warning signs to look for in children and adults, so that more children and women are protected.

Protection of the Environment

Line of Hope program turns unused wireless programs into support for victims of rape and domestic violence and protects the environment by disposing of wireless phones in an environmentally sound way.

This program will involve professionals, parents, carers, high school and college students and other guardians completing training and awareness sessions, public education materials such as posters, leaflets and flyers being distributed and the unveiling of a new online tool for adults to become familiar with the issue of child sexual abuse, where the risks lie, what they can do to minimise those risks and where they can go for more help and advice.

Specifically, Women's Comfort Corner Foundation is calling for:

- A national public information campaign to raise awareness of the scale of child abuse and the steps we can all take to prevent it.
- Education for the communities, parents, professionals, high school and college students, administrators and carers to help prevent child abuse including resilience building in children, open and honest communication and implementing and respecting boundaries.
- Education for children and young people in schools and youth settings on respectful relationships, sexual boundaries and appropriate touch.
- Specific training on child abuse prevention for those who work with children and families including on how to identify and respond to signs of child abuse.
- Therapeutic services for children and families who suffer child sexual abuse.

Through these connections – and hours of tireless work from all involved – we have made incredible progress. We hope to inspire to enlist their creativity so that they too can positively affect the lives of our nation's children and women.

Babies, children and women are raped daily. This heartbreaking occurrence resulted in the genesis of **Line of Hope Project** emanating from a project which caught our attention during our visa to the USA some years back. The prevalence of child sexual abuse demands innovative approaches to prevent further victimisation. The online environment provides new opportunities to expand existing child sexual abuse prevention trainings that target the community, high school and university students including adult gatekeepers and allow for large scale interventions that are fiscally viable. Research findings tell us that high school and university students like to learn with mobile technology and that use of technology for the prevention program can make a difference in **how** they learn. We sincerely hope that through education initiatives like these, there will be a reduction of sexual violence and bullying related issues on campus and schools through motivational feedback, social norms and education. That is why we are championing the use of technology for training, to better engage children and help them be more successful.

Through technology and our expertise we will transform teaching and learning. We will provide rich interactive content and resources, at no charge, to the trainees through the free online program. The **Line of Hope Schools Program** is an initiative designed to reduce incidents of child abuse through the use of technology to improve student performance and drive student interest in to reduce sexual violence and its negative consequences through an engaging and efficacious learning experience.

The goals of The Line of Hope in the Facilitator Led Program are to achieve:

- Increases in teacher and student proficiency with technology
- Increases in student engagement
- Increases in student achievement

Line of Hope Project was designed to **Inspire, Empower, Engage and Equip** youth and young adults to join Women's Comfort Corner Foundation in the prevention and treatment of child abuse. Women's Comfort Corner Foundation members strengthen their schools and communities by educating themselves as well as others about the types and signs of abuse, and by using their voices to speak up for others. Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust, through its Line of Hope Project, focuses on helping survivors of sexual violence and raising awareness of this often silent epidemic.

Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust will support:

- Rape, Child Abuse and Domestic violence prevention and awareness programs improved through the use of technology.
- Programs that enable our organisation to reach the community it serves more effectively.
- Programs that provide participants with strategies for enhancing their safety and use of community resources.
- Training for individuals participating in rape and domestic violence programs.

Prevent Now! for Building Community Awareness

We can all agree that awareness is an important ingredient for success. If everyone knew what we know then more people would surely step up. Since the Line of Hope Program began, we have been holding Community Awareness Meetings to help people understand the issue of child sexual abuse and why they need to get involved. The results of these efforts are clear:

- Advocacy: People are talking about the issue!
- Training: People are asking for training!
- Funding: People are providing financial resources and other support!

There have been huge increased calls to the line of hope helpline. Thank you to all of you who have come forward and stood beside Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust in our efforts to protect the survivors of rape. Your recognition of the importance of this work and of what Women's Comfort Corner Foundation Trust stand invaluable and is deeply appreciated.

We have also participated in the commemoration of World Aids Day but due to the limited time frame of submitting articles, we intend to submit same in the next newsletter.

We are grateful to have the support of partners around the world who aid our causes and share our victories.