

BACKGROUND



2009 Purple Ribbon Campaign Against Violence

A project of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women

What is the PEI Purple Ribbon Campaign Against Violence?

Twenty years ago, on December 6, 1989, 14 women were murdered at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal. They were murdered because they were women.

What is the history of the Purple Ribbon Campaign?

December 2009 marks the 18th year the Prince Edward Island Advisory Council on the Status of Women has organized its Purple Ribbon Campaign Against Violence.

Isabelle Christian, Chairperson of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women, asks Islanders to wear purple ribbons in remembrance of the 14 women slain at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal and to raise awareness about violence against women and children here on PEI and throughout the world.

"Every year, hundreds of Island women and children are the victims of violence. It has got to stop," says Christian. "We must never forget those 14 young women in Montreal who were murdered because they were women. We must remember them and work to ensure an end to violence against women and children."

On December 6, women across Canada often say,
"First mourn, then work for change."

Why is there a Purple Ribbon Campaign?

The purposes of the Purple Ribbon Campaign are to:

- Remember the fourteen women who died in Montreal on December 6, 1989
- Remember all women who have died violently and the many thousands who continue to live with abuse
- Raise awareness about violence against women

Who organizes the Purple Ribbon Campaign?

The Purple Ribbon Campaign is a project of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Hundreds of people across the province volunteer their time to ensure a wide distribution of ribbons. The campaign is growing each year with ever increasing numbers of women, men, and youth wearing ribbons.

When did the Purple Ribbon Campaign begin?

The Purple Ribbon Campaign was initiated in 1991. It started out relatively small with the Advisory Council handing out about 500 ribbons. This year, the Advisory Council will distribute 25,000 bilingual information cards and ribbons.

Why the colour purple?

Purple has long been the colour of the women's movement, beginning with the suffragettes. It's a symbol of pain and suffering but also of power, spirituality, and transformation.

When do we wear the purple ribbon?

Wear the ribbon between November 25, the International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women and December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The ribbons can also be worn during Family Violence Prevention Week every February.

Should men and boys wear a purple ribbon?

Yes. Wearing a purple ribbon is an opportunity for men and boys, as well as women and girls, to remember and acknowledge violence against women and to support the work against violence against women. In some parts of Canada, men wear a white ribbon instead. The White Ribbon Campaign is a campaign by and for men, originating in Toronto. The white ribbon is usually worn by men only. While the White Ribbon Campaign may have some distribution in PEI, we ask that men who choose to wear a white ribbon also wear a purple ribbon.

