



16 Days of Activism

A Call to Action

Help end violence against women and children

by Staff Reporter

The 16 Days of Activism Campaign is an annual international drive aimed at creating awareness against women related violence. Although the global campaign focuses on violence against women only, South Africa added children to its campaign because of the high incidences of children abuse in the country.

The campaign takes place from November 25 to December 10 and South Africans of all gender, colour and creed are encouraged to speak out, show support and contribute in the enhancement of gender violence free society.

Coordinated by the Department of Correctional Services, the 2005 campaign will popularise the white ribbon as a symbol of personal and

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organisational commitment to the eradication of violence against women and children. The white ribbon, according to the department, symbolises the commitment to "never commit or condone violence against women and children, and to speak out about violence when they see it."

The campaign, which should not only be limited to 16 days, places on the shoulders of every South African to, among others, act as watchdogs of the law enforcement agencies and blow the whistle against any act of violence against women and children. Particularly, it places a responsibility on men and boys to learn that women and children should be respected and protected rather than being abused.

Addressing Parliament on the Campaign, Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

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said that not only was the society being encouraged to blow the whistle,

but also to support and not isolate survivors.

"Because most abuse cases takes place in the home, families and communities should assist in exposing offenders. In particular, we need families as first line of defence. Women whose children are abused by step parents and relatives, families whose makotis are beaten by husbands and boyfriends," said the Deputy President.

Readers can show their support for the campaign by either wearing a white ribbon to symbolise support and create awareness about the drive, SMSing the word "16 Days" to 31616 [and donate R5 to anti-women and children violence organisations], or by signing the campaign post card (see below and back page) as a pledge to "act against abuse". 

