

# **WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## **WHY ARE WE HAVING THIS EVENT?**

Whether we realize it or not, each of us knows someone whose life has been directly affected by domestic or sexual violence. Current estimates tell us that:

- \*1 in 4 women and 1 in 11 men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime  
(Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence)
- \*Domestic violence occurs in one-quarter to one-third of all intimate partner relationships  
(The Riley Center)

Walk a Mile in Her Shoes allows members of the public to engage in the work of ending the violence.

## **WHY MEN?**

There is an old saying that goes, “You can’t understand someone’s experiences until you walk a mile in her shoes.” While many people may have the perception that domestic violence and sexual assault are “women’s issues,” we believe that inviting men to become allies in ending the violence sends a powerful message. In asking men to publicly stand up and show their commitment to ending violence, their actions will encourage other men to start thinking about how they personally can do their part to end violence.

## **WHY MEN IN HIGH HEELS?**

Domestic violence and sexual assault are extremely serious problems, but, too often the general public finds itself unable to address such issues. Through humor, we are able to reach and educate those who, for whatever reason, initially find themselves unable to deal with these serious topics. By reaching out to them in a non-threatening way, we allow them to begin to face the realities of domestic violence and sexual assault.

## **HOW DID WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES START?**

Frank Baird, a Clinical Supervisor at the Valley Trauma Center in Van Nuys, CA, first proposed the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes in 2001 to raise awareness about sexual assault. Frank writes of his experience:

“Women had created a very successful rape crisis movement and I was grateful to have been able to join their efforts. I...wanted to increase the opportunities for men to contribute to efforts to make the world safer.”

“Violence against women does not just affect women. Men are hurt and angered when women they care about are raped...And the same violence that targets women also targets men because rape isn’t about sex, it’s about power, control and violence...I knew that for every man who could be persuaded to think differently about gender roles, gender relationships and gender violence, many more women would be spared – and so, too, would the men in their lives.”

## **HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?**

- 1) Come to the Bennion Student Union Information Desk to pick up a pledge sheet.**
- 2) Get pledges – minimum 25-cents per lap or a one-time donation. All walkers must have a minimum amount of \$25.00 in pledges/donations to participate.**
- 3) Make a copy of your pledge sheet, bring it to the event and hand it in when you sign up.**
- 4) Walk on Wednesday, October 7, 10am-2pm, Bennion Student Union Multi-purpose Room**
- 5) Collect pledge money by October 21, and return it to the Bennion Student Union Information Desk (checks payable to the Anderson Center)**

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If you would like more information, or to schedule an interview with Anderson Center Director, Rebecca Morrow, please contact us at 282-2805 or [gndrctr@isu.edu](mailto:gndrctr@isu.edu), you can visit us online at [www.isu.edu/andersoncenter](http://www.isu.edu/andersoncenter).