

The Handkerchief Project

to End Violence Against Women and Girls

On December 6th, 1989 women across Canada were shaken to their cores by events at L'Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal. On that bitterly cold day 19 years ago 14 of our sisters, 14 of our mothers, 14 of our daughters were separated from the men in the room and murdered.

Since that day that many of us recount when asked the jumpstart question "where were you when...?", women and men across this country have tried to fight against violence that is specifically aimed at women and girls.

As we approach the 20th anniversary of that fateful day we must ask ourselves "What role can we play in combating violence against women in our society". The first step is to talk about it. The second is to do what we can to get rid of it.

On March 8th 2009, International Women's Day, we launched a nationwide initiative called **THE HANDKERCHIEF PROJECT**. It is based on two US based undertakings, the Clothesline and Paper Clips Projects.

The Handkerchief Project invites you to participate by sending us a handkerchief, scarf, bandana, swatch or any brightly coloured piece of fabric to commemorate a woman or girl who has lived with or experienced violence.

More importantly we want to hear their stories. In addition to fabric pieces we ask that you send us a note or a letter to recount the story, their feelings or a message of some kind.

People from all over the country have expressed an interest in the Project and it is my sincere hope that this Project offers them the opportunity to express themselves in a unique way.

Between March 8, 2009 and November 15, 2009 we will be accepting handkerchiefs and letters or notes from anyone, anywhere in the world.

There are no limits on how long, or short your letter is. It can be 3 pages or 3 lines. The only thing we ask is that the piece of fabric be about 18 inches by 18 inches square.

You do not have to sign anything and your anonymity will be fiercely protected. If you wish, you can just sign your first name or only your initials. For example, if I lived in London I might sign my letter "D.H. London ON" or even "D. London ON". Whatever works for you, works for us.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask them.

You can also find us on Facebook. Just do a search for "The Handkerchief Project".

Thank you.



First we mourn... Then we work for change.

Please send all handkerchiefs and
messages to:

THP c/o Denise Hampden
CAW Local 4003
65 Front St. West, Suite 290
Toronto ON, M5J 1E6

thehandkerchiefproject@yahoo.com