

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Thousands will Participate in International Anti-Street Harassment Week
A Global Problem Needs a Global Response

WASHINGTON, DC – From March 18-24, 2012, thousands of women and men across the United States and throughout the world in cities such as Cairo, Delhi, Istanbul, Montreal, Oslo, and Sana'a will participate in [International Anti-Street Harassment Week](#) to collectively raise awareness about gender-based street harassment.

[By age 12](#), nearly 1 in 4 girls worldwide experience unwanted sexual comments, leers, touches, and stalking in public places by strangers. Nearly 90 percent of women have that experience by age 19.

“Street harassment is seen as a given by many women, girls and LGBTQ individuals. Meanwhile, most people who are not harassed do not realize how much it happens,” said Holly Kearn, street harassment expert and founder of International Anti-Street Harassment Week. “This week is about challenging the normalization of street harassment, showing it’s a worldwide problem that negatively impacts lives, and working toward solutions.”

More than 100 groups in 18 countries, plus thousands of individuals worldwide, are participating in some form of activism, from sharing stories on or offline, to organizing sidewalk chalking parties with friends, to organizing discussions with school groups, to participating in community or campus events.

Internationally, women in Yemen will distribute a book of women's street harassment stories to nonprofit organizations and members of parliament. In Germany, activists will pass out "red cards" against street harassment on buses, subways, pubs, and schools. In Afghanistan, activists will host a debate about street harassment.

Events taking place across the USA include a film screening and spoken word event in Philadelphia, individuals distributing fliers outside transit stops in San Francisco, campus discussions in Ohio and Illinois, an art exhibit and street theater performance in Washington, DC, and sidewalk chalking in Minnesota.

In New York City there are several events, including a rally. Additionally, thousands of students in 65 public schools will participate in an awareness campaign run by STEPS to End Family Violence. Lucia Riviuccio, Director of STEPS, said, “Educating teens about street harassment now will make our streets safer for all of us in the future.”

Some events specifically will address harassment motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault (SACASA) is coordinating events and art exhibits in libraries focused on the harassment faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender-identified youth. “By working to bring awareness and an end to street harassment, we hope to create a safer and more welcoming community for all,” said Stephanie Arendt, Senior Prevention Educator at SACASA.

Any individual can participate in the week by sharing stories on and offline. Visit www.MeetUsontheStreet.org for more information about the week and how to be involved.

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Holly Kearn is the founder of International Anti-Street Harassment Week. A street harassment expert, she wrote the 2010 book Stop Street Harassment: Making Public Places Safe and Welcoming for Women, founded and runs www.stopstreetharassment.org, and speaks around the world on this topic. Her work has been cited by the United Nations, the New York City Council, The New York Times, The Washington Post, the Guardian, CNN.