

Statement of Commitment by White Allies in the Anti-Sexual Violence Movement

We, the undersigned, are a group of white women and men in the anti-sexual violence movement who are committed to ongoing anti-racism work. Drafts of this statement began at the Resource Sharing Project in Denver in May of 2007 to respond to questions asked of us by women of color at that meeting. This statement is a work in progress – a journey – much like our own personal anti-racism work – that too is a journey. We are happy to invite other white allies in the anti-sexual violence movement to join us in this anti-racism work and sign onto the statement below.

We recognize that racism exists in the anti-sexual violence movement. We recognize that anti-racism work and anti-sexual violence work must go hand in hand, and we are committed to addressing this within the fundamental framework of the movement. We recognize that anti-racism work is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor, nor is it stagnant. Anti-racism work is a daily, ongoing process. Our anti-racism work must be flexible and dynamic in order to respond to the unique strengths and challenges in our local communities. Yet, we recognize that anti-racism work must share a foundation of core principles.

We recognize that anti-racism work is *our* work. We recognize that the commitment we make as white allies is *our* responsibility. We commit to moving beyond analysis/paralysis. We are committed to being the ones to step up and speak out. We are committed to being proactive and action oriented. We will ask questions and ask for direction from people of color. We are committed to listening to communities of color and sitting with the hard truths told. We are committed to moving beyond lip service to action steps.

We, the undersigned white allies and state coalitions, are committed to anti-racism work and in support of people of color commit to the following priorities:

- Creating policy statements for our organizations supporting anti-racism work as well as corresponding action plans.
- Encouraging rape crisis centers and local service providers to have policy statements supporting anti-racism work as well as corresponding action plans.
- Integrating anti-racism work into the leadership and governance practices of our coalitions.
- Establishing a regular dialogue for white allies to build momentum, community and commitment around our work to end racism.
- Fully supporting the 10% VAWA STOP set aside for linguistically and culturally specific victim services.
- Providing opportunities for staff of color to move into leadership roles at the local, state, and national level including providing professional development, skill-building, and networking opportunities.

- Devoting adequate time within existing meeting frameworks as well as outside of currently funded national meetings for people of color to gather, for white allies to gather, and for all of us to gather together to discuss our progress in addressing racism or racial disparities within our field, including the development and/or sharing of concrete strategies to remedy these issues.
- Protecting people of color only spaces and gathering opportunities.
- Supporting other white people in learning more about racism and its effects on people of color including sitting with colleagues who are new to these ideas without blame or shame, but as a genuine ally to their burgeoning work.
- Taking proactive steps to eliminate tokenism.
- Collaborating with anti-oppression partners in prevention and intervention efforts.

We acknowledge that we will make mistakes and missteps, and we affirm that we will not allow that to deter us from the real work. As white allies, we agree to risk:

- Challenging our privilege and power by acknowledging our personal, professional, and the movement's role in oppression.
- Speaking even if we're not sure what to say.
- Making others angry or uncomfortable because we stand up for people and communities of color.
- Feeling discomfort and other painful emotions in order to really hear the hard truths of oppression and keep these commitments to action.
- Losing apparent and/or real control of the anti-sexual violence movement in favor of solidarity and shared power to co-create and determine the leadership, direction, and priorities of the anti-sexual violence movement as well as the work of local sexual violence programs.

Signing Organizations:

- Florida Council Against Sexual Violence
- Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault
- Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape
- Indiana Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center
- DC Rape Crisis Center
- South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services
- Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- The Allies for Racial Justice within the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Signing Individuals:

- Anita Carpenter
- Karen L. Baker
- Kathleen Arledge
- Sally J. Laskey
- Marianne Winters
- Denise Snyder
- Erica Staab Westmoreland
- Nancy Kushins
- Kelsen Young
- Elizabeth Ward Saxl
- Grace Frances
- Sarah Stewart
- Elizabeth Barnhill
- Cat Fribley
- Jessica McSparron-Bien
- Jennifer Pollitt-Hill
- Terri Poore
- Evelyn Larsen
- Annette Burrhus-Clay
- Delilah Rumburg
- Tara Wolfe
- Joyce Lukima
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