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Gender Equality and A Life Free of Violence for All

Press Release

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For immediate release

5 Steps to 'Be the Change'

Each one of us can 'Be the Change' in the local effort to end gender violence.

This is the message of the Estella Scott-Roberts Foundation, which has detailed '5 things you can do to be the change'.

The Foundation is urging each member of the community to be an active participant in changing attitudes about gender violence.

Coinciding with the annual observance of the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence', which begins on 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) and runs through 10 December (International Day of Human Rights), the '5 things you can do to be the change' all centre around changing attitudes in order to prevent violence.

First, people are urged to challenge cultural and social norms that encourage violence. "For example," said Foundation Director, Tammy Ebanks-Bishop, "We all need to re-evaluate the media that we allow our children to watch in order to ensure that children learn non-violent conflict resolution skills, and as adults we have to challenge the cultural norms that violence in an intimate relationship is acceptable or 'normal'."

Second of the five steps is to "promote and act upon the belief that men and women, boys and girls have equal value to our society." Ms. Ebanks-Bishop said this is essential to achieving gender equality in our society.

The Board of Directors
Rayle Roberts, Chairman

Andrea Bryan, MBE, JP
Marilyn Conolly
Novelette Ebanks

Sara Collins
Tammy Ebanks Bishop
Melanie McLaughlin



Step three is to ensure that children are growing up in safe, stable and nurturing relationships with their parents and caregivers. Parenting, Ms. Ebanks-Bishop said, is vital in the prevention of gender violence because our children learn what the live. They look to adults and peers in their lives to model how they are supposed to interact with the opposite sex.

Since gender violence is statistically more commonly inflicted by men on women and girls, the fourth action is to engage with men and young boys to challenge the stereotypes that give men power over women and girls. Gender violence both reflects and reinforces inequities between males and females and compromises the health, dignity, and safety of its victims.

“We have to begin to engage with men and boys on these topics in order to reduce the violence against women and girls that is all too prevalent in this and many societies around the world,” Mr. Rayle Roberts, ESRF Chairperson said. The ESRF will be further pursuing this issue as they plan to host A Call to Men Conference in mid-2010, which will encourage men to examine their roles as a part of the solution to address violence against women and girls.

And finally, we are all urged to support victims of all forms of violent crime by ensuring they have access to the interventions, support and services that they require.

“The eradication of gender violence cannot be the responsibility only of specific groups or the government,” Mr. Roberts said. “It is up to all of us to be the change, and to ensure that support is available to victims of gender violence and all violent crime.”

The ‘5 things you can do to be the change’ will be incorporated into the Foundation’s ongoing ‘Be the Change’ public education and awareness campaign, and will form the basis of public service announcements to be aired on local radio stations.

The Foundation launched the ‘Be the Change’ campaign on 10 October. The date marked the first anniversary of the tragic death of Estella Scott-Roberts.



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At the campaign launch, Ms. Melanie McLaughlin, ESRF Vice Chairperson said, “Estella became a local icon through the work she did in the community to address domestic abuse and raise awareness about the issue. Her passing touched the nation profoundly, and we wanted to mark the anniversary with a campaign, which builds on the foundations she laid.”

The campaign title is borrowed from Mahatma Gandhi’s famous quote, “Be the change you want to see in the world.”

Ms. Ebanks-Bishop says, “The Foundation intends for the campaign to challenge men and women to work together to become the change they want to see in our society. We want to promote the Foundation’s vision of gender equality and a life free of violence for all.”

For more information on the ‘Be the Change’ campaign, visit: www.esrfoundation.org.ky or The Estella Scott-Roberts Foundation on Facebook. Persons interested in purchasing the ESRF lapel pin (\$5) that was launched as a part of the campaign can send a message via the Facebook page or email esrfoundation@gmail.com.

About the Estella Scott-Roberts Foundation

Following the tragic death of Estella Scott-Roberts in 2008, the Foundation bearing her name was formed on 31st October that year. Rayle Roberts, Estella’s husband, envisioned the Foundation as a vehicle that would continue to raise awareness about the social issues that his wife had been so passionately involved in tackling, such as domestic violence and abuse. The objectives of the Foundation are to advocate for a life free of violence; to carry out activities to facilitate the empowerment of women and girls; to support policies and research projects that further the aim of gender equality; and to advance progress in dealing with social issues affecting women. The Estella Scott-Roberts Foundation is a non-profit company licensed in the Cayman Islands. For more information, visit www.esrfoundation.org.ky.

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