



# THE BENEFITS

*"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."*

Galatians 6:2, NKJV

*"I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my [brothers and sisters] you were doing it to me!"*

Matthew 25:40, NLT

## MINISTRY RESOURCES

- Access the **enditnow** resources on the GC website <http://www.enditnow.org/stop-violence-against-women-resources>
- Provide seminars on emotional healing.
- Read widely on abuse prevention. Research available training and materials.
- Promote and establish support groups.
- Promote and support the annual **enditnow** Emphasis Day, the 4th Sabbath of August, which is a global initiative on the church calendar. Encourage the leadership of your church to embrace this special day.
- In your church, provide a lending library of materials on abuse.
- Provide abuse awareness seminars for the church and community.
- Support women's shelters in your area.
- Include ministry to women's shelters as part of your outreach initiatives.
- Ensure that every individual participating in this ministry is legally cleared to work with vulnerable adults and children.
- Do not assume that abuse does not occur within your church.
- Conduct *Thinking Well, Living Well*. (GC Women's Ministries mental health training seminars)



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## PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

*Thank you, God, for inviting us us to partner with you in healing wounded hearts, restoring troubled minds, and transforming broken lives.  
 Amen*



# ABUSE

Abuse affects more than one third of all women globally.




# THE CHALLENGE

The World Health Organization reports: “Physical or sexual violence is a public health problem that affects more than one third of all women globally.” (World Health Organization, Geneva. 2013)

In 2014, analysis of data from more than 80 countries found that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. International studies also reveal that approximately 20% of women and 5 to 10% of men report being victims of sexual violence as children. (World Health Organization Fact sheet No. 239, November 2014)

## KEY FACTS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- “Violence can result in physical, mental, sexual, reproductive health and other health problems, and may increase vulnerability to HIV.”
- “Risk factors for being a victim of intimate partner and sexual violence include low education, witnessing violence between parents, exposure to abuse during childhood and attitudes accepting violence and gender inequality.”
- “Globally, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner.”
- “Situations of conflict, post conflict and displacement may exacerbate existing violence and present additional forms of violence against women.” (World Health Organization Fact sheet No. 239, November 2014)



Regardless of who the victim is, violence and abuse in the family or community, whether physical, sexual or psychological, is a serious problem that needs to be addressed by religious communities around the globe. In 2009 the General Conference Women’s Ministries department launched the **enditnow** campaign to bring awareness of and address this appalling evil.

# GOD’S REQUEST

*“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.”*

Proverbs 31:8-9, NLT

# OUR RESPONSE

Join the campaign for **enditnow** – **Adventist Say No to Violence**

## ***The Seventh-day Adventist church opposes abuse of every kind.***

- We affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and family violence.
- We believe that Christians must respond to abuse and family violence within both the church and the community.
- We believe that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate, and potentially extend such behavior.
- We accept our responsibility to:
  - Cooperate with other professional services, to listen and care for those suffering from abuse and family violence.
  - Highlight the injustices and to speak out in defence of victims.
  - Help persons in need to identify and access the range of available professional services.
  - Assist families in grief over relationships that cannot be restored.
  - Address the spiritual questions confronting abused persons seeking to understand the origins of abuse and family violence and develop better ways of preventing the recurring cycle.

*(This statement was approved and voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee and was released at the General Conference Session in the Netherlands, June 29-July 8, 1995)*



# HOW TO BEGIN

1. **Get relevant resources** – The **enditnow** material from the General Conference Women’s Ministries department is a good place to start. Other resources are readily available from your local Conference/ Union Family Ministries, Health Ministries, and Women’s Ministries departments.
2. **Create a safe haven** – Make your church a secure place where victims of abuse and violence can come to seek help and healing without condemnation. Use existing material or prepare relevant resources that include information about how/where these individuals can get help. Make these materials visible and easily available in the church at all times.
3. **Educate your congregation** – Present programs, run seminars, and provide material on the various forms of abuse to help educate church members.
4. **Speak out** – Utilize church and community programs as a platform to inform and to speak out against abuse.
5. **Lead by example** – Always present a non-violent attitude and grace-filled attitude even when dealing with perpetrators of abuse. Use your influence as a leader to positively impact people’s attitudes. Seek opportunities to educate others.
6. **Informed intervention and referral** – If you suspect that abuse is happening, do not attempt to deal with the situation on your own. Be informed about local abuse reporting procedures and referral to external agencies specialising in this area. Seek professional advice and help. Pray for the family involved and maintain absolute confidentiality.