

**NEW ENGLAND CAMPAIGNS AGAINST VIOLENCE  
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How does one initiate a dialogue with survivors of unspeakable acts of violence? SGI-USA members in New England made a start Oct 21 by displaying shirts created by survivors of physical, emotional and psychological assaults. On loan from The Clothesline Project, the shirts were hung in dazzling sunlight on a line that zigzagged over the lawn and flowerbeds of the New England Culture Center.

Printed on the shirts were powerful and poignant messages from women and men to the perpetrators who had harmed them. Some shirts were created to honor the memory of relatives or friends who did not survive an assault.

Many messages described the survivors' determination to transform the negativity of the shadowy past into a bright future. One shirt read: "Our lives are precious and powerful, no matter what happened to us." Another declared: "I am beautiful. I am a winner. I'm going to change the world."

The Clothesline Project got its start when in 1990 the Cape Cod Womens Agenda put up the first clothesline. They had discovered the amazing fact that during the time of the Vietnam War, 58,000 American soldiers had lost their lives while during the same period 51,000 women were murdered in the United States by husbands or lovers. Since then, more than 250 Clothesline Projects have been organized around the world.

The shirts displayed at the New England Culture Center were on loan from the Clothesline Project of Somerville, Mass., and the Somerville Commission for Women. However, tables were set up on the culture center lawn and members and visitors were able to create shirts bearing their own messages. Some of the shirts now hang in the lobby of the culture center.

The Clothesline Project kicked off an intensive campaign against violence that will culminate in the Nov. 4 Victory Over Violence dramatic and musical program sponsored by the youth members of New England.

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