

NFL GAME CHANGER

Engaging Communities To End Violence Against Women & Girls

NEWS RELEASE
October 6, 2014

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Twelve Hundred Local, State and National Service and Advocacy Groups Call on NFL to Become a ‘Game Changer’ in Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

More than 1,200 organizations—including national, state and local groups from 47 states, the District of Columbia, 12 tribal communities and four territories that are working to prevent domestic and sexual violence—have come together under the banner of “NFL Game Changer” to call on the NFL to invest heavily in a long-term, comprehensive community engagement and prevention campaign to change the culture in order to end violence against women and girls.

In [a letter sent to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell](#) late last week, this extraordinary grassroots coalition asked that the League make a significant investment in an approach to preventing violence against women that includes partnerships with community organizations that promote prevention, the involvement of NFL personnel at all levels, and efforts to teach the pipeline of players and fans about respect for women and girls.

“We know that violence against women and girls is preventable,” the letter says, in part. “We are writing because we see a real opportunity for the NFL to partner with state and local experts to engage communities in cultural transformation.”

“This remarkable, perhaps unprecedented, coalition has come together to ask the NFL to engage in real partnerships with community leaders and organizations on the ground to help prevent violence against women and girls,” said Ulester Douglas, executive director of Men Stopping Violence and a spokesperson for NFL Game Changer. “The NFL may be the most powerful brand in America. It can have an impact not just in helping victims after violence has occurred, but in changing the culture in order to prevent it. It can be a catalyst for long-lasting, systemic change.”

“We know that domestic and sexual violence are not unique to the NFL, but the NFL is uniquely positioned to make meaningful change,” agreed Nan Stoops, executive director of the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence and a spokesperson for NFL Game Changer. “Russell Wilson’s leadership with his ‘Pass the Peace’ campaign is just one example of the power of the NFL and its players to create a social intolerance for abuse.”

The NFL Game Changer campaign is urging the league to:

- Support and help lead a comprehensive awareness campaign to reach millions of its fans;
- Create an initiative that engages players to demonstrate their commitment to respecting girls and women;
- Invest in national, state and local programs that work to prevent violence and promote models of masculinity based on healthy relationships; and
- Become a model for other sports leagues by building meaningful relationships with national, state and local violence prevention organizations and leaders.

“Another exceptional role model from the NFL is Jason Witten of the Dallas Cowboys, whose SCOREkeepers violence prevention program focuses on positive male mentors on staff at family abuse shelters in Texas,” said Gloria Aguilera Terry, CEO of the Texas Council on Family Violence. “The NFL can set the bar by encouraging teams to partner and support community engagement and prevention strategies to help change attitudes. Prevention works.”

Signers of the letter in markets with NFL teams are preparing to reach out to those teams to encourage engagement and collaboration.

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports](#) that a substantial proportion of the U.S. population have experienced some form of sexual violence, stalking or intimate partner violence at least once during their lifetimes.

For a complete list of signers and to read the letter, please visit www.NFLGameChanger.org.

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NFL Game Changer consists of organizations, leaders, activists and advocates across the country working to end violence against women and girls. It represents thousands of organizations that have provided services and advocated for millions of victims of domestic and sexual violence, and worked to change attitudes and behaviors for more than 30 years.