

The MILFORD DAILY NEWS

Clothesline Project highlights sexual assault awareness

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MILFORD -- Wayside Youth and Family Support Network continues to hold events in the Milford community to build public awareness of the issues of sexual assault, as part of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

The Wayside Clothesline Project is part of a national movement to expose the impact of violence against women in American culture. It is comprised of different colored T-shirts that represent different forms of violence. The shirts are decorated by survivors, their family and friends and hung on clotheslines in public areas as a personal tribute to all victims and survivors.

The purpose of creating a shirt is twofold. It gives survivors and their significant others an opportunity to safely and confidentially speak about their experiences in a way that is a powerful aid in the healing process. It also serves to educate the community about the personal impact and prevalence of this type of violence.

The Clothesline Project started as a grassroots project by the Cape Cod Women's Agenda in 1990. Since its creation, the project has spread via thousands of individual projects throughout the United States, England, Australia and [Israel](#). Thousands of shirts hang on display in Washington, D.C., annually at a National Clothesline Project Display.

The Wayside Clothesline Project was started by Wayside's Rape Crisis Volunteers and the staff of Trauma Intervention Services in April 1999 when they acquired donations of shirts, fabric paint and other supplies and organized their first display at the Milford Unitarian Universalist Church.

Many community members came to view the display and create their own shirts. As a result, Wayside currently has a collection of well over 100 shirts in the project that are hung in area town greens, fairs, schools and community forums.

Shirts are color-coded based on the type of assault being expressed in the shirt design: red, orange, pink represents rape/sexual assault; blue, green represents incest, child sexual abuse; yellow, beige represents domestic violence; purple represents hate crimes and homophobia; and white represents violent death of woman or child.

For more information or to donate supplies, please contact 508-478-6888, ext. 134. Wayside's toll-free 24 hour Rape crisis hotline is 800-511-5070.

The Clothesline Project events are as follows:

- April 19-23, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Clothesline Project Display Wayside Community Counseling, 10 Asylum St., Milford
- April 23-30, noon to 6 p.m., Daily Clothesline Project Displays: Millworks Gallery, Bernat Mill Visiting Artists' Studios, 19 Depot St., Uxbridge, call 508-278-0553 to RSVP; Uxbridge Police Station, Uxbridge; Uxbridge Town Hall, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- April 29, 6 to 8 p.m., at the Millworks Gallery, Bernat Mill Visiting Artists' Studios, 19 Depot St., Uxbridge, Gallery Talk: Clothesline Project, T-Shirt Making: For Survivors & their Loved Ones.