Dear Rhode Island men,

If you are concerned about the rates of intimate partner violence in our communities, and the rise of domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, we invite you to join us in taking action to prevent abuse.

If we, as men, believe men’s violence against women is unacceptable, then we, as men, have the responsibility to act.

The burden should not be on survivors and the people most impacted to end domestic violence, most often perpetrated by men.

Society tells us that men have to be strong, so let’s redefine strength, not as power over others but as solidarity with survivors and allyship with women and girls.

There are so many spaces where our collective voice is missing, yet needed. We can show our strength by calling for practices and policies in our organizations that support survivors of domestic violence and create safe, healthy workplaces. We can support and make space for women leaders and leaders of all gender identities. We can model healthy relationships based on equality and respect in all areas of our lives, including sharing responsibilities at home, such as childcare and household chores.

We can get involved in community-led social justice movements through online campaigns and local advocacy efforts, as we strive to address racism and oppression, the root causes of violence. In advocating for policies that improve the health and wellbeing of all people—by making affordable housing, childcare, employment, education, healthy food, parks, and other green and open spaces more accessible to all—we can decrease the rates of abuse in our communities.

Rhode Island men: It is on us to hold each other and ourselves accountable, to examine our unearned privilege and use it as a force for change.

This June, we ask Rhode Island men to stand with us and share how they show strength—strength without violence, strength to answer this call to action and address domestic violence as a men’s issue.

Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, in the wake of so much fear and uncertainty, community and connection are essential. It is past time we let go of the myths of masculinity that keep us, as men, “boxed in” and silent about gender-based violence.

It is time for us to act.

With care and respect,

Ten Men 2019-2020
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Jon Berenson        Adam Cable        Lee Casper-Torch        Elwood Donnelly        Dave Joseph
Sam Kirsch         Don Laliberte       Elliot Rivera                 Anthony Sinapi