

# No More Silence: Prevent Sexual Violence Messages That Matter

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## Welcome

Thank you for considering taking part in [Messages That Matter](#).

This project has been created as part of [Sexual Violence Awareness Month](#) and invites current and former clients to contribute to a community campaign using creativity.

Sexual Violence Awareness Month (SVAM) is held annually throughout October to raise awareness of sexual violence, promote available support services, and reinforce the message that sexual violence will not be tolerated within our communities.

Laurel Place is offering a collaborative creative campaign, inviting current and former clients with lived experience of sexual violence and gender-based violence to contribute a creative piece that communicates a message they believe deserves to be heard.

This is not a project about telling personal stories. It is a project about creating space for participants voices. You don't need to be an artist.

This project is guided by one simple invitation:

[Choose a message.](#)

[Choose a medium.](#)

[Choose how your voice is heard.](#)

Every message matters.

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## Before You Begin

Consider... [What message do I want the world to hear?](#)

Participants then choose the creative medium that best communicates that message.

You are the author of your own message. You choose what you share. You choose what you keep. You choose how your voice is heard.

Whether your message is one sentence, a poem, a painting or a collage, your voice matters.

Your message may come from your lived experience, but you do not need to describe or explain that experience.

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## What is this project?

Many people affected by sexual and gender-based violence have experienced being silenced, dismissed or not believed.

This project offers an opportunity to contribute to an important community conversation by sharing a message that you believe deserves to be heard.

**There will be two ways** that submitted works are shared. The first is an online gallery on the Laurel Place website, where people can take their time viewing each artwork, poem, letter or creative piece individually.

The second is a digital campaign video that brings together selected works into a powerful collection of voices and messages. This video will be shared publicly through Laurel Place's online platforms, including YouTube and social media, to help extend these messages beyond our service and contribute to wider community awareness and the prevention of sexual violence.

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## How can I participate?

You can create your piece:

- At home
- During counselling sessions
- In one of our supported creative workshops

The creative process itself may be meaningful regardless of whether a participant ultimately submits their work. Choosing not to submit a completed piece is respected as a valid outcome.

No artistic experience is required.

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## Choose a Message

Before choosing what to make, think about the message you would like to share.

You might ask yourself:

- What do I wish people understood?
- What do I wish someone had said to me?
- What message feels important?
- What do I want the community to know?
- What change would I like to see?
- If I was not silenced, the voice I want to share is...

You don't have to answer these questions. They are simply a place to begin.

See our [Creative Prompts](#) document for more ideas on how to get started.

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## Your Message Doesn't Need To...

Your message doesn't need to:

- Tell your story.
- Explain what happened.
- Be positive or inspirational.
- Teach others.
- Look artistic or polished.
- Be perfect.

Messages may communicate grief, strength, injustice, hope, frustration, compassion, courage, advocacy or calls for change.

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## Choose a Medium

Choose the creative medium that best communicates your message.

Ideas include:

- Poetry
- Creative writing
- Spoken word

- A letter
- Collage
- Painting
- Drawing using pastels or markers

If you would prefer to use another creative medium, speak with your counsellor.

Original works remain the property of participants. Laurel Place will not store or keep participant's work.

Laurel Place will photograph or digitally record submitted works for inclusion within the final campaign.

Written or spoken work should be kept to under a minute long.

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## Sharing Your Work

If you choose to submit your work, you'll be invited to decide how your message is shared.

You can choose to:

- Remain anonymous
  - Use your first name
  - Use a pseudonym
  - Show your face
  - Keep your face off camera
  - Read your own words
  - Have a counsellor read them on your behalf
  - Participants are encouraged to consider both emotional wellbeing and personal safety before deciding what they wish to share publicly.
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## Before You Submit

Your artwork or written piece may be included in a public campaign shared online.

Before deciding to submit, consider:

- Am I comfortable with others seeing this?
- Does this share only what I want people to know?

- Am I happy with how my message is represented?
- Does this feel like my choice?

If you're unsure, talk with your counsellor.

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## A Few Things to Know

To help keep everyone safe, submissions cannot include:

- Names or identifying details of people involved
- Information about legal matters or court proceedings
- Threats or abusive language
- Hate speech or discriminatory content
- Graphic descriptions of violence

If changes are needed before publication, we'll discuss these with you.

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## Consent

Before your work is published, you'll be asked to complete a consent form.

The form explains:

- Where your work may be shared
- Your privacy options
- How your message may be used
- Important information about online publication

The completed campaign will be released publicly through social media platforms, including YouTube.

You can change your mind and withdraw your consent any time before the final video is produced.

Once the campaign has been published online, it may be shared by others and cannot be withdrawn.

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## Before You Finish

Take a moment to pause. Ask yourself:

Does this say what I wanted it to say?

Is there anything I want to add?

Is there anything I'd like to keep private?

Am I comfortable sharing this publicly?

If the answer is "not yet," that's okay.

Your message belongs to you.

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## Thank You

Every message shared through this project contributes to a broader conversation about respect, consent, safety and the prevention of sexual violence.

Whether you choose to participate or not, thank you for taking the time to consider being part of [Messages That Matter](#).

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