

# 16 days OF ACTIVISM

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The 16 Days of Activism (25 November - 10 December) is an International Campaign that focuses on and highlights the plight of violence against women and children world-wide. The purpose of this campaign is to increase awareness amongst South Africans on the occurrences of violence against women and children and encourage change in behavioural patterns of

perpetrators. Violence includes rape, emotional and physical abuse, drug abuse and teenage pregnancies. It targets men and boys to encourage them to overcome this form of violence. The campaign also has as its aim to bring about a mindset change among men and boys regarding their perception of women, that is, that women and girls are simply objects and should be subordinate to them.

South Africa is proud to have participated since 1998.

## Departmental involvement

This annual international event is supported every year by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport as well as various other departments, including the Provincial Library Service, who contribute and assist in activities highlighting women and children's plight against violence.

The theme for 2005 was: *Promoting sport and culture as an alternative lifestyle to violence against women and children.* The Gender Committee chose the Atlantis area in

Cape Town to host the event.

Public libraries in Atlantis were responsible for story-telling, puppet shows and exhibitions, all spotlighting themes of violence against women and children, as well as sexual harassment and rape.

As most of the activities overlapped, public libraries worked in close conjunction with other units of the Department, such as Language and Museums

White ribbons symbolising peace were handed out and by wearing it one publicly declared one's commitment to end all forms of violence against women and children.

For more information, access the web site [www.capegateway.gov.za](http://www.capegateway.gov.za).

*Left: Displays in public libraries in Atlantis highlighted themes of violence against women and children*

*Right: Children were made aware of 16 days of activism and its message with a puppet show presented by Jason Cupido (left), Tannie Gina (right) and Dawn Thielman (seated back) from Mamre*

