



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORT DENIM DAY:

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2014

Local Nonprofit Organizations Encouraging Community Members to Wear Jeans to Promote Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Support Survivors

Fresno, CA (April 22, 2014) – Central California Legal Services, Inc., Central Valley Children's Services Network, Centro La Familia, First 5 Fresno County, Fresno State Women's Resource Center, Marjaree Mason Center and RCS Fresno are calling on the Fresno community to wear jeans to raise awareness to sexual violence prevention, education and support on international Denim Day on April 23, 2014.

The campaign is inspired by an Italian Supreme Court case that sparked international outrage when judges did not convict a rapist because the victim wore tight-fitting jeans. The judges ruled that because the victim was wearing tight jeans, she must have helped her attacker remove them, thus implying consent. Denim Day is observed in April as its Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

As strong advocates of increasing community awareness on the prevention of sexual and domestic violence that impact the lives of women, children and families, these local nonprofit organizations are spreading the word of this day's activities through a social media campaign, surrounding the hashtag **#denimdayfresno**. They're encouraging those wearing denim and/or contributing to events surrounding Denim Day to post pictures, status updates, videos, etc. with this hashtag **#denimdayfresno** to further educate our community of the prevalence of sexual abuse. Each organization will also be allowing and encouraging their staff, those involved with



their organizations, and community members to wear denim jeans on this day, reminding us there is “No Excuse and Never an Invitation to Rape.” According to RCS Fresno’s website, over 1 in 3 women in the United States have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

Central California Legal Services, Inc., Central Valley Children's Services Network, Centro La Familia, First 5 Fresno County, Fresno State Women’s Resource Center, Marjaree Mason Center and RCS Fresno support Peace Over Violence and the GUESS Foundation for Denim Day. To register for Denim Day, please visit www.denimdayusa.org. Already, more than 1 million supporters have signed up to wear jeans on April 23, 2014. And, to show your support locally, use **#denimdayfresno** in your social media postings (including status updates, pictures, videos, etc.).

About Denim Day

Denim Day is a global movement that began in 1998 in Italy in response to a rape case that was overturned because the 18---year---old survivor was wearing tight jeans. The Italian Supreme Court ruled the attacker would not have been able to remove the jeans without help from the young woman, which therefore implied consent. Outraged by the verdict, women in the Italian Parliament and all over Italy wore jeans to stand in solidarity with the survivor, and Denim Day was born. In North America, Peace Over Violence has led the Denim Day movement for the past 15 years. To learn more about Denim Day, visit denimdayinfo.org or to register for Denim Day, please visit www.denimdayusa.org.

About Central California Legal Services, Inc. (CCLS)

Central California Legal Services is a non-profit law firm. They provide free legal assistance to low income families and individuals in the following counties: Fresno, Kings, Mariposa, Merced, Tulare, and Tuolumne. CCLS’s mission is to advance justice and empower people. The purpose of CCLS is to fight social injustice, to provide education and representation to the disadvantaged and to maintain access to the legal system. For more information, visit centralcallegal.org or call (559) 570-1200.

About Central Valley Children’s Services Network

At Children’s Services Network staff works everyday towards the mission of “Improving the quality of care for children of the Central Valley.” Children’s Services Network provides the necessary support, education and linkage of community resources to advocate for high quality care for all children. Every child has the right to receive the



highest quality care available and Central Valley Children's Services Network is working towards achieving this vision in the Fresno County. For more information, visit www.cvcsn.org or call (559) 456-1100.

About Centro La Familia

Centro La Familia is a community based non-profit organization that has served low income families throughout Fresno County for over 30 years. Centro was founded in 1972 to provide direct advocacy and intervention services to low-income residents. Their mission is to empower low-income people to access life sustaining resources and become self-sufficient through education, training and social services. Visit www.centrolafamilia.org or call 559-237-2961 for more information.

About First 5 Fresno County

First 5 Fresno County is an advocacy organization that wants all children to thrive. They provide resources and support efforts to improve the lives of children ages 0 to 5 and their families. Research proves children who reach their full potential come from strong families. Strong families are supported by vibrant communities. Investing in children equals a better community. First 5 Fresno County is a catalyst for creating an accessible and effective network of quality services for young children (0-5 years old) and their families. For more information, please visit first5fresno.org or call 559-241-6515.

About Fresno State Women's Resource Center

The Women's Resource Center at California State University, Fresno is established to enhance the learning, work, and life experiences of women in the university community and to educate the campus on women's issues. The Women's Resource Center is a compassionate, inclusive, feminist place that provides a sense of belonging, advocacy, and resources for the campus community. It promotes success and nurtures holistic growth and development through various opportunities, activities, and events that focus on women with an eye toward gender, founded in a framework that is fully inclusive of diversity. For more information, visit <http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/wrc/>.

About Marjaree Mason Center

For more than 30 years, the Marjaree Mason Center has offered shelter and supportive services to victims of domestic violence in Fresno County. Currently, the center operates the county's only domestic violence shelters. The Center was founded in 1979 after the murder of Marjaree Mason, a native of Easton. A graduate of Washington High School and Reedley College, Marjaree lived in Fresno for 31 years and was well known in the community. The Marjaree Mason Center supports and empowers adults and children affected by domestic violence, while striving to prevent and end the cycle of abuse through education and advocacy. To contact MMC,



call business center at 559-237-4706, 24-hour confidential emergency hotline at 800-640-0333 or visit online at mmccenter.org, [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

About RCS Fresno

RCS Fresno works to end rape and sexual violence while supporting safe, consensual relationships for all people. RCS Fresno advocates are state-certified sexual assault counselors who offer victim-centered, culturally competent, trauma-based services to survivors, including individual therapeutic services. Free and confidential emergency (or non-emergency) help is available anywhere in Fresno County 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the RCS Fresno 24-hour rape crisis line: (559) 222-7273.

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