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YWCA RAPE CRISIS CENTER TO LAUNCH "DENIM DAY IN NJ"

Bergen County—On April 28, 2008, the **YWCA of Bergen County Rape Crisis Center** will launch "Denim Day in NJ 2008", a day-long observance dedicated to raising awareness about sexual violence and consent.

Denim Day and wearing jeans in April became an international symbol of protest of harmful attitudes about rape over a decade ago after an Italian Supreme Court decision overturned a rape conviction simply because the victim wore jeans. The justices reasoned that the victim must have helped her attacker remove her jeans because they were "tight," thereby implying her consent. After the decision, the women in the Italian Parliament protested by wearing jeans to work the next day. Thus, International Denim Day was born.

This April marks the 10th year Denim Day has been observed in the U.S., and the first time activities supporting it are taking place in New Jersey. The **YWCA of Bergen County Rape Crisis Center** is bringing Denim Day to New Jersey to educate students about issues of consent and sexual violence. Why? Because we know that the same attitude held by the Italian Supreme Court exists here in our community.

The **YWCA of Bergen County Rape Crisis Center** is focusing its efforts on educating young women and men around the issue of consent, introducing an awareness campaign entitled, "Don't Touch My Jeans 'Til You Know What I Mean." Over 50 high schools and colleges throughout Bergen County have been invited to participate in the campaign, and they will be receiving Denim Day Toolkits filled with ideas and materials for organizing their own events.

For more information, please contact Angelae Wilkerson at 201-881-1752 or via email at angelae@ywcabergencounty.org.

About the YWCA of Bergen County

The YWCA of Bergen County, along with hundreds of other YWCAs across the United States and around the world, comprises the world's largest women's movement empowering women and girls. With offices in Ridgewood and Hackensack, New Jersey and program sites throughout Bergen County, the YWCA of Bergen County provides a comprehensive range of programs designed to empower women and eliminate racism within the communities of Northern New Jersey. The YWCA also is the largest provider of child-care services in Bergen County, is a leader in health and fitness programs and runs the county's only 24-hour, seven-days-a-week rape crisis hotline. For more information, please visit us online at www.ywcabergencounty.org.

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