

#START by BELIEVING

Start By Believing Origin

The Start by Believing campaign is a global movement originally developed by End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI) to change how communities respond to disclosures of harm. At its core, the campaign encourages people to respond with belief and compassion.



Why it matters...

The very first response a survivor receives can deeply influence their healing journey. A supportive first response improves the likelihood of the survivor accessing support services and reporting the crime if they choose to do so.

In Aotearoa New Zealand only around 8% of sexual assaults are reported to the police.

Our 3 key messages

The first
response
matters

Safety begins
when we
believe

Healing looks
different for
everyone

Getting involved makes a difference!

Individuals, schools, workplaces, community groups, and agencies across New Zealand are invited to support the campaign, particularly during Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April.

Here's how to get involved:

- Utilise the downloadable campaign pack
- Show your support and light up the map
- Challenge harmful attitudes
- Educate yourself, staff, and communities on how to safely respond to disclosures of harm

Three things to say when someone discloses harm:

1. I believe you
2. I'm sorry that happened
3. Thank you for telling me

By choosing to Start by Believing, Aotearoa New Zealand can replace doubt with dignity, silence with support, and become a country where survivors are met first with belief.