

<https://denimday.org/why-denim>

There is no excuse and never an invitation to rape

Since 1999, Peace Over Violence has run an inspiring and powerful campaign to practice solidarity and support survivors by renewing our commitment to exposing harmful behaviors and attitudes surrounding sexual violence. Denim Day is recognized on a Wednesday in April in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The campaign began after a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court to overturn a rape conviction because the justices felt that since the victim was wearing tight jeans she must have helped the person who raped her remove them, thereby implying consent. Following the reversal, the women in the Italian Parliament came to work wearing jeans in solidarity with the victim.

Peace Over Violence developed the Denim Day campaign in response to this case and the activism surrounding it. Since then, what started as a local event to bring awareness to victim blaming and destructive myths that surround sexual violence has grown into a worldwide movement.

As the longest-running sexual violence prevention and education campaign in history, Denim Day asks community members, elected officials, businesses and students to make a social statement with their fashion statement by wearing jeans on this day as a visible means of protest against the misconceptions that surround sexual violence.

Denim Day 2025 is Wednesday, April 30th!



Italy, 1990s

The Denim Day story began in Italy 1992, when an 18-year old girl was raped by the 45-year old driving instructor who was taking her to her very first driving lesson. He took her to an isolated road, pulled her out of the car, removed her jeans and forcefully raped her.

She reported the rape and the perpetrator was arrested and prosecuted. He was then convicted of rape and sentenced to jail. Years later, he appealed the conviction claiming that the sex was consensual, leading the Italian Supreme Court to overturn the conviction and release the perpetrator. A statement from the Court argued that because the victim was wearing very tight jeans, she had to help remove them, and by removing the jeans it was not rape but consensual sex. This became known throughout Italy as the “jeans alibi.”

Enraged by the verdict, the women in the Italian Parliament launched a protest wearing jeans on the steps of the Supreme Court. This protest was picked up by international media which inspired the California Senate and Assembly to do the same on the steps of the Capitol in Sacramento. Patti Occhiuzzo Giggans, Executive Director of Peace Over Violence, saw this in the media and thought everyone should be wearing jeans to protest all of the myths about why women and girls are raped. Thus, Denim Day in LA was born. The first Denim Day in LA event was held in April 1999, and has continued annually since.

For more information on the case, visit [The New York Times](#)' coverage.