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“Violence against women is one of the most critical problems that we are facing in our society today. According to a recent World Health Organization study, it is estimated that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner (not including sexual harassment) at some point in their lives. In some countries, National studies have shown this number to be as high as 70%. Such staggering figures should definitely generate some introspection on what are some of the simple things that we can do in our daily lives to recognize the causes, behaviors and attitudes that lead to violence against women in our society.

We need to start with our families first, most importantly the family values that we instill in our young boys and girls. We should teach them that men and women are equal in all aspects, for example, when we are sharing household chores such as cleaning, grocery shopping, laundry, cooking, washing dishes etc., we should encourage boys and girls to share the work and parents role model by sharing the responsibilities. This is very important as it demonstrates equality between men and women at home within the family. Further, we should talk to them with lot of love and caring about family, friends, school, and community and encourage them to express their views openly. Lot of times a lack of open communication often leads to bottling up of emotions, building up negative feelings and eventually over a period of time leads to aggressive behavior especially in boys, which could result in violent behavior against women. Parents should make sure that they hear the opinions of their kids both boys and girls equally. Parents should clearly call out any biases against girls and women, condemning unequivocally derogatory comments and jokes. At the same time, they should reinforce respectful behavior towards go and women with positive examples and explanations. It is also important to encourage girls to call out any discrimination, this gives them the confidence to continue to standup for what they believe in beyond the family and in the society.

If we put a concerted effort in raising awareness and changing behaviors at the grassroots level starting with the family, this will have a huge impact at the community, national and global levels.”