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Julia Hiltz

## It's Time for Change

I believe we need change. I believe we need change in the way our society views women. I believe this because I am a daughter. I believe this because I am a sister. I believe this because I am a college student I believe this as a niece of a survivor of domestic violence. I believe this as a cousin to two survivors of domestic violence.

I grew up hearing adults around me saying women couldn't do this and men couldn't do that, that men could wear this and women couldn't wear that, that women had to do this and men had to do that. Through my almost 21 years of life, I was told I had to be feminine and had to pertain to society's definition of femininity, while my male peers had to be masculine and carry out the definition of masculinity. These ideas are teaching men that they need to be the aggressor and to take control of women. These ideas are teaching men that in order to be seen as a man, they need to dehumanize women and treat them like objects. These ideas are teaching women that they need to be obedient and follow a man's request. These ideas teach women that they "owe" men. These ideas are teaching women that it is normal to be seen as less valuable and that men are above us.

Current statistics show that almost 60% of young women have experience abuse in their lifetime and about 29% of young women have been in an abusive relationship. 24% of young women in abusive relationships do not share their abuse with anyone. Smaller percentages are seen as men as the victim.

I believe that we need to change how our society views women and view them as equal. I believe that we need to teach our daughters to be themselves and to stand up for themselves. I believe we need to teach our daughters to treat everyone as equal. I believe that we need to teach our sons to respect women as an equal. I believe we need to teach our sons to stand up for what they believe in.