

Ring the bell

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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What does it take to replace a culture that tolerates violence against women with one that insists on respect? According to Breakthrough, an organization based in the U.S. and India, a key element is enlisting men to actively enforce nonviolent, respectful norms.

A couple years ago, the group's [Bell Bajao](#) (Hindi for "Ring the Bell") project produced some amazing PSA videos in India. Watch:

And:

Okay, one more:

The simplicity of the idea is powerful: the kind of forceful intervention that could have frightening, unpredictable results is not the only way to intervene. Men—that's men in particular—can do something that is essentially nonconfrontational but that accomplishes two things: interrupting the abusive situation, and sending a clear (though indirect) message that *this is not what we do*.

I learned about these [via E. J. Graff](#), who points out that a similar project in the States would look somewhat different, not least because so many of us live out of earshot of our neighbors. But this kind of public-health approach to antiviolence work is crucial here as well.