



**Ottawa Coalition to End  
Violence Against Women**

**Coalition d'Ottawa contre la  
violence faite aux femmes**

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June 11, 2008

Letter to the Editor  
Globe and Mail

The Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW) would like to thank Anthony E. Wolfe for his article, "*The most important sex talk of all*" published on June 10, 2008.

As a coalition dedicated to ending violence against women we believe that violence and disrespectful behaviour towards women by men is largely due to the way we socialize boys through gender stereotypes and macho masculinity. These images are everywhere, i.e. advertisements and video games that give boys and men the permission to cross the line.

Preventative messages and public education are essential to changing men's views of how they should treat women and we thank Wolfe for articulating this well.

This discourse which shifts the responsibility to men needs more airtime. It is not only a women's job to keep herself safe and to consent to sex. The onus is on men, who need to ask for consent and make sure they have it before engaging in sexual activity. Getting consent is a necessary step and more boys need to hear that message. Even if it feels corny or not spontaneous enough, boys need to ask. No girl will ever laugh at them for doing so; in fact we know that girls will respect them so much more.

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