



What is “[Take Back the Night](#)” and how did it start?

Take Back the Night is the oldest worldwide movement to stand against sexual violence in all forms. Take Back the Night began in the 1970s with a Tribunal Council meeting in Belgium attended by 2000+ women representing 40+ countries. One of the first "Take Back the Night" marches was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in October 1975, after the murder of a microbiologist, Susan Alexander Speeth, who was stabbed to death while walking home alone. Early protests sparked thousands of events on college campuses, each working to end sexual violence and to support victims. The name is in honour of those who first advocated for the essential right of women to walk alone at night without fear of being raped, harassed, or otherwise harmed.

“Women are often told to be extra careful and take precautions when going out at night. In some parts of the world, even today, women are not allowed out at night. So, when women struggle for freedom, we must start at the beginning by fighting for freedom of movement, which we have not had and do not now have. We must recognize that freedom of movement is a precondition for anything else. It comes before freedom of speech in importance because, without it, freedom of speech cannot in fact exist”.

— [The Night and Danger](#) by [Andrea Dworkin](#)

Events

Events typically consist of a rally followed by a march and often a speak-out or candlelight vigil on violence against women. The word night was originally meant to be taken literally to express the fear that many women feel during the night but has changed to symbolize a fear of violence in general. This helps the movement incorporate other feminist concerns such as domestic violence and sexual abuse within the home.

Can anyone participate in a Take Back the Night event or is it for women only?

TBTN is committed to ending sexual violence for all people of all sexual and gender identities, races, ethnicities, nationalities, religious beliefs, ages, abilities, and statuses. **All** will be welcome to walk, stand, speak, chant, and rally with us until sexual violence is no more.