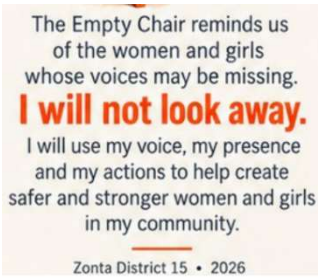
ZONTA SAYS NO
TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM TOOLKIT

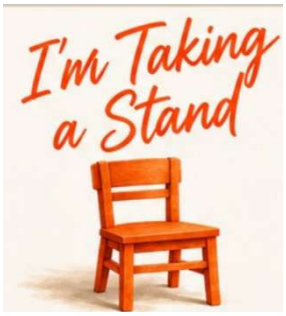
WWW.ZONTASAYSNO.COM

25 NOVEMBER – 10 DECEMBER



THE EMPTY CHAIR

District 15 Zonta Says NO Featured Project
16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence
November 25–December 10, 2026



START HERE

First: Don't panic. You have a chair. You're already halfway there.

The Empty Chair is the **featured District 15 project** for the 2026 16 Days of Activism.

It is **strongly encouraged—but it is not required.**

District 15 is providing this project as a ready-to-use starting point. Your club may:

- use it as written
- make it simpler
- make it bigger
- change the location
- adapt the display
- combine it with another activity
- create your own version
- or choose one of the other three District 15 project ideas

There is no one "right" way to participate. We've done the groundwork. **You make it yours.**

WHAT IS THE EMPTY CHAIR?

An orange chair is used as a simple visual symbol to get people's attention and start a conversation about violence against women. The chair is not meant to tell the whole story.

Think of it this way:
The chair gets attention.
The sign explains.
The information educates.
The resource connects.
The conversation opens the door to action.
That's the project.

WHAT DO WE ACTUALLY HAVE TO DO ?

At its simplest:

1. FIND A CHAIR

A thrift-store, donated, borrowed, or inexpensive chair is fine.

It needs to be **safe and sturdy**.



2. PAINT IT ORANGE

It doesn't have to be perfect.

For an outdoor display, use appropriate exterior paint and weather-resistant materials.

3. FIND A LOCATION

Choose somewhere people will see it and where the display makes sense.

Get permission before placing it.

4. ADD THE MESSAGE

Use the District 15 sign or create an appropriate version for your club.

5. PROVIDE A WAY TO LEARN MORE

Use reliable resource information, a website, QR code, local organization, or other appropriate next step.

6. DISPLAY IT

For a few hours, a day, several days, or as part of another event.

It does not have to be displayed for all 16 days.

7. SHARE WHAT HAPPENED

Take a few appropriate photos if possible and complete the simple District report.

That's enough.

WHERE CAN WE PUT IT?

Possibilities include:

- libraries
- businesses
- community centers
- schools
- churches or faith communities
- civic spaces
- partner organizations
- club events
- other approved community locations

Indoor or outdoor can both work.

Before you set it up, ask:

Do we have permission?

Also ask:

- Where can it go?
- How long can it stay?
- Who will set it up and remove it?
- Can we photograph it?
- Are there rules about signs or QR codes?
- If outdoors, what is our weather plan?

If one location says no, **find another**.

WHAT SHOULD THE DISPLAY INCLUDE?

You really need only four things:

THE CHAIR

The visual invitation.

THE SIGN

What is this and why is it here?

THE INFORMATION

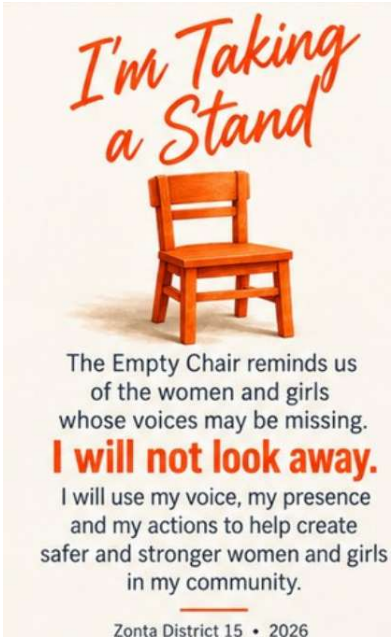
A brief explanation or educational information.

THE NEXT STEP

A reliable way to learn more or take action.

Don't try to put everything on the sign.

Let the chair breathe.



WHAT IF SOMEONE ASKS A QUESTION?

You don't need a speech.

You can say:
"The Empty Chair is part of Zonta's effort to raise awareness about violence against women. It's a visual reminder that someone is missing—and an invitation to learn more and take action."

If you don't know an answer:
"I don't know, but I can help you find reliable information."

If someone shares a personal experience:

- listen
- thank them for trusting you
- don't investigate
- don't promise confidentiality you cannot provide
- don't try to become their counselor
- provide appropriate reliable resources

You are making a connection—not providing professional services.

DO WE NEED A PARTNER?

No. A community partner can be helpful, but it is not required.

A partner might provide:

- a location
- resources
- education
- publicity
- a speaker
- community connections

If you involve a partner, make a clear, specific request and respect their expertise and time.

You can absolutely do the Empty Chair with **just your club.**

DO WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ALL 16 DAYS?

No. The Empty Chair can be:

- a single display
- part of an existing club event
- displayed for several days
- moved between approved locations
- part of a larger community activity
- one piece of your club's overall 16 Days participation

You do **not** need 16 activities.

You do **not** need 16 social media posts.

Choose what fits your club.

WHAT ABOUT PUBLICITY?

Keep it simple.

You might:

- post on your club's Facebook page
- tell your members
- notify a community partner
- submit a community calendar announcement
- contact local media
- take a few photos

Three posts can be plenty:

BEFORE: We're getting ready.

DURING: Here's why our Empty Chair is here.

AFTER: Here's what happened and what we learned.

No graphic or sensational material. Respect people's privacy and get permission before using photographs or personal stories.

WHAT IF WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME OR MONEY?

Simplify.

You do not need:

- a large committee
- a large budget
- a fancy event
- a perfect chair
- professional photography
- six community partners
- daily social media
- a perfect plan

The Emergency Version:

Safe chair.
Orange paint.
Permission.
District message.
Reliable resource.
Display it.
Take a picture.
Tell us what happened.

Done.

QUICK CHECKLIST

BEFORE



☐ Choose your version
☐ Find a chair
☐ Paint it orange
☐ Choose a location
☐ Get permission
☐ Prepare the sign
☐ Check resource information/QR code
☐ Decide who handles setup and removal

DURING

☐ Display safely
☐ Keep the message visible
☐ Answer questions simply
☐ Connect people with reliable information
☐ Take appropriate photos

AFTER

☐ Remove/store the display
☐ Thank the host or partners
☐ Share photos if appropriate
☐ Complete the simple report
☐ Note what worked and what you'd change

WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

✓ **No chair?** Find another one. ☺

✓ **Chair isn't pretty?** Paint it / move on. ☺

✓ **Location says no?** Find another location. ☺

✓ **Nobody stops?** Doesn't mean nobody saw. ☺

✓ **Something didn't work?** Learn from it. ☺

✓ **Running out of time?** Simplify. ☺

✓ **Can't staff it?** Use display by itself.

✓ **Don't know the answer:** Say so & help find reliable information. ☺

Remember: **Done and breathing beats perfect and panicking—and they both beat giving up.**

AND THERE ARE THREE MORE OPTIONS

The Empty Chair is the **featured District 15 project**, but it's **not the only way to participate.** District 15 is also providing **three additional, lighter-weight project ideas** for the 16 Days.

Your club can:
choose one,
combine them,
adapt them,
use the Empty Chair plus another idea,
or create something of your own.

The goal is not for every club to look the same.

The goal is for **every club to participate in a way that works in its community.**

NEED HELP?

That's what I'm here for.

If you're wondering:

"Is this enough?"
"Where should we put it?"
"What should our sign say?"
"Can we change this?"
"What if our club wants to do something different?"

Ask Kim.

Kim Sandberg

District 15 Zonta Says NO Advocacy Chair

kim@preta.com
559 280 7723

You don't have to figure it all out by yourself.

ONE LAST THING

The Empty Chair is a **tool—not a script.**

Small is not less meaningful.
Big is not necessarily better.
Different is not wrong.

District 15 has done the groundwork.

You make it yours.

One chair. One conversation. One community at a time.

