

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Sista II Sista
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Young Women in Brooklyn Speak Out Against Violence

Saturday, August 31st, 2002

4-8 pm

Burger King Parking Lot

On Knickerbocker, between Myrtle and Blecker.

On Saturday, August 31st, Sista II Sista, a Bushwick-based community organization that organizes young women of color, will be hosting a community speak-out to call attention to the issue of violence against women of color in the Bushwick area. As has been recently reported by local media, the New York Police Department has failed to adequately respond to domestic abuse and sexual assault cases city-wide due to a backlog in the NYPD database. Some results from a community survey that Sista II Sista took last summer illustrate the severity of this issue in our community. Out of 400 young women that we asked, 57% knew someone who had been raped. In 90% of those cases, the young women were not helped. 64% of those asked felt that the community they live in is not safe for girls.

This event will be an opportunity for the Bushwick community to come together and break the silence and neglect that surrounds the issue of violence against women in a creative and powerful way. The event will include dance, theater, musical and poetry performances by young women, as well as outside performers and poets. At the end of the evening, Sista II Sista will screen its video documentary entitled "You Have the Right to Break the Silence", which includes interviews with young women from the community about sexual harassment by the police. Coverage of police abuse in communities of color has time and again centered on the experiences of young men. The experiences of young women of color in these communities, however, are rarely brought out into the open.

We invite members of the media to join us and speak with the young women of Bushwick about the issues that affect their lives, and to help us make our voices heard in order to put an end to the violence that we are forced to live with.

For more information, please contact Sista II Sista at the numbers on the top of this page.