***ONE MILLION STARS***

Today in our school we are trying to raise awareness to end violence against women. When you entered our school this morning you were met with over 1,000 stars. These beautiful stars were individually hand woven by Class 4L, and other members of the school community.

The project “ONE MILLION STARS” began in Australia in 2012, when Samoan artist Maryann Talia Pau began weaving the eight-pointed stars as a response to the murder of Gillian Meagher, an Irish woman living in Australia.

Australia reached over one million stars and now it is a global movement trying to create one billion stars throughout the world. The artist Maryann claims that “every time a person weaves a star, they are expressing their hopes, dreams and concerns.” She says, “that weaving stars helps us to feel less alone, and less overwhelmed by the enormity of violence and more confident to face the next step.”

The stars represent LIGHT, HOPE and SOLIDARITY against violence throughout the world.

The Project came to Ireland in 2019, and in connection with the AMBER WOMEN’s REFUGE in Kilkenny, the project hopes to raise awareness of domestic abuse by holding public star installations.

Today in Maryfield as part of INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’s DAY, Class 4L are proud to launch our public STAR Installation. We hope other individuals and communities will join this wonderful project.

***SOME IMPORTANT POINTS:***

* 1 in 3 women worldwide experience physical or sexual violence and everyday 137 women worldwide are killed by a partner or member of their own family.
* In Ireland, 1 in 4 women experience emotional, physical, sexual, or financial abuse from a partner or ex-partner.
* Since 1996- 244 women have been murdered in Ireland.
* The Pandemic has had an “unprecedented impact on victims of domestic abuse”. There was a 43% rise in the number of women contacting Women’s Aid.
* According to a report based on a nationally representative sample of 500 young people (age 18-25), the report found that 1 in 5 young women were abused with 51% of them under 18 when the abuse started.
* Violence against women is caused by gender inequality. This leads to further inequality as it prevents women from participating in society and achieving their full potential.

Here in Maryfield College, we all have a part to play in putting a stop to violence against women. Let the One Million Stars project inspire and encourage us to work together to end violence against women.

 Thank You,

 Class 4L

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY 8th March 2022