



Lake County Rising brings our community together to raise awareness about the abuse women and girls experience and to take a stand to end it. Inspired by One Billion Rising—a global movement started by the playwright formerly known as Eve Ensler—this event is about rising in solidarity and taking action.

A big part of the event is the youth contests, where young people can speak up, share their creativity, and help end gender-based violence.

The theme for 2026 is:

“Reclaim. Resist. Rise.”

Against abuse. Against toxic norms. For every girl’s right to be real.

Essay entries should be 500 words or less, double-spaced, and connect to the theme—what it means to you, why it matters, or how it influences society.

Poem entries will be judged on originality, creativity, and artistic quality. Any style is welcome (except block or blackout poems), and they should connect to the theme. Poems should not be longer than two pages.

Poster entries must be original artwork and can use any medium—paint, crayons, digital, handwriting, etc.—just avoid stereotypical or harmful images of domestic violence, like bondage.

Submit your project and waiver form to lakecountyrising@gmail.com by Monday, January 19, 2026. You’ll get an email when your entry is received. Winners will be notified by February 2, 2026, and invited to share their work at Lake County Rising 2026 on February 9 at the College of Lake County, Grayslake Campus, from 6:00 to 7:15 p.m.



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Lake County Rising Entry Form

Essay, Poem, and Poster (Art) Contest



Student name (First and last name)

Student email address

School name

Grade and age

Parent/Guardian name (first and last name)

Parent/Guardian email address

Parent/Guardian phone number

Parent/Guardian mailing address

Release/Waiver

By signing this form, I give permission to publish the name, school, grade, and age of the student submitting an entry. I also give permission to the Lake County Rising committee to publish any portion of the poem or essay, including publishing the entire submission. If submitting artwork, I agree to allow its display at Lake County Rising. If I am selected as the winning poem or essay, I agree to read it during the Lake County Rising event. I have read this agreement and understand it.

Student Signature and Date:

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date:

Lake County Rising Entry Form

Poster (Art) Contest - Middle School



Student name (First and last name)

Student email address

School name

Grade and age

Parent/Guardian name (first and last name)

Parent/Guardian email address

Parent/Guardian phone number

Parent/Guardian mailing address

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