

## Civil Rights Group & Ashley Stewart Stores Provide Safe Haven for Teen Girls

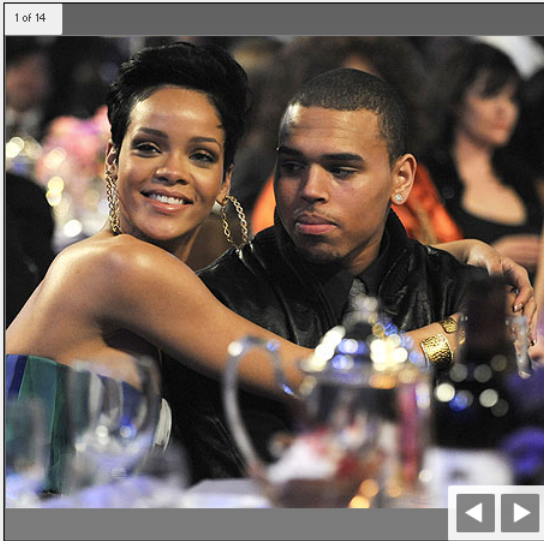
Posted Mar 20th 2009 3:48PM by [Chana Garcia](#)

In light of growing concern about teen domestic violence and improving the self-image of young women, Ashley Stewart Stores and the National Council of Negro Women have teamed up to provide safe havens for girls in need.

As part of the "We are Listening Campaign," more than 200 stores nationwide will serve as meeting grounds where young women can be heard, seek help and develop mentoring relationships with African American women in their communities.

The NCNW and Ashley Stewart relaunched the campaign Wednesday in celebration of Women's History Month, which, incidentally, arrives on the heels of the **Chris Brown-Rihanna** scandal.

"The connection between women and girls is powerful," said **Alfreda Davis**, executive director of NCNW, at a press conference in Washington, D.C. "Girls are impacted by sexual harassment and violence. We saw this as a mission long before it hit the headlines."



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Millions of fans -- young and old -- were shocked to hear that the young couple was involved in alleged domestic abuse incident. A dramatic photo of her bruises drove the story home.

"What a wonderful way to celebrate women and empowerment," said longtime activist and NCNW Chairwoman **Dorothy Height**. "We are giving assistance to each other -- the older generation to the younger. We can use this facility to have an open house and have a program that exposes women to each other."

More than 2,000 women are joining the campaign every week, according to reps from Urban Brands, the parent company of Ashley Stewart.

To encourage more women to sign up, Ashley Stewart Stores offers a 20 percent discount on all purchases after meetings. And customers who join NCNW receive a 10 percent discount for one year following their enrollment.

"We can give young girls the courage to stand up for themselves," said **Mark Gunn**, chairman of the Ashley Stewart Foundation. "Simply having another woman to listen and talk to can make all the difference in the world."

Founded in 1935 by educator and civil rights leader **Mary McLeod Bethune**, the NCNW is an advocacy group for women of African descent and their families. Two years ago, when local chapters began meeting at Ashley Stewart locations, a women's specialty retailer, the two formed a partnership to promote dialogue around issues facing young women and girls. They have since taken their efforts nationwide.

To learn more about the "We are Listening Campaign," click [here](#).