

For Immediate Release:
September 28, 2011

Contact: Gabrielle H. Turner
YWCA USA - Communications
202-467-0801
www.ywca.org

THE YWCA USA AND SAVING OUR DAUGHTERS, WITH SINGER/ACTRESS KEKE PALMER, HAVE COLLABORATED TO LAUNCH A NATIONWIDE ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVE

With the start of a new school season this fall across the country, the YWCA USA and Saving Our Daughters have created a new alliance to help combat the issues of bullying and abuse with young people throughout our nation. This partnership is currently rolling out with Interscope singer/actress Keke Palmer, who will lend her time and support to both organizations' efforts.

Keke Palmer has long been associated with organizations that work to bring awareness and change to communities throughout the world. Palmer was particularly impacted by the life of a 12-year-old friend and one of her biggest fans, Iliss Marie Benjamin. Iliss fought a tough battle against brain cancer and sadly lost. During her fight, Iliss experienced the cruelty of bullying like so many young cancer victims. "I was a victim of a bully when I was eight years old, some kids in my class made fun of me because my hair was very curly and hard to manage" said Palmer. "I am 18 years old and still, I remember it was painful, to be different, to have an illness like Little Iliss, to be different from the crowd for any reason can make you a target of a bully." Palmer continued, "I am so pleased to be a part of this anti-bullying campaign and sincerely hope that together we can make a difference."

Keke will be working side by side with the national office of the YWCA and Saving Our Daughters both who have similar missions to empower women across the globe.

"We are so excited about having such an extraordinary singer and actress as Keke Palmer, to address these issues of bullying and abuse worldwide with the YWCA USA and with both our missions," stated CEO of Saving Our Daughters, Curtis Benjamin.

"The YWCA has long advocated for empowering women, eliminating racism, eliminating violence and promoting dignity for women and girls," says Gloria Lau, CEO of YWCA USA. "The YWCA is thrilled to partner with Saving Our Daughters and Keke Palmer to tackle the issue of bullying in our nation. Awareness of the damage and violence that bullying inflicts needs to be heightened in communities across the country," Lau continued, "and the YWCA is committed to exposing its negative impact on our society, and especially for women and girls."

According to Tavia Pauling, chief operating officer of Saving Our Daughters, "Keke will be the exclusive leader for the "Oath Project" where young girls are encouraged to take an oath for anti-bullying. This initiative will launch online via Facebook and Twitter to acquire pledges from 50,000 teens and 250,000 adults to take eight immediate action steps to prevent bullying."

The pledge initiative will be accompanied by an anti-bullying public service announcement featuring Keke and girls at a YWCA that will premiere nationally in October 2011 during National Bullying Awareness Month. Keke will also use the



promotional platform of her upcoming film, "Joyful Noise," opening January 2012, and her forthcoming sophomore album due out in the spring of 2012 to bring further awareness and attention to this cause.

About the YWCA...

The YWCA USA is one of the oldest and largest women's organizations in the nation with the mission of eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. In the U.S., the YWCA serves over 2 million women, girls and their families in communities all across the country. The YWCA focuses on providing resources and support for women, girls and their families including services for child care, job training, housing, and health and safety. Globally, the YWCA USA is a member of the World YWCA, which has affiliates in 122 countries that serve 25 million women and girls worldwide.

About Saving Our Daughters...

The 501c(3) Saving Our Daughters organization, creates the tools to get teen girls discussing key issues and fired up to take the power away from bullying, (cyber, gossip, face-to-face,...), date abuse, hate crimes, school violence, violence against women, and other esteem slayers. Saving Our Daughters (SOD) has had the honor of collaborating with key women of film, television, and music in its celebrity-inspired book series as well as more than a decade of youth mentoring and academic programs. With a growing network of valued community partners such as the YWCA USA, SOD is primed to deliver a revolutionary level of awareness and action toward bullying and abuse prevention.

About Keke Palmer...

Keke Palmer is a young, highly respected actress and burgeoning recording artist best known for her roles in "Akeelah and the Bee" and her Nickelodeon hit series "True Jackson, VP." Keke is a SAG nominated and multi-NAACP Image Award winner all by the age of 18. She will next be seen January 2012 in Warner Bros., "Joyful Noise" alongside the iconic Dolly Parton and Queen Latifah and in the Nickelodeon Television movie "Rags" which she also produced. On the music side, her sophomore album with Interscope Records will drop spring 2012.

###