

OVERVIEW: CAMPUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Sexual violence is a serious public health issue that affects all communities. As many as 1 in 5 women are sexually assaulted in college (Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007), and while in college, one in 16 men have been victims of an attempted or completed assault (Krebs et al., 2007). Research shows male college students are less likely than female college students to report an assault (Banyard et al., 2007). This comprehensive overview will focus on prevention.

Impact of campus sexual violence

The impact of sexual assault can be wide-ranging and can have long-term impacts. Survivors experience an increased risk for post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, and depression (Kilpatrick, Resnick, Ruggiero, Conoscenti, & McCauley, 2007). As a result, a survivor might have difficulty academically, and often will drop out of school (Arria et al., 2013; Eisenberg, Golbertstein, & Hunt, 2009). Conversely, people who sexually abuse are unlikely to be reported or held accountable, and might rape again (Lisak & Miller, 2002).

Colleges and universities are in a unique position to create a campus culture that is safe for all students, faculty, and staff. As research shows, campuses need to go beyond a one-time awareness event in order to change knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs (DeGue et al., 2014). This overview will define comprehensive sexual violence prevention and identify effective strategies to engage the campus community.

FACT SHEETS AVAILABLE ONLINE

- Action steps for health care professionals
- Action steps for faculty and staff
- Action steps for campus administrators

Prevention 101

There are many pieces that must come together in order to create a comprehensive approach to ending sexual violence. Awareness, risk reduction, response, and prevention are all pieces of that puzzle.

- **Awareness** increases understanding of what sexual violence is and its prevalence. Awareness activities also can inform students and staff on which resources are available for support.
- **Risk-reduction** approaches may help individuals identify warning signs and learn safety tips.
- **Response** occurs following an assault and works to lessen the impact of trauma on survivors and those who are close to them.
- **Prevention** goes beyond raising awareness and reducing risk and engages campus communities in creating long-term solutions to social issues.

Effective prevention strategies address the root causes and social norms that allow sexual violence to exist. All forms of oppression are connected. Oppression creates an environment where inequality thrives and violence is seen as normal and acceptable. To prevent sexual violence, it is necessary to change the culture.