



FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUNDATION

CHOICES CAMPUS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

WORLD'S LARGEST PRO-CHOICE STUDENT NETWORK

CAMPAIGN TO END CAMPUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE

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The campus sexual assault epidemic has been receiving a lot of attention due to increased student activism. Federal agencies are investigating colleges and universities across the country for mishandling sexual violence. Survivors are also using the courts to hold schools accountable, winning monetary settlements and forcing universities to change how they handle reports of sexual violence. We need safer campuses - and can harness this momentum to build them.

THE BASICS RAPE CULTURE

“Rape culture” is a complex set of beliefs that create an environment in which sexual violence is prevalent and normalized. Rape culture is perpetuated through the use of misogynistic language, objectification of bodies, and glamorization of violence. Behaviors commonly associated with rape culture include victim-blaming, sexual objectification, trivializing rape, denial of widespread rape, or refusing to acknowledge the harm of sexual assault.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is a general term for any non-consensual touching or sexual activity. Sexual assault is violence that can take many forms - including rape, non-consensual sexual activity and sexual harassment. The federal government and each state have their own legal definitions of sexual assault.

CONSENT

Consent is the expression of a mutual desire between parties to participate in a sexual activity. Definitions of consent also vary according to campus, state, and localities. Sexual activity without consent is sexual violence. Consent isn't always spoken, but the absence of a “no” is not a “yes!” Minors, people who are mentally incapacitated or unconscious, and people under the influence of drugs or alcohol are unable to give consent.

COERCION

Coercion refers to threatening or intimidating someone in order to persuade them to engage in a sexual behavior. Someone saying “yes” because they are too afraid to say



“no” is not what consent looks like. Someone changing their mind about a sex act and then being pressured into engaging in it is not what consent looks like.

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is actual or threatened physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional abuse by a current or former spouse or same or opposite sex partner. IPV exists along a continuum, but several types of IPV can occur simultaneously. Behaviors on the IPV spectrum include:

- **Physical Violence:** When a person hurts or tries to hurt a partner with physical force.
- **Sexual Violence:** Forcing a partner to take part in a sex act when the partner does not consent.
- **Stalking:** Repeated, unwanted attention and contact that causes fear or concern for someone's safety.
- **Psychological Aggression:** The use of verbal and non-verbal communication with intent to emotionally or mentally harm or exert control over another person.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Any situation in which you are forced to participate in a degrading sexual activity is sexual abuse. Forced sex, even with a partner with whom you have had consensual sex, is an act of violence, and people with abusive partners are at a higher risk of being seriously injured or killed.

FAST FACTS

- Anyone can be a survivor of rape, sexual assault, or intimate partner violence. 33.5% of multiracial



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women, 27% of American Indian and Alaska Native women, 15% of Latina women, 22% of Black women, and 19% of white women have been raped. The LGBTQ community is also uniquely vulnerable.

- 1 in 5 women will experience sexual violence during her time in college.
- 1 in 3 college women report having been in an abusive relationship. 43% report experiencing tech, physical, sexual, verbal abuse or controlling behavior.
- Most survivors know their attackers. Of female victims, 51% were raped by a current / former partner, 41% by an acquaintance, and 14% by a stranger. 52% of men and boys report being raped by an acquaintance and 15% by a stranger.
- Sexual offenders are often serial offenders. One study found that of men who admitted to committed rape or attempted rape, 63% said they committed an average of six rapes each.
- Alcohol is the most frequently used weapon in sexual assaults.

IF SOMEONE IS ASSAULTED...

WHAT IS HELPFUL?

- Give them options. When a person is assaulted, their power and control is taken away. Give them control.
- Tell them it's not their fault.
- Ask before you hug or touch them. After experiencing a physical assault, they might not want to be touched.
- Keep their information private.
- Provide resources for counseling and medical care, including emergency contraception. Survivors have a right to a rape kit and exam by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, but it is advisable to do so immediately but no later than 72 hours after the crime.

WHAT IS HARMFUL?

- Asking the survivor pointed questions. ("What were you wearing?" or "Why did you get that drunk?")
- Forcing the survivor to report the crime, seek medical attention, or tell their parents.

- Hugging or touching without permission.
- Confronting an attacker. This may endanger a survivor.
- Asking the survivor to relive details of the assault.

WHAT'S REQUIRED OF YOUR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

THE JEANNE CLERY ACT

The Clery Act, a federal law passed in 1990, requires all colleges receiving federal funding to report crime statistics for incidents occurring on campus, in areas immediately next to the campus, and at some non-campus facilities (i.e. an off-campus Greek house). Schools must publish incidents reported to a campus security authority or local police agency in publicly available, annual crime reports and alert the campus of known public safety risks. Schools that fail to comply face a fine of \$35,000 per violation.

TITLE IX

Title IX, the landmark federal legislation prohibiting sex discrimination in federally-funded educational programs or activities, requires universities to have an established procedure for handling sexual assault, sexual harassment and rape and protects students against retaliation from the college if they file a complaint. It also allows universities to issue "no contact" orders prohibiting accused attackers from contacting survivors and prohibits them from encouraging recovering survivors to discontinue their education.

CAMPUS SAVE ACT

Congress passed the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), a provision of the 2013 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) reauthorization, in March of 2014. That October, the Obama Administration implemented new rules that go into effect in July 2015 codifying how to interpret Title IX in work against sexual violence; broadening the Clery Act's range of reportable crimes to include domestic and dating violence, stalking, hate crimes, and four categories of sexual assault: rape, fondling, incest, and statutory rape; and outlining victim rights and the responsibilities of schools facing these issues.



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WHAT YOU CAN DO CLERY ACT COMPLAINTS

Under the Clery Act, victims can file a federal complaint against their university if any of the following rights are violated:

- Schools are required to create proactive prevention education programs on healthy relationships, sexuality, consent, and bystander intervention.
- Both the accuser and the accused must have equal opportunities to have others present at disciplinary hearings or procedures.
- Schools are required to detail each type of disciplinary proceeding used by the institution, including the decision-making process, anticipated timelines, and processes determining the proceeding types used.
- Both the victim and perpetrator must be informed simultaneously and in writing of the outcome of the proceeding and hearings, appeal procedures, and any change to the result before and when it becomes final.
- School officials who conduct proceedings must be trained on how to do so in a manner that “protects the safety of victims” and “promotes accountability.”
- Survivors must be notified of counseling services and their housing, academic, and reporting options.

Clery Act complaints have no statutes of limitations and can be submitted via mail, fax or email in any format. To learn more, email clery@ed.gov or visit knowyourix.org.

TITLE IX COMPLAINTS

Any student, whether or not they are a survivor of sexual assault, may file a Title IX complaint against a school that has failed to comply with the law. Complaints may be filed with the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) within 180 days, which will launch an investigation and may lead OCR to enter into an agreement with a school to address violations if any are found. Schools may also lose federal funds, though no institution has ever faced this penalty. Title IX complaints are filed online or emailed to ocr@gov.edu and are confidential. To learn more, visit knowyourix.org.

If you are a survivor, Title IX also allows you (or your parents, if you're under 18) to file a private lawsuit in federal court for money damages or to change your school's discriminatory policies with or without filing an OCR complaint.

In 2014, the University of Connecticut settled a Title IX lawsuit brought by five survivors for \$1.2 million dollars. Although not part of the settlement, UConn also created a Special Victims Unit within campus police and appointed a Dean for victim support services.

At the University of Colorado at Boulder, two women received a \$2.85 million settlement after a Title IX suit. As part of the settlement, the university agreed to implement policy changes. In the wake of the lawsuit, several staff members and administrators were forced to resign - including the President and Chancellor.

OTHER WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

PUSH TO IMPROVE YOUR SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Campus SaVE Act requires all universities and colleges to provide comprehensive sexual assault and dating violence prevention education for all students, staff, and faculty. Find out what department or official is developing the prevention education program and advocate for student involvement in the process. Work in coalition with other campus groups, student government, Greek Life, and professors to push for an hour-long in-person training with Q&A and encourage your administration to use successful prevention programs at UMD College Park and UC Berkeley as a model. Apply pressure with local and campus media buzz.

HOST AN ADVOCACY DAY

Encourage students to visit administrators and your Title IX coordinator and advocate for policy changes related to violence against women at your school or thank them for supporting existing policies. This helps create awareness, grow student involvement, and foster a working relationship between activists and administrators. University of Mary



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Washington's advocacy day also helped them identify decision makers and potential partners on campus. Your advocacy day should also be accompanied with an educational session on effective advocacy techniques.

TELL SURVIVORS' STORIES

The Clothesline Project is a visual display where survivor-made shirts with messages representing particular experiences with violence are displayed publicly. To host one, have a shirt-making party and arrange for survivors who don't want to decorate in-person to drop them off to you. Display the shirts on campus with counselors nearby to answer questions or assist survivors who are triggered.

HOST A DEMONSTRATION

Plan a protest or demonstration at your college. Common events include SlutWalks, Take Back The Night, and Denim Day commemorations.

SlutWalk, an international movement against victim blaming that originated in Toronto in 2011 after a police officer said women should "avoid dressing like sluts" to protect themselves from sexual assault. Women dressed in provocative clothing and marched to the police station to make the point that no one asks for sexual assault.

Take Back the Night is an event that raises awareness about sexual assault and domestic violence by inviting participants to rally around campus in great numbers - thus reclaiming the community as their own.

On **Denim Day**, people are encouraged to wear jeans to raise awareness. When a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court overturned a rape conviction because the survivor had worn tight jeans, women in the Parliament came to work the next day in jeans to show solidarity. Since then, Denim Day has grown into an international movement protesting against inaccurate and destructive attitudes about assault.

Here are some ways to get started planning a rally:

- Map out an accessible route covering your campus.
- Let campus security know about the event.
- Generate buzz with a Facebook event and event hashtag. Flier and chalk around campus. Alert campus media. Spread the word as best you can!
- Host a sign-making party a few days before the march so protesters can get to know each other.
- Invite campus officials who work on issues of sexual violence and give them a chance to inform protesters about the services they provide. Have them stay until the end in case anyone is triggered at the protest.

SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH SURVIVORS

The Handprint Project - in which students take a pledge not to commit or condone violence and place their handprint on a board - unites campuses in the fight to end sexual assault.

CREATE YOUR OWN MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Campus groups across the country have launched successful online campaigns to raise awareness:

- The "It Happens Here Project" is a website where Amherst College survivors anonymously submit their stories. Similar online projects exist at Harvard and Occidental.
- Project Unbreakable is a photo campaign of survivors holding signs quoting their attackers.
- Conduct a "Know Your Campus Survey" to investigate safety provisions, sexual assault policies, and police response to violence against women on your campus. Publicize your most impressive and startling findings through letters to the editor, editorial, or an investigative article. Create visibility by chalking, flyering, or postering to further publicize results. When you launch the project, include a press release for media outlets that may want to cover it. Make sure to include your contact information and fast facts about sexual assault.