

Sexual Assault Awareness Landscape Analysis

Background:

It is important to work with your community to spread awareness of these crimes and to ensure that all students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community understand the prevalence of sexual violence. We cannot only focus on altering the attitudes and behaviors of perceived problem groups on campus. Widespread change in the areas of intervention and prevention only occurs with widespread adaptation by all community members. It is a majority of individuals who together make up a campus community, set community norms, and establish campus culture. That is how we create change.

What is SA Awareness?

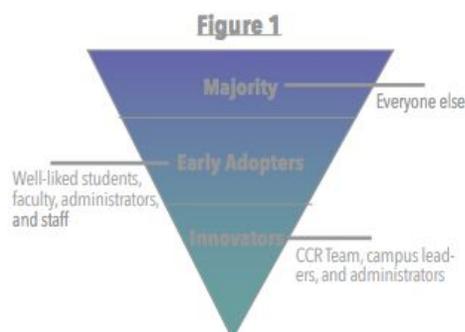
Sexual Assault Awareness programs provide a background on the prevalence of campus sexual assault as well as policies pertaining to what campuses should be doing to combat sexual violence, and a clear vision of what consent is. Institutions should provide resources on the how to and the importance of conducting a campus climate survey and other ways to influence positive change on a campus community. The goal of sexual assault awareness is for campus communities to become more aware of their sexual assault cultures, including who this violence affects most, in order to make colleges and universities environments where all students can safely pursue their education.

Schools with comprehensive SA Awareness programs have:

1. Ongoing Training
2. Training for specific campus groups/communities
3. Policies and Law explained
4. Awareness Activities

Ongoing Training

Ongoing training provides individuals with a higher rate of retention of the material. In any area, the more knowledge and skills in any area or issue increases morale and a sense of loyalty.¹ Increasing morale is an important piece to changing campus culture over time. It is important for schools to invest in ongoing and recurring training in sexual assault awareness that is effective and relevant to students.



Creating these different trainings can be done strategically. If the right people are involved in the development of the training, more students will attend and the content will be most relevant. According to Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation (DoI) Theory, changes can occur as key individuals move into the different settings where they have influence in order to

[pdfs/IBMTraining-TheValueofTraining.pdf](#)

help other individuals change their attitudes and behaviors.² Through this process, community norms shift and change from one that may support violence to one that is working to prevent sexual violence. This change can occur when key individuals on a campus use their influence to promote prevention and response that is based on meeting the needs of survivors. If these key individuals are not on the CCR team, they should work with the CCR team to develop the skills to train others.

Training for specific campus groups/communities

All campus communities are different and have different groups within them, therefore, it is important to have programs, training, and awareness activities that are unique and specialized.³

Assumptions, stereotypes, and racism may play a role in the way sexual violence is perceived as well as perception of certain dominant groups over communities of color. Some myths that exist include: women of color are promiscuous, so if they are sexually assaulted, it is because they were “asking for it,” Asian-American women do not get sexually assaulted because they are always willing to have sex, or that Black and Latino cultures are violent; therefore women in these cultures experience the violence of sexual assault as “normal.”⁴

Another Myth that exists is that the majority of sexual violence is perpetrated by men of color, specifically black men, towards white women. In fact, the large majority of all sexual violence is committed by someone of the same race (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011).⁵

These stereotypes often make it difficult for individuals to seek help, feel connected or have trust in their campus, therefore it is important to recognize the needs of all communities at a school.

Campus Climate Surveys: Campus Climate Surveys are a best practice for colleges and universities to better understand the scope of the problem of sexual assault in their community and to improve prevention and response programs.

In August 2014 the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) funded the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), to develop and test a pilot campus climate survey that could be implemented by schools or researchers, and used to address key issues related to the measurement of rape and sexual assault in self-report surveys. BJS contracted with RTI International, a nonprofit research organization, to collaborate on the design and implementation of the Campus Climate Survey Validation Study (CCSVS). The purpose of the CCSVS was to develop and test a survey instrument and methodology for efficiently collecting valid school-level data on campus climate and sexual victimization. The full report can be found [here](#). This report provides best practices in

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2957672/>

³ <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ccsvsfr.pdf>

⁴ <http://sapac.umich.edu/tags/striving-justice-toolkit>

⁵ <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/rhovo1215.pdf>

developing each survey in a way that is relevant to any campus using it. Campuses can change and add questions to truly personalize the surveys.

*According to the Department of Justice, campus climate refers to student perceptions on school connectedness; general perceptions of campus police, faculty, and university leadership; perceptions of leadership around sexual assault prevention and response; student norms related to sexual conduct; and attitudes about sexual assault.

Policies and Law explained

It is important for everyone on a college campus to know about the policies and services related to intervention and GBV so that the entire campus community is prepared to respond, but often the knowledge is not distributed and hard to access.

Campuses may have different legal obligations based on their local and state laws, so it is important to connect with local providers to ensure survivors have access to all of their rights.⁶

List of state-specific definitions and statutes for sexual assault, including overviews of select states' sexual assault offenses, penalties, and more can be found [here](#), through FindLaw.

Awareness Activities

Sexual assault can happen to any person, at any time, and can occur in marginalized communities at even higher rates. Awareness of the prevalence of sexual violence in our campus communities is an important piece to prevention. Each campus community is different and there should be activities to reflect that to ensure they are relevant to their audience.

Examples of awareness activity toolkits:

- [Navy SAPR awareness toolkit](#)
- [Washington Coalition](#)
- [Stop Street Harassment - April Awareness Activity toolkit](#)
- [NSVRC Event Ideas](#)
- [National Panhellenic Conference Awareness Toolkit](#)

Sexual assault continues to be a serious problem among young people age 18-24. Women between the ages of 18-24 who are at a college or university are three times more likely to be sexually assaulted than women in this age group who are not. A higher number of trans, queer, and gender-nonconforming students (21%) are sexually assaulted while in college.⁷

Cost:

Campus climate surveys can be expensive to conduct. Many schools face constraints related to costs and the logistical challenges of data collection, data processing, and data analysis. For a

⁶ <https://statelaws.findlaw.com/criminal-laws/sexual-assault.html>

⁷ <https://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/2017/09/preventing-sexual-assault-on-college-campuses/>

large school, conducting a census and collecting and processing thousands of surveys, in some cases more than 30,000, would be an intensive effort that would not be expected to result in a more representative estimate of the prevalence of sexual victimization than an estimate based on a randomly selected sample of a much smaller size. If incentives are being offered (which is critical for increasing response rates and minimizing non-response bias) the cost of using a census approach could quickly become prohibitive for large schools.⁸

Recommendations:

Incentives of \$40 have been seen to get the best response rate from students participating in campus climate surveys. One recommendation is to find incentives that can be provided by the school that are not money-based - tickets to a school show or sporting event, dining dollars, coupons for a campus store, etc.

⁸ <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ccsvsfr.pdf>

⁹ <https://studentaffairs.ku.edu/special-considerations-multicultural-and-or-underrepresented-communities>