Overview of Sexual Assault on College Campuses

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Introduction

• 14 years of campus experience prior to NASPA
• Completed more than 2,000 hours of training on campus sexual violence
• Trained as a domestic violence and sexual assault advocate in four states
• Completed dissertation on the topic of campus sexual violence
• Served on 2014 VAWA Negotiated Rulemaking Committee, representing four-year, public institutions
Learning Outcomes

At the end of this session, you should be able to:

• Understand the history of student campus sexual violence movement
• Identify patterns of perpetration and overview of the “red zone”
• Identify various types of victimology on college campuses
• Define rape culture
• Identify institutional barriers to reporting
Who is In the Room

1. Where is your position located in the University?

2. To whom does your position report?

3. Have you also been through state-recognized advocate training?
The History of the Campus Sexual Violence Student Movement
The Development of Campus Prevention and Response

1970s
Intro of campus Women’s Centers

1990s
Campus grant program through OVW

2000s
White House Not Alone report and State Legislation
Student Activism and the Media

- 2010 Center for Public Integrity report
- Rolling Stone article
- New York Times article
- Hunting Ground
- It Happens Here
What We Know About Campus Gender-Based Violence
Prevalence

• National Prevalence Surveys
  – National College Women Sexual Victimization (NCWSV) survey
  – National Crime Victimization Survey
Prevalence

• Campus Prevalence Data
  – Campus Climate Surveys
  – Health Center Data
  – Clery Statistics

• False Reports
Patterns of Perpetration and Overview of the Red Zone
College Student Perpetration Behavior

- Perpetrator Behavior
  - Serial perpetration
  - Grooming
  - Relation to mass shootings

120 rapists.
The “Red Zone”

- Where perpetrator behavior and risk factors come together

- Defined in different ways
  - First six weeks of school
  - First semester of first year
  - First year students only
The “Red Zone”

• Many campuses hold prevention education programs during this time

• The trouble with an overreliance on the Red Zone
Victimology on College Campuses
Victimology

- Victim Behavior
  - Disclosure
  - Labeling
  - Self-Blame
  - Reporting Experiences
Victimology

- Victim Behavior
  - Impact of Advocates/Support Resources
  - Revictimization
  - Institutional Betrayal
  - Impact of Victimization on Campus
Understanding Rape Culture
Rape Culture

A complex set of beliefs that encourage male sexual aggression and supports violence against women. It is a society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent. In a rape culture, women perceive a continuum of threatened violence that ranges from sexual remarks to sexual touching to rape itself. A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm. In a rape culture both men and women assume that sexual violence is a fact of life, inevitable. However, much of what we accept as inevitable is in fact the expression of values and attitudes that can change.

Penn State example
Rape Culture

- Princeton men’s swim team
- Harvard men’s soccer team
- Columbia men’s wrestling team
- Washington University men’s soccer team
Rape Culture

• Includes:
  – Victim blaming behavior by self, others
  – Systematic barriers for victims
    • Prosecution rates of sexual assault cases
    • Sentencing for convicted rapists
  – Athletic culture
  – Greek culture
Rape Culture
Rape Culture

• What examples of rape culture have you seen in your roles or on your campuses?
The Importance and Impact of Campus Advocacy
Campus Advocacy Best Practices: The Top 10

1. Appropriate salaries for staff, especially those providing after-hours coverage
2. Understanding confidentiality and privilege (provided by whom)
3. Ongoing professional development for advocates
4. Emergency funds for survivors
5. Advocates’ roles in accessing accommodations
6. Office name and branding are top priority
7. Training for media relations professionals on campus
8. Data management system is essential
9. Inclusion of advocates in ongoing case management teams
10. Prepare for increase in reporting
Campus Advocacy Stumbling Blocks: What to Avoid

1. Don’t bury the office in an org chart where students can’t find it.

2. Do not have advocates report to Title IX or Conduct Offices.

3. Be realistic about staffing levels (one person cannot realistically do all advocacy and prevention).

4. Don’t start from scratch – involve stakeholders throughout.

5. Campus-wide prevention and advocacy cannot be done with $0.

6. Don’t bury the office in a hard-to-find area on campus.

7. Don’t forget to include community partners.

8. Don’t forget that you must provide services for domestic/dating violence and stalking as well as sexual assault.

9. Don’t forget to include students.

10. Don’t require students to report to access academic accommodations.
The presence of an advocate does increase the rate of survivor reporting overall.

**A note of caution - the goal of providing advocacy services should never be to increase reporting, as it invalidates the option of not reporting for survivors.**
Institutional Barriers to Reporting
Barriers to Reporting

• Insular nature of campuses
  – Student organization involvement
  – Greek membership
  – Athletes

• Confidentiality concerns
  – Student advocates, hearing board members
  – Retaliation
Barriers to Reporting

• Lack of consequences
  – Prosecution rates in the courts
  – Sanctions for campus perpetrators

• Academic impact of reporting
  – Multiple meetings
    • Investigation
    • Hearing
    • Appeals
Barriers to Reporting

• “Interim measures” vs. accommodations

• Lack of long-term support services
  – Counseling session limits
  – Short-term advocacy

• Title IX overreach
Barriers to Reporting

• Structural barriers
  – Location of confidential resources
    • Police department
    • Title IX office
  – Inability to find resources online
  – Lack of amnesty clauses for survivors and bystanders

• Reputation of campus administrators
  – Breaches of confidentiality
  – Lack of serious sanctions for those found responsible

“...What frustrates me at my school is that we’ve had people expelled for cheating, but nobody has ever been expelled for rape.”

© Moving Beyond Blue Lights and Body Systems: A National Study of Student Anti-Rape Activists Students Active for Ending Rape, 2013
Barriers to Reporting

What have you done to overcome some of the barriers to reporting on your campus?
Questions?

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