

Six Steps to Preventing Sexual Violence

Sexual violence impacts all of us, and we all have a role to play in preventing it. Below are six steps you can take to participate in your campus' prevention strategy.

1 Know the facts. We can't address a problem we don't understand. That's why your campus is required by the Clery Act to host a campaign to raise awareness about sexual violence and publish statistics annually about incidents of sexual violence on campus. Take the time to learn about how sexual violence impacts your community and our society: <https://cultureofrespect.org/sexual-violence/statistics-at-a-glance/>

2 Dispel myths about sexual violence. Falsehoods about sexual violence allow it to persist. Contrary to common myths, what we do know is that sexual violence: can happen to anyone; is often perpetrated by someone the survivor knows; is never the fault of the survivor; and impacts everyone differently. Learn more about the myths that allow sexual violence to persist, and the best practices that help prevent it with the Culture of Respect CORE Blueprint: <https://www.naspa.org/publications/books/core-blueprint>

3 Learn your institution's policies. Research shows that setting and enforcing clear community standards is an effective way to reduce unwelcome behavior, and an institution's policy on sexual misconduct is one way to make that standard clear. No matter your role on campus, you can help by: reading and asking questions about the school's policies and encouraging others to do the same, and participating actively in the creation and oversight of these policies. You can encourage your institution to inventory their sexual misconduct policy using the Culture of Respect CORE Evaluation: <https://www.naspa.org/publications/books/core-evaluation-4th-ed>

4 Intervene as a bystander. Bystander intervention is one of the strategies with the most robust evidence to support its effectiveness in addressing sexual violence. Your institution should train you about when, how, and why to intervene in situations where your peers and colleagues are at risk for harm. To learn more about evidence-based bystander intervention programs available for colleges and universities, visit: <https://cultureofrespect.org/programs-and-tools/matrix/>

Examine the Evidence

In order to effectively address sexual violence, researchers must examine its potential causes, and strategies that can be effective in reducing its likelihood or preventing it from occurring. *STOP SV: A Technical Package to Prevent Sexual Violence*, from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), compiles research and effective prevention strategies so communities, including colleges and universities, can tailor their sexual violence prevention programming for their unique needs.

Read more:

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sv-prevention-technical-package.pdf>

5 Speak out against bias and discrimination. Violence is fueled by systems of oppression that are upheld by everyday speech and actions, and the silence that allows them to continue. It's everyone's responsibility to speak out against sexism, racism, transphobia, homophobia, xenophobia, and other forms of oppression. Calling out language and behavior that contributes to systems of oppression helps build a Culture of Respect. To learn more about how oppression and bias intersect with sexual violence, explore our research inventory: <https://cultureofrespect.org/sexual-violence/research-inventory/>

6 Join your campus task force. To effectively address sexual violence, your institution needs to ensure this work is well thought-out, collaborative, coordinated, and evaluated on a regular basis. Joining or supporting the sexual violence task force or working group is a great way to get involved. To learn more about best practice strategies for campus task forces, read this blog: <https://www.naspa.org/about/blog/effective-task-force-work-in-higher-ed-exploring-best-practices>

