

Engaging Bystanders to Prevent High Risk Behaviors

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Agenda

- Overview of active and passive bystander behavior
- Bystander Intervention research and theory
- Social norms and bystander behavior
- Bystander Intervention Skills
- Case Studies and Next Steps

What is the greatest asset of your campus community?

The values and ideals of its members

Most people care and want to do what is right

Most people are uncomfortable with unwanted behaviors and social injustice

Our goal is to focus on the positive in order to transform the negative

Unwanted behaviors and social injustice can be reduced or prevented by active bystanders

Bystanders can make a difference

- A passive bystander is someone who "stands by" and does not do anything when they notice a problematic situation or behavior even though they may find the behavior to be problematic.
- For almost all health and social justice problems there are bystanders
- Bystanders who act have the ability to create an inhospitable climate for risk behaviors and their perpetrators and to intervene to prevent harm

Bystander Intervention Contexts

- To prevent a sexual assault
- To notice signs of suicidal behavior and intervene
- To prevent alcohol-related harm
- To prevent mistreatment and injustice
- To interrupt inappropriate remarks and behaviors
- To foster ethical behavior
- To change the culture that allows these and other behaviors to occur

Key Points

- Bystanders are in a position to actively intervene to prevent unwanted behaviors and shift the climate that permits them
- Individuals can be taught to overcome their inhibitions to intervene and learn skills to do so effectively
- Most people underestimate the willingness of their peers to "be part of the solution"

Think of a time when you were a bystander and wanted to intervene but didn't

What We Know

- Most of the studies and evidence for the social norms approach relate to substance abuse prevention and is very strong. For violence prevention the social norms approach can be considered as a promising practice.
- Most of the studies and evidence for bystander intervention relate to sexual assault prevention and can be considered as a promising practice. There are few applications to substance abuse prevention.

Levels of Bystander Behavior

- To an individual
- To a group
- To a system or institution

Stages of Bystander Behavior

- Notice the event
- Interpret it as a problem
- Feel responsible for dealing with it
- Have the necessary skills to act

Reasons for Being a Passive Bystander

- Assume that it isn't a problem because others don't intervene (social influence)
- Fear of embarrassment (audience inhibition)
- Assume that someone else will do something (diffusion of responsibility)
- Believe that others' aren't bothered (social norms)
- Fear of retaliation or negative outcomes

The presence of other's can serve to inhibit the desire to help ("the bystander effect") or be reversed to support the desire to intervene

Social Norms

- "Social norms" refer to the acceptability of an action or belief
- Are unspoken rules about what is "normal" for that group or setting
- Perceptions of social norms predict what people say and do

Social Norms: Underlying Beliefs

- **Pluralistic Ignorance:** the incorrect belief that one's private attitudes, judgments or behavior are different from others
- **False Consensus:** the incorrect belief that one represents the majority when one is actually a minority

Misperceptions and Bystander Behavior

- Individuals are bothered by problem behaviors but underestimate other's discomfort with them and desire to have someone intervene
- Intervention is more likely when others are perceived as willing to intervene
- Problem individuals use the misperception to justify their behavior

Bystander Norms

- Over 90% of students say that it is their duty to stop another student from harm.
- Over 90% of students would intervene when they see a guy they know leading a drunk woman who they do not know away in order to have sex
- 97% of college men witnessing "someone 'hitting on a woman I know", say that they "would do something to help her"
- But only 19% intervened when witnessing a situation in which it looked like a female would be taken advantage of (last 12 months)

Campus data and Florida State University Sexual Violence Prevention Survey

False Consensus Norms

Individuals who engage in problem behavior overestimate other's support for their attitudes and actions, i.e.

- Perpetrators of domestic violence
- Men who sexually assault
- Problem drinkers
- Gamblers
- People who engage in risk behaviors

Perpetrator overestimations predict problem behavior.

A false consensus norm constitutes a "self-serving bias"

Conclusion

Underestimating other's concern results in less chance of intervening on the part of bystanders
(*pluralistic ignorance*)

Overestimating other's comfort with problem behavior results in more chance of problem behavior
(*false consensus*)

Question

Given the very strong research documenting the important role of misperceptions as an influence on bystander behavior, why is it that all of the popular bystander intervention and bullying prevention programs do not address perceptions of norms?

Intention to Act versus Action

- Perceptions strongly predict desire and willingness to intervene
- Perceptions do not predict actual intervention.
- Why the gap?
 - non-salient norms?
 - methodological and measurement issues?
 - BI requires a higher threshold
 - how to remove the barriers?

Bystander behavior and leadership:

The Role of Environment

- Environmental factors inhibit or permit problem behaviors.
- Leadership is an important environmental factor
- Do you and your other leaders set a climate that serves to inhibit problems and encourage students to seek help?
- Are bystanders expected to intervene?
- Is positive behavior rewarded and reinforced?
- Are you perceived as accessible and sympathetic to individuals who might have something to report?
- Are your efforts reactive or proactive?

What is Leadership?

- Risk behaviors take place in an environment that either encourages (dis-inhibits) or discourages (inhibits) them
- Leaders have an important role in shaping the environment
- Visible events send cues as to whether a behavior is tolerated or not
- Leaders are "visible events"

Social Norms and Leadership

- Leaders underestimate others' discomfort and desire to have them intervene
- Leaders are often "carriers of the misperception" and thereby contribute to the problems they are responsible for solving
- Leaders can serve to inhibit and reduce problems and their causes

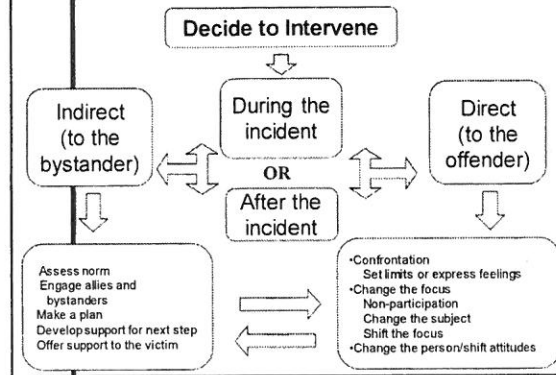
Intervention Options and Skills

Intervention Options

- Direct versus Indirect: Talk to the person directly or to the others who are present
- On the spot or later: Do something right away or wait
- Types of interventions
 - Confront the person/impose consequences, express feelings
 - Shift the focus (change the situation)
 - Shift the person (change the person)

Goal: To have more options for responding and feel better about your response

Positive Intervention Options



Ingredients for a Successful Intervention

- There is a context or relationship that allows you to intervene
- You see something you feel needs to be addressed
- You are involved in the situation in some way
- You are willing to bring about change

Different Situations May Require a Different Type of Intervention

- With peers
- With subordinates
- With superiors
- On or off campus
- Student or staff/faculty

Intervention is situation-specific

Confrontation

Make it clear that certain behaviors and remarks are not appropriate and will not be tolerated

and/or

Forcefully tell the other person how you feel about their actions

Shifting the Focus (Changing the Situation)

- Non-participation
- Deflection (change the subject)
- Shift the focus (address the underlying assumption)

Changing the Person ("Shifting Attitudes")

- Is non-confrontational
- Uses "open conversation"
- Identifies the "ouch"
- Helps the person understand *why* the behavior is problematic
- Fosters deeper change

(www.ncbi.org)

Practice and Role Plays

Pair exercise:

How might I apply what I learned today to my campus?

Case Studies

Ohio University: Small Group Norms and BI Sexual Assault Prevention Workshop for Men

Florida State: BI Social Norms Media Campaign & Workshops

University of Central Missouri Small Group SN-BI workshop for Greeks & 1st years

University of California at San Diego BIT – "Every BIT Counts"

State University of New York at Albany – Step Up Bystander Intervention Program

A Model Rape Prevention Program for Men

- Developed by Alan Berkowitz
- Tested by Christine Gidycz of Ohio University in a CDC funded study
- Incorporates definition of consent, normative feedback (about men in the workshop and men on campus), and practice in bystander intervention strategies (responding to scenarios)
- Offered in parallel with a women's program
- Workshop recipients were men and women in residence halls with matched control groups
- Intensive facilitator training

Findings for Men at Seven Month Follow-up

- Perceived that their peers would be more likely to intervene (including sexually aggressive men)
- Perceived less reinforcement from peers for sexually aggressive behavior (among sexually aggressive men)
- Associated less with sexually aggressive peers
- Less likely to engage in sexually aggressive behavior (1.5% experimental versus 6.7% control) at four months, with "rebound" at seven months
- Decreased use of pornography

Preventing Sexual Aggression Among College Men: An Evaluation of a Social Norms and Bystander Intervention Program
Violence Against Women, 12(2) 228-42

Implications and Recommendations

- Potential promising approach, however cannot be sure of the mechanisms that led to change
- Greater participation rates within residence halls, intensive facilitator training and mentoring, and pairing with a parallel women's program may have also led to positive outcomes
- Attitude change not required for behavior or culture change
- The intervention could be strengthened by:
 - Intensifying the bystander intervention component
 - Teaching peer mentors to model and reinforce healthy norms and bystander intervention
 - Reinforce positive norms through media campaigns and other channels
 - Parallel, reinforcing interventions before and after the workshop

Programmatic Components FSU Sexual Violence Prevention Project

- Campus-Wide Social Norms Marketing (SNM) Campaign
 - Correct Student Misperceptions of Attitudes and Behaviors That Influence Sexual Violence
- Peer-Facilitated "Men's/Women's Workshop"
 - Trained Peer-Educators to Facilitate 90-Minute Workshops
 - Targeted to 'All Male' or 'All Female' Groups on Campus (Predominately Within the Greek Community)
- Campus Based Community Action Team (CAT)
 - Component of Healthy Campus 2020 Committee Chaired by FSU Vice President for Student Affairs
 - 10-Member Sexual Health/Sexual Violence Prevention Subcommittee

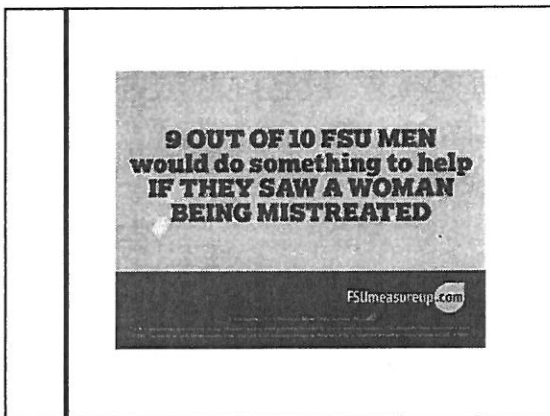
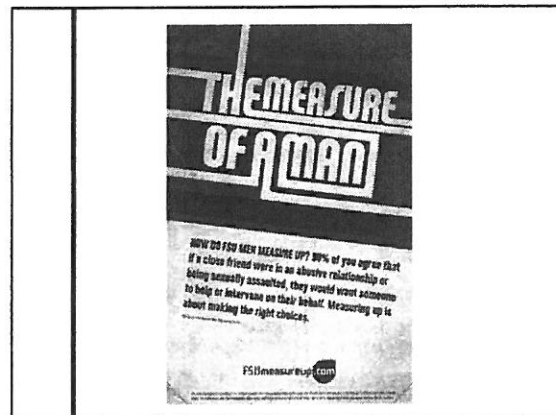
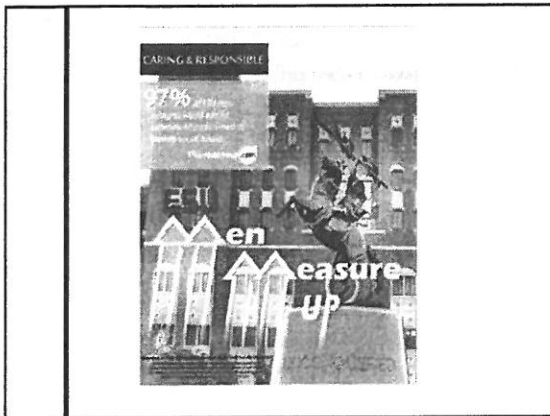
FSU Sexual Violence Prevention Survey (Actual and Perceived Norms)

- Sexual activity
- Attitudes on consent, rape myths & bystander intervention
- Actual behavior for bystander intervention, consent, disapproval of sexist remarks

On-line survey administered to 3,000 male undergraduates

Social Norms Marketing Campaign Themes

- Bystander theme: **"Most FSU men would intervene to prevent sexual harassment or sexual assault"**
- Rape myth-not blaming victims theme: **"Most FSU men agree that blaming sexual assault victims is wrong"**
- Sexually active theme: **"Most FSU men are not as sexually active as you might think"**



Media Campaign Outcomes

- Misperceptions corrected in all four campaign theme areas
- Increase from 85% to 90% in men who say they get consent before sex
- Increase from 62% to 71% who stop "first time date says no"
- Small increase (from 88% to 91%) of men who would intervene if they saw emotional abuse
- Better outcomes for workshop (from 77% to 85% for BI)

Comments

- Small group workshops may have greater impact but reach less individuals
- Less success with bystander intervention theme
- Potentially synergistic effect of small group workshops and media campaign not evaluated

University of Central Missouri EPIC Program "Encouraging Positive Interventions in Chapters"

- Collect actual and perceived norms in Greek chapters for alcohol-related bystander scenarios
- Share results of data with chapters in tailored workshops
- Social norms media campaign
- Active BI Video contest

Program Overview

- 90 minutes
- Shared social norms data and taught theory
- Taught bystander intervention theory and skills
- Used clickers to teach, check understanding and reflect
- Practiced skills with role plays and scenario worksheets

How much does the following bother you? (fraternity)

Noticing an intoxicated chapter member harassing or bothering someone

	Perception	Reality
Not at all	7.7%	11.5%
Somewhat	50.0%	11.5%
Very much	38.5%	73.1%

A Typical Thursday Night (sorority example)

- ❖ 70% of members *think* their chapter members typically drink more than 3 drinks on a Thursday.
- ❖ In *reality* 76% of members actually drink 3 or less.
 - ❖ 26% drink 1-3 drinks
 - ❖ 50% drink 0 drinks

Did You Know?

85% of UCM Greek students think it's unacceptable to miss class due to alcohol.

Reality: 73.1% miss class due to alcohol.

The contents of this site have been developed under a grant from the Department of Education, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and the Department of Education, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education. The contents do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Education, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, or the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

UCM GREEK MEN

LEADING THE WAY TO AN EPIC FUTURE.

85% of UCM fraternity men think it's acceptable to stop a brother from drinking more if he has had too much.

50% of UCM fraternity men think it's unacceptable for a brother to miss chapter commitments due to alcohol use.

73.1% of UCM fraternity men think it's unacceptable for a brother to miss class due to alcohol use.

The contents of this advertisement have been developed under a grant from the Department of Education, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and the Department of Education, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education. The contents do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Education, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, or the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Intervening Data

Comfort level- Cutting off a chapter member
Scale 1-5, 1 = Not at all, 5 = Very

Comfort Level	2009	2010
1 & 2	13.8	8.2
3	18.4	18
4 & 5	67.7	73.2

University of California at San Diego "Every Little BIT Counts"

- Comprehensive social norms and BI survey and focus groups to identify BI barriers
- BIT training model – skill based non-confrontational
- Dissemination throughout student affairs
- Collaboration with campus partners
- Creation of "bystander intervention group"

Step Up UAlbany Program: Promoting a Culture Supporting Bystander Intervention

- Increase awareness of both individual and community responsibility in the prevention of inappropriate, unacceptable, and unsafe behaviors
- Identify the 5 –step decision making process that predicts successful bystander intervention.
- Identify appropriate levels of intervention, being mindful of personal safety and different personal options that bystanders possess, given the nature of the situation.
- Build skills through group discussion and role-playing scenarios designed to highlight the continuum of safe bystander options.

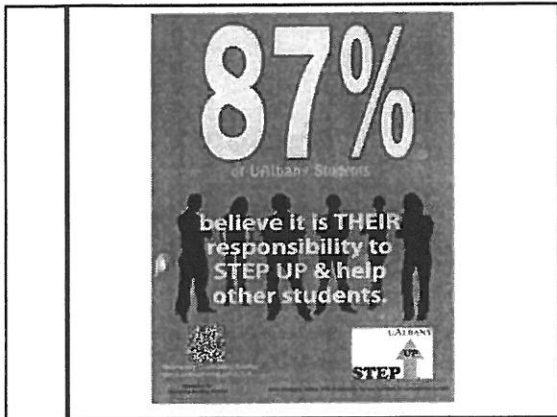
**The STEP UP UAlbany! Program is adapted with permission from the University of Arizona STEP UP Program.*

Modes of Delivery

- STEP UP! UALBANY Training Curriculum
- Public Service Announcements
- Poster Campaign
- T-shirts
- Brochures
- Web Page
- Giveaways
- Middle Earth Peer Outreach Presentations

Training Key Stakeholders

- Residential Life, Student Staff
- Student Leaders; Student Association
- Peer Assistance Programs
- Judicially Mandated Students (alcohol)
- All Incoming Students (sexual assault)
- Student-Athletes
- Fraternity and sorority members



It takes time...

...for the first time *in eight years*, our annual student survey of health and risk behaviors is showing significant reductions in alcohol use, anonymous reports of sexual assault, and risk factors for suicide - all indices are going down at the same time, which suggests to us that we are seeing culture change on campus.

Although we are unable to determine which of our comprehensive prevention program elements is contributing to these positive changes, we have evidence that our interventions are working. Our major interventions include our bystander intervention campaign, a social norms campaign, screening and brief intervention for alcohol use, early intervention for suicide risk, and consistent policy enforcement.

M. Dolores Cimini, Ph.D. – University of Albany

Elements of Success

- May be single issue or multiple issue
- Contains multiple synergistic elements
- Has an interactive component
- Reaches students through multiple channels and venues
- Trains leaders in skills
- Uses an oversight coordinating committee
- Sustained over time
- Positive focus, discernible steps, actionable

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Lindsay Orchowski (Brown University)

Nancy Wahlig (UCSD)

Dolores Cimini (SUNY Albany)

Next Steps

- What?
- How?
- Who?
- Who are my potential partners?
 - How to get campus buy-in
 - How to address challenges?

Writing exercise:

**What can I imagine implementing on my campus?
What are the barriers?**

Meet in Small Groups

Meet with others from your campus to share your ideas

Report back to larger group

Wrap Up

Final Comments and Questions

What do I want for my campus?

- People are more likely to intervene when they know that other people also want to intervene and will support them if they do.
- We can create a campus culture in which people feel supported to behave in compassionate and caring ways in response to unwanted behaviors and injustice.

Thank you for your willingness to lead by expressing values in action

Citation Information

The material in this presentation is from:

"RESPONSE ABILITY: The Complete Guide to Bystander Behavior" available from www.lulu.com

"A Grassroots Guide to Fostering Healthy Norms to Reduce Violence in Our Communities: A Social Norms Toolkit"

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