

Flood, Engaging Male Students and Staff on Campus in Violence Prevention

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Young men on campus

We're going to focus this morning on how to engage male students and staff on campus in violence prevention.

So I want you to think for a moment about the young men you see every day on your campus. The young men in your classrooms, in the cafeteria, in the college residences, and so on.

If these young men are typical of young men their age, then sizable proportions think things, believe things, which make it more likely that they will *use* violence, that they will tolerate or excuse violence, that they will respond poorly to victims and survivors, that they will fail to hold others accountable for their violence, and so on.

Significant proportions of young men have violence-supportive and sexist attitudes.

From national Australian research, we know that significant proportions of young men aged 16-25 have violence-supportive and sexist attitudes.

Attitudes excusing violence

	Males 16-24	Females 16-24
Rape results from men not able to control their need for sex.	43	36
Domestic violence can be excused if the victim is heavily affected by alcohol	10	9
Domestic violence can be excused if the violent person regrets it	33*	20

Attitudes minimising violence and blaming the victim

	Males 16-24	Females 16-24
Women going through custody battles often make up or exaggerate claims of domestic violence in order to improve their case	56*	47
Women rarely make false claims of rape	54	58
A lot of times women who say they were raped led the man on and later had regrets	46*	33
If a woman doesn't physically resist – even if protesting verbally – then it isn't really rape	8	9
If a woman is raped while drunk/affected by drugs she is at least partly responsible	21	15

Women often say 'no' when they mean 'yes'	22	17
If a woman goes to a room alone with a man at a party, it is her fault if she is raped	9	8

Attitudes supporting gender inequality

	Males 16-24	Females 16-24
On the whole men make better political leaders than women	29*	19
Discrimination against women is no longer a problem in the workplace in Australia.	17*	10
Men should take control in relationships and be head of the household.	27*	17
Women prefer a man to be in charge of the relationship.	38*	31

(Note that these findings are from the 2013 NCAS, and while national data from the most recent NCAS was released in 2018, findings for 16-24 year-olds in particular are not yet available.)

I've focused on attitudes here, and they're important – they shape perpetration. They shape responses to perpetrators, victims, etc. And they also shape victimisation.

What we *don't* know is the extent of perpetration. And in fact, even our national data on victimisation is weak, with some serious weaknesses in the Human Rights Commission survey.

Significant proportions of men (and small proportions of women) have perpetrated violence, abuse, and harassment

But, we know from other studies that significant proportions of male students have perpetrated sexual assault. Various studies on American campuses ask men if they have committed acts that meet the standard legal definition of attempted or completed rape or sexual assault, or if they have committed various sexually coercive and aggressive acts. Significant minorities say yes: 2%, 15%, 25%, 27%

Proportions of men in university samples who have perpetrated sexual violence

Findings	Citation
<u>25%</u> by the end of their fourth year of university.	(Swartout <i>et al.</i> , 2015)
<u>19.3%</u> of incoming male first-year students before university	(Salazar <i>et al.</i> , 2018)
<u>1.6%</u> in the last 12 months.	(Porta <i>et al.</i> , 2017)
<u>10.8%</u> of men reported perpetrating at least one rape from 14 years of age through the end of college	(Orchowski & Berkowitz, 2015)

<u>14.5%</u>	(Sutherland <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
<u>51%</u> since the age of 14.	(Gervais <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
<u>17.6%</u> between the age of 14 and the baseline assessment. And <u>10%</u> over the next 3 months	(Gidycz <i>et al.</i> , 2011)
<u>3.4%</u> of male undergraduates and <u>1.2%</u> of male graduates	(Campbell <i>et al.</i> , 2017)
<u>26.8%</u> since the age of 14.	(Schuster <i>et al.</i> , 2016)
<u>18.3%</u>	(Brennan <i>et al.</i> , 2018)

There are violence-supportive peer cultures on and around campus

We also know that there are violence-supportive peer cultures on and around campus. There are violence-supportive social norms and sexual relations: in some all-male residential colleges, university sporting clubs and codes, and in young people's informal peer circles.

The risks of men's sexual violence against women are higher in some contexts on and around campus than others. For example, rates of sexual violence appear to be higher in male campus fraternities involving greater gender segregation, less non-sexual male-female interaction, high alcohol consumption, use of pornography, and local cultures of sexism, sexual boasting and sexual harassment.

Other factors that increase the risks of perpetration or victimisation also are apparent in aspects of university life, including independence from parental supervision, gendered sexual expectations, and 'party cultures' that involve sexist social norms.

There is consistent evidence that male peer support for violence is an important predictor of men's perpetration of sexual and physical abuse. If a man is attached to male peers who abuse women, if he has mates who condone or excuse violence against women, if he has friends who provide information or guidance for example that women owe him sex or he should respond with force to girlfriends' challenges to his authority, he is much more likely to use violence himself.

Implications for prevention

So we need energetic efforts to target men and masculinities. In our work on healthy and respectful relationships, in social marketing, and so on. And, in more intensive efforts directed at violence-supportive peer groups, settings, and contexts.

Engaging male students: Elements of effective practice

So, if we need to engage men, what does this look like? Will run through some elements of effective practice.

I begin with two strategies which are being taken up widely on Australian campuses.

Engaging male students through respectful relationships / consent education

Evidence of effectiveness

Direct participation programs (largely, face-to-face educational interventions) can be an effective

strategy of violence prevention and reduction. If done well (and this is a significant 'if'), such programs can produce declines in factors associated with violence such as attitudes and beliefs. University students who have attended education programs focused on sexual assault prevention show less adherence to rape myths, express less rape-supportive attitudes, and/or report greater victim empathy than those in control groups.

The evidence base for educational programs' impact on actual perpetration and victimisation is weaker. For a start, most interventions have not been evaluated. When they are, many evaluations rely only on risk factors or proxy variables for violence such as attitudes rather than including measures of violent behaviours themselves, and some studies assessing victimisation show no effects.

Only a few university-based group interventions can show evidence of reductions in violence perpetration and/or victimisation. These include a multi-session program among men in a university residence, a four-by-three-hour sexual assault resistance program among female students, a mixed-sex, multi-session program among first-year students, and other interventions.

Criteria for effective practice

So what are the key elements of effective practice in violence prevention education? There are five elements for a minimum standard here.

- 1) A whole-of-institution approach
- 2) Long-term vision, approach, and funding
- 3) Effective curriculum delivery
- 4) Relevant and tailored practice
- 5) Evaluation and continual improvement

(1) A whole-of-institution approach

Whatever means a university adopts to educate its students about violence, these must be embedded in a whole-of-institution approach. A whole-of-institution approach requires the adoption of comprehensive and multipronged intervention strategies to prevent and reduce violence.

(2) Long-term vision, approach, and funding

A long term approach involves sustainable resourcing, adequate and appropriate staffing for prevention work, and ongoing engagement of and collaboration with key stakeholders.

(3) Effective curriculum delivery

Violence prevention curricula will only be effective if based in appropriate forms of teaching and learning. Four dimensions of educational practice are relevant: (a) curriculum content, (b) teaching and learning methods, (c) curriculum structure (duration and intensity, and group composition), and (d) educators.

Curriculum content

Program curricula should directly address the factors known to drive violence, including violence-supportive and sexist attitudes and norms, gendered power relations and inequalities, and a host of other social and cultural factors. They must address *both* physical and sexual violence. Both forms of violence have profound impacts on victims' health and wellbeing, in

practice they often overlap and co-occur, and there is also overlap in the risk and protective factors for each.

Teaching and learning methods

Effective programs: (i) are interactive, participatory, and include small-group learning. Face-to-face education should include participatory discussion, group work, cooperative learning, role plays, introspection and critical reflection, and behavioural rehearsal. In short, education must involve active learning.

Violence prevention education ideally addresses cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains: what people know, how they feel, and how they behave. Programs which merely convey information are not enough to create the change needed to actually prevent violence. Affective or emotion-oriented strategies often aim to elicit empathy for victims and survivors. Good-practice programs also include activities focused on skills development, with clear messages about behaviour.

Curriculum structure

I'll now look at curriculum structure. First, duration.

Duration: Education programs must have sufficient duration to produce change. Programs with greater amounts of contact with students have larger impacts on student outcomes.

Now, some relatively short programs (e.g. of 15 to 60 minutes in length) have been shown to generate positive impacts, at least in attitudes and over a short term. Nonetheless, brief, one-session programs are seen as unlikely to achieve lasting change in violent attitudes or behaviours. Looking at brief, one-session educational programs among university students, as a recent review concludes, “none have demonstrated lasting effects on risk factors or behavior” (DeGue, 2014, p. 8).

Group composition: There is evidence that the composition of the groups that participate in violence prevention education can influence its outcomes. Although there is debate over the merits of single-sex versus mixed-sex groups, the weight of evidence is in favour of single-sex classes, particularly because of the need to address issues of consent, gender, and sexuality in differing ways with male and female audiences. The optimum teaching strategy in face-to-face education may be to use a sequenced mix of mixed-sex and single-sex classes.

Educators

Violence prevention programs should be delivered by skilled and trained staff – by educators with both content expertise and educational skills. There are advantages in having university staff teach violence prevention education, although there also are advantages in drawing on external community educators. The use of university-based staff facilitates a whole-of-institution approach, enables more effective integration of program curricula, and involves training and capacity-building for staff present on campus and available to students.

Some programs rely on peer educators: on students teaching students. But one review found that whether professionals or others implemented the intervention had little influence on impacts, while another found that professional presenters were more successful than either graduate students or peer presenters.

(4) Relevant and tailored practice

The fourth criterion for effective violence prevention education is relevant and tailored practice.

Good practice programs are relevant to the communities and contexts in which they are

delivered. They are informed by knowledge of their target group or population and their local contexts.

Prevention efforts should be tailored to specific campus communities, including international students, ethnic minority students, LGBTQ students, disabled students, and others.

Attention to ‘relevance’ and ‘cultural appropriateness’ is necessary in working with *any* group or population in *any* context, including those seen to be ‘mainstream’ or ‘normal’. So in working with a group of white, heterosexual, middle-class students in a university college, recognise the forms of culture – norms, practices, etc. – specific to them.

(5) Evaluation and continual improvement

Finally, good practice programs involve a comprehensive process of evaluation which is integrated into program design and implementation.

Online delivery

A key challenge in university-based violence prevention is how to reach large student populations. The small group format of many existing programs is resource-intensive and has limited reach and sustainability. An obvious alternative is online delivery. The use of the internet has important advantages over in-person interventions, including “lower cost of intervention delivery, greater reach, maintenance of fidelity, the possibility of delivery in a wide range of settings, and ability to tailor content to a variety of users”.

Online violence prevention programs do show some positive evaluations. For example, the US program RealConsent is a Web-based bystander approach to sexual violence prevention which comprises six 30-minute media-based and interactive modules. In a study among US male undergraduate students, at six-month follow-up participants showed a range of positive attitudinal and behavioural changes compared to a control group (Laura F Salazar, Vivolo-Kantor, Hardin, & Berkowitz, 2014). Individuals who had taken part in the RealConsent program engaged in less sexual violence perpetration and intervened more often than controls, and also reported a range of positive attitudinal changes.

On the other hand, a far shorter intervention, the 20-minute intervention TakeCARE, had no positive impact on university students’ feelings of efficacy in engaging in positive bystander behaviour or their actual engagement (Kleinsasser, Jouriles, McDonald, & Rosenfield, 2015).

The authors report that compared to the control group, students who viewed Take Care felt more able to engage in bystander behaviours, and they engaged in more bystander behaviours for friends. But note that there was *no increase* in Take Care participants on these measures, but only a decrease among the comparison group.

So while there are only a handful of evaluations of online violence prevention education, they suggest that the same criteria apply as for face-to-face education. Online programs ideally are interactive, they teach skills, and they are of sufficient duration and intensity to make change.

Engaging men in particular

So far I have identified some generic criteria for effective violence prevention education. But particular approaches and strategies are vital in educating *men* in particular.

Use a gender-transformative approach

There is a growing consensus in the violence prevention field that efforts among men must be *gender-transformative*.

Work with men should be ‘gender-transformative’ – oriented towards transforming gender

roles, gender relations, and structures.

A gender-transformative approach involves an overt attention to gender, and an orientation towards promoting more gender-equitable relationships between men and women and lessening systemic gender inequalities.

One key component of this is involving men in critical reflection on masculinities and gender. We should engage men in reflecting on their own experiences of gender, questioning dominant constructions of masculinity, and coming to a critical awareness of sexism and male privilege. And for men who are taking up roles in education and advocacy, this work also should involve critical reflection on their own positions and practices as allies for change.

Use effective ways to make the case to men

My book explores a range of ways which have proven effective in inspiring men's interest, convincing them that domestic and sexual violence are issues of personal relevance and concern, and mobilising their commitment.

Address typical forms of resistance and backlash

We must take steps to address the typical forms of resistance and backlash which arise in this work.

Engaging male students through social marketing and communications

I turn now to another common strategy of violence prevention on campuses, social marketing and communications.

There is evidence that communications and social marketing campaigns can produce positive change in violence-related attitudes. This includes some campaigns run on university campuses (Kilmartin et al., 2008; Potter & Stapleton, 2012).

Effective communications and social marketing strategies should be informed by the same principles which guide effective violence prevention in general.

First, communication and social marketing interventions must be *comprehensive*. The evidence is that they have greater impact if they are more intensive, involve exposure to messaging through more than one component, and/or are complemented by on-the-ground strategies.

Questions of duration and intensity are relevant here too. Evaluations find that one-off media interventions such as showing a film or training video do not produce lasting attitudinal change, or even any change at all (Darnell & Cook, 2009; Perry, Kulik, & Schmidtke, 1998).

Effective interventions must be both *engaging* and *relevant*. This means, first, understanding the audience.

It is important for the individual or group to relate strongly to the message being promoted. To inspire change, communication campaigns must create a sense of familiarity, or "social self-identification". For example, students are more likely to be willing to intervene as prosocial bystanders in response to a social marketing campaign if the people and situations shown seem similar to the ones they regularly encounter.

Another dimension of media campaigns' ability to engage audiences is the use of influential messengers and spokespeople. Looking at campaigns aimed at men, some campaigns feature men who are well known to large numbers of other men, whether as celebrities or political leaders. Other campaigns draw on men who influence the behaviour of other men, such as sporting coaches, fathers, and religious leaders. Others depict 'ordinary' men of the community collectively voicing their concern about violence against women.

These strategies have an obvious rationale. These men function as role models, whose intolerance for violence ideally will be emulated. Peer acceptance and collective norms are particularly influential among men. And given the cultural authority given to men's voices over women's, unfortunately, men may listen more readily to men than to women.

There are particular communications strategies which are particularly valuable in engaging men, such as social norms and bystander intervention strategies. But I want to move on.

Now want to shift to two strategies which are vital to prevention efforts and yet which have been neglected in Australian work.

Engaging male students in anti-violence advocacy

Community mobilisation is a vital strategy of violence prevention. It involves bringing individuals and groups together through coalitions, networks, and movements to take collective action.

Community mobilisation strategies are one expression of a growing emphasis on community-based strategies in violence prevention, disease prevention, and health promotion.

Community-level strategies have been described as a vital next step in prevention. Community and societal strategies are essential to shift the cultures, social relations, and structural inequalities which underpin this violence.

Collective mobilisations on domestic and sexual violence have been central to violence prevention.

Collective mobilisations focused on men's violence against women have a long history, particularly in the women's movements and feminism. Women's groups, networks, and campaigns have played a vital role in raising community awareness of men's violence against women, establishing legal and community responses to its victims and perpetrators, and challenging the social norms and gender inequalities which sustain this violence.

In short, we owe a debt to feminism for being here at all, for domestic and sexual violence being the object of community attention, policy, and programming.

Activist men's groups focused on challenging men's violence and building gender equality also have emerged, albeit on a much smaller scale. There are major international efforts such as the White Ribbon Campaign, national networks, and local men's anti-violence groups.

And, if we look to the US, we find strong, active networks of men involved in anti-violence advocacy on *university campuses*. Men Can Stop Rape, Men of Strength clubs, university anti-rape and anti-violence groups. As well as violence prevention and anti-rape education programs directed particularly at men: Mentors in Violence Prevention, the Men's Program, and so on. Yes, most campus advocacy and mobilisation is driven by women, but there is also some significant participation by men.

Male anti-violence groups and networks are absent on Australian campuses

But in Australia, very little such mobilising. Not sure how many men involved e.g. in End Rape on Campus and similar efforts, but little sign of campus men's anti-violence advocacy.

Community mobilisation has several key strengths.

Community mobilisation has several key strengths:

- Like other community-level strategies, it addresses preventable risk factors at a scale beyond individuals and their relationships, and thus generates greater impact.

- Because it involves community involvement and collaboration, it leads to more culturally relevant and thus engaging interventions.
- Participating in groups and networks is empowering for participants themselves, as members become involved in both personal and collective change.
- Groups and networks on campus increase the critical mass behind prevention efforts. They are important in changing peer norms and relations on campus.
- Finally, advocacy is important is holding universities to account, putting pressure on leaders and administrators, and establishing effective policies and programs.

Universities should support violence prevention mobilisations and advocacy by students and staff.

I have written in my book about *how* to mobilise men. But here, I simply want to say: Universities should support and resource campus-based advocacy groups, student unions, or other entities to run campaigns, including e.g. women's collectives, students' sexual assault advocacy groups, men's anti-rape networks, and advocacy by male academic staff.

Engaging male staff

You may have noticed there my mention of male *staff*. On university campuses, perhaps the most neglected prevention strategy of all is engaging male *staff*. Male academic and administrative staff are all but invisible in discussions of prevention.

Yet some male staff clearly are part of the problem. Working at another university, I recall the male senior lecturer who was alleged to have sexually assaulted a young woman on the Honours retreat. The male tutor who would constantly comment to me on female students' breasts. (That university, to get rid of him, gave him a glowing recommendation for a job elsewhere, and two years later I saw him on the front page of the local tabloid paper, as he had been pressuring young female international students into sex in return for not failing them.)

Thus far there has little attention to sexual harassment, sexual coercion, and sexism by male staff – of students, and of other staff. Male academic staff were told last year, “Don't have sex with your PhD students”. That sets the bar very low indeed, and there is so much more that could be done.

However, there *are* some promising initiatives among men in workplaces in Australia. There's Male Champions of Change, engaging senior men as advocates. Other scattered initiatives in white collar and blue collar workplaces. My report for the Diversity Council of Australia, *Men Make a Difference*, outlined a range of ways to engage men in workplaces in building gender equality, and promising initiatives and strategies in this area.

Again in the US, there are some promising examples of efforts among male academic staff. For example, as part of their efforts to improve women's representation and participation in STEM disciplines, several US universities have created male advocates program. In one for example, the men were identified through an application and interview process, participated in a program of self-education and training, then took up advocacy: contributing to gender equality events on campus and training for other men. These kinds of advocates and allies programs are “designed to develop a critical mass of faculty men who can serve as advocates and allies for and with their female colleagues”.

I started this talk focusing on how some men – some men's attitudes, behaviours, relations with other men and with women – are part of the *problem*. But because I'm an optimist, want to end on a positive note. As I've outlined, it *is* possible to shift the attitudes, behaviours, and

inequalities which feed into domestic and sexual violence. *If* our efforts are well-designed, and that is a big if, then we *can* make change.

So, let's see what we can do to make male students and staff part of the *solution*.