It's your place: Development of an evidence-based bystander intervention campaign

Beth Sundstrom, PhD, MPH; Andrea L. DeMaria, PhD, MS; Merissa Ferrara, PhD, MA; Colby M. Gabel; Maja Grzejdziak; Kathleen Booth; Jeri Cabot, PhD, MA
College of Charleston; Charleston, SC

PURPOSE
The purpose of this study was to conduct systematic theory-based formative audience research to explore how college women and men understand sexual assault and bystander intervention. A secondary purpose was to design, implement, and evaluate an effective health communication campaign to increase bystander intervention and prevent sexual misconduct.

BACKGROUND
Sexual misconduct remains a problem on college campuses despite years of documentation and research, and program development and implementation. The incidence of sexual assault—through verbal coercion, attempted rape, and forcible rape—increases during the college years. The U.S. Department of Education’s 2011 Dear Colleague Letter on sexual harassment and sexual violence and President Obama’s recently established White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault to address the nationwide issue have generated discussions on college campuses and in communities. As a result, rape prevention programs are increasing at colleges and universities as institutions of higher education address the need to provide more effective prevention and intervention programs.

RESULTS
CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

• Two videos
• Stress balls
• New student orientation materials
• Additional flyers/handouts

CONCLUSIONS
Our study is the first of its kind to use formative research to influence campaign and program development related to bystander intervention. Overall, the research points to the need for a large, mixed media, repeated message campaign, including integrated, ongoing prevention promotion. A mixed media social marketing campaign will merge existing programming and limited campus training. Traditional and new media will provide the most serviceable access to the target audience.

METHODS
❖ Phase I: Focus Group Discussions (Fall 2014)
• 8 2-hour focus group discussions
• 69 male and female participants
• Poster, email, and in-person recruitment
• $30 incentive for time and efforts, and light refreshments provided during focus group discussions
• SoundNote iPad App used to audio record
❖ Phase II: Data Analysis and Interpretation
• All SoundNote audio files transcribed verbatim
• HyperRESEARCH 3.5.2 facilitated data analysis
• A constant comparative method of open and axial coding used to analyze data
• Research team met frequently to discuss emergent themes and findings
❖ Phase III: Campaign Proposal
• Mixed-media campaign
• Use of social media, text messaging, and posters
• Development of video series featuring real life scenarios
• Mobile application adopted for student body to report and track acts of sexual misconduct, crime, and bystander intervention
❖ Phase IV: Campaign Evaluation (Spring 2015)
• Web-based survey
• Participants could choose to be entered into a drawing to win 1 of 50 $25 gift cards

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