



IT'S ON

US

THE FACTS:

- 1 in 5 women and 1 in 16 men are sexually assaulted in college
- 40% of survivors fear reprisal by their attacker
- Only 2% of incapacitated rape survivors report assault
- Only 13% of rape survivors report assault
- 8 in 10 victims knew their attacker (friend, significant other, etc.)
- It is estimated that between 2%-7% of sexual assault reports are false

It's On Us Spring Week of Action Toolkit

April 12-19, 2015

Friends,

It has been almost 6 months since the It's On Us campaign launched with President Obama and Vice President Biden at the White House. Since then, hundreds of thousands of students, parents, administrators, and community members have taken up the call to action. We're excited to announce our second Week of Action for April 12-19, 2015, and we need your help!

As many of you know, April is National Sexual Assault Awareness month, and serves as a critical reminder of how prevalent sexual violence is around the country. Throughout the month, we will be using both online and offline actions to provide support for survivors as well as tackle the question that is central to it all: **How can we stop sexual assault from happening?**

Throughout the week of April 12-19, It's On Us will be working to engage students across the country through on-campus events and social media campaigns. In this toolkit, you will find the resources and tools to plan an event on your college or in your community. Please read through it, and if you have any questions reach out to the campaign at contact@itsonus.org.

We look forward to working with all of you.

Sincerely,

Kristin Avery
Campaign Manager

P.S. We want to know about your events so we can amplify them! Please fill out this form with all the details: goo.gl/forms/77ist0l8bQ

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Take Action

Want to host an event but not sure where to start? Below are some events that we've seen from around the country. Remember, there is no such thing as an event too big or too small! Any and all efforts will help make the It's On Us Week of Action a success!

Remember to register your events here: goo.gl/forms/77ist0l8bQ

On Campus

Host Roundtable Discussions. Host a discussion using one of the discussion guides from our partner groups. Encourage participants to be open and honest about sexual assault in your school and community.

It's On Us Freeze. Throughout the week, identify a location (such as the student union or cafeteria) where, at the same time, everyone will freeze in the middle of whatever they are doing. During the "freeze," you can play an It's On Us PSA or share stories from survivors. Watch Hofstra University's It's On Us freeze from last month: www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLpQXhhDa9o

Dorm Storm. During the week, "storm" dorms on campus by knocking on doors and asking everyone to take the pledge. You can even host small meetings in each dorm and post pictures from each floor or building with the hashtag #ItsOnUs. (Tip: Try and get RA's involved!)

Open Mic Night. Have a coffeeshop on campus? Host an open mic night and encourage people to share their stories, perform, or discuss this issue and how to make change on your campus.

Event Piggyback. Look at the calendar of upcoming events on your college campus. Is there a concert, speaker event, or event on the quad coming up? If so, try to add in It's On Us by having a speaker or playing a video during the event.

It's On Us Rally. Host a large event on your campus. Rallies can include a physical signing of the pledge on a banner, with accompanying photography to aid in online engagement with the It's On Us campaign.

Have a laptop ready, so more people can add their names to the pledge. Speakers can include members of the student body, faculty, community members, and more. Be creative and think big!

Greek Life Competition/Frat Friday & Sorority Saturday. Organize a competition among fraternities and sororities on campus. Greek groups could earn a certain number of points for signing up people to take the pledge, hosting a roundtable discussion, and engaging with It's On Us online. Possible ideas can include photos of members posing with an It's On Us sign next to their letters, or taking short videos of individuals taking the pledge. Groups with the most points could be eligible for prizes.

Finding Our Voice Rally/Campus Kick Back. This creative approach to having a conversation on campus sexual assault can be a gathering with friends or members of a campus group to discuss and share stories from the It's On Us campaign, and can integrate music, art, or spoken word and poetry.

Tabling/Petition/Pledge Drive. Set up a table in your student union to inform your community about the It's On Us campaign. Set up computers and have supporters sign the online pledge to combat sexual assault. You can also sign an It's On Us petition and deliver the signatures to your university president.

Op-Eds. Write an op-ed that can run in your school or local newspaper. Use the piece as a tool to promote your event!

Online

#ItsOnUs Twitter Rally Or Townhall. Set a time for students to tweet at partners, celebrities, and schools encouraging them to get involved with the campaign.

Pledges On Instagram: Take a selfie and let your friends know that you have signed the pledge. Sample language could include: *I've signed the pledge, have you? #ItsOnUs to prevent campus sexual assault.*

Webinar/Google Hangout/Online Panel: Engage in a Google Hangout addressing It's On Us with panelists that could include survivors, student groups, and campus administration.

Other Events

- Town hall or open forum
- Domestic and sexual violence speak-out and vigil
- “Teal Out” campus day, where students wear teal in support of sexual assault survivors
- Clothes line, where students write a message to survivors on a t-shirt
- Make an It’s On Us public service announcement video
- Make announcements and show PSA’s about the campaign in classrooms
- Create posters and banners and write #ItsOnUs on your schools’ chalkboards
- Victory jam party to celebrate students taking the It’s On Us pledge
- 24-hour dance marathon to raise money for a local rape crisis center
- 24-hour relay at your track and field recreation center
- Feature a keynote speaker at your school
- Screen and discuss documentaries like *It Happened Here* or *The Hunting Ground*
- Marches on campus
- Have dorm discussions with resident advisors
- Office hours with your Title IX coordinator and/or administration to talk with students
- Photo campaign with It’s On Us signs where participants are asked “Why did you take the It’s On Us pledge?”
- Roundtable discussion
- Sorority and fraternity collaborative breakfasts
- Set up an It’s On Us table in your student union or quad

Tips

It's More Fun (And Powerful) To Organize With Friends. Find 3-5 fellow students who are able to help coordinate and facilitate the event alongside you. Reach out to student organizations on campus to ask them to sponsor or provide support to your event.

Set Goals. What are you trying to do with your event? Do you want to educate students, raise awareness, and put pressure on decision-makers? Defining your goals will help you plan an effective on-campus event.

Find A Good Location. Hold an event in an academic hall, auditorium, or student union. Alternatively, you can use a local restaurant, coffeeshop, organization, or community center, as long as the owner of the space gives you permission to use it. You'll want to book your location for slightly longer than your event so you have time to set up and clean up. Make sure to ask lots of questions about sound, A/V equipment, internet connection (if you need it), and other logistical questions.

The Best Way To Get People To Your Event Is By Having Face-To-Face Conversations With People You Know. Ask your professor if you can highlight the event at the end of class. Talk to your roommates, friends, professors, Greek family, and classmates.

Invite At Least 50 People To Aim For A Gathering Of 15-20 Attendees. You can talk to them in person, via email, social media, or pick up the phone—just remember to keep a list of your attendees so you know how many people to expect. This will give you a new network of people to reach out as you begin to organize. And don't forget the rule of halves—only half of those who RSVP are likely to actually show up.

Get The Word Out On Campus. Reach out to other campus groups such as athletes, Greek letter organizations, and the student government, and ask them to cosponsor the event or advertise it to their members. Pass flyers out to local businesses, large gathering locations, coffeeshops, bars, civic organizations, and public spaces. Your event is your first opportunity to engage people, so we ask that you use this opportunity to reach out to a wide group of people.

Decide If This Is An Event Where You Want Media. If the answer is yes, be sure to talk with survivors who may be telling their stories before inviting press.

Get The Word Out To Local Press. To get the press at your event, you'll need to send out a "media advisory," or press release 24 hours in advance to let local press and the college media know the background and details of the event.

Do Your Research. Find the number for your local television and radio stations' newsroom. Let them know you will be hosting a large community event on campus where you and your fellow students will gather to discuss campus sexual assault in America. Ask them who the best person is to email the media advisory to, and send that person your advisory.

Blast Your Advisory. Reach out to your school newspaper and local newspaper and ask the news desk for whoever has the education beat (or covers education issues). If there is no education reporter, let both the political reporter and the local news desk know that the event will be taking place and invite them to cover the story. Email the most relevant reporters the media advisory.

Prepare Your Materials For The Event. There are a number of crucial materials and tasks that you should review, print out, and complete before your event, including: sign-in sheets, so that you can sign in every person who comes to your event and follow-up with them later; tech equipment, to ensure there are appropriate power outlets for the media to bring their audio/visual equipment; a microphone to project your voice during your event and to better support a question/answer period and good conversation; a camera or smartphone to take pictures of your event; contact information for recovery resources, such as your campus' counseling center and the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE and online.rainn.org).

Amp Up Your Turnout With Reminders. The more you remind people about your event, the more people you'll have in attendance. Reminders are one of the most important things you can do to have a successful event. Here's a sample schedule you can follow to send reminders:

- **Invite Your Guests** 2-4 weeks before the date of your event. This can be by phone, email, in person, or social media.
- **One Week Before Your Event**, call, text, or email your attendees a reminder that the event is coming up, along with any details that will get them excited.
- **One Day Before Your Event**, send a reminder email, phone call, or text and let them know you're looking forward to having them join you. This kind of follow-up will make a huge difference in boosting attendance.

Before, During, And After Your Event

Before: Your team should arrive at least 30 minutes ahead of start time to set up your event. Make sure that any audio/visual (including Internet) or sound needs are addressed right away, since they often take the longest to set up and have the highest chances of giving you problems. Assign someone the job of signing up everyone who attends through the sign-in sheet.

During: Keep someone at the door to make sure that anyone who comes in late is also able to sign in. Do your best to introduce yourself to others. The more connections you make, the stronger your relationships will be when you follow up with them after the event.

After: Make sure to clean your room up before you leave. Assign someone to put all the data from your sign-in sheet into a spreadsheet or Google Doc and share it with everyone on your team. Figure out a time to meet to determine roles for following up. And celebrate your success - you did it!

Social Media

Social media platforms (Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, Snapchat) are powerful tools to use when promoting your event. Below are some sample tweets you can use. If you fill out the details of your event, the It's On Us Campaign can amplify your message on our national social media pages: goo.gl/forms/77ist0l8bQ

Sample Tweets:

Join @[campus org.] and @ItsOnUs at our event [event info] and stand up to campus sexual assault. [link]

Have you taken the pledge? Want to do more? We have an event with @ItsOnUs this [event date]! Learn more: [link]

Learn what you can do to be an active bystander. Attend our event at [event date/info] with @ItsOnUs! [link]

#ItsOnUs to stand up to campus sexual assault. Sign up to attend [event date/info] and learn how you can be an active bystander

#ItsOnUs to stand up to campus sexual assault. Check out our [event info] tomorrow to learn how you can get involved!

.[campus org.] is hosting an event today! RSVP here: [link] Be sure to take the pledge: itsonus.org

WHAT DO WE CHOOSE TO IGNORE?

ASK **BIG**
QUESTIONS

CONVERSATION GUIDE
FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. WELCOME

Before we begin, we need to agree on a few things:

- In order for our conversation to be as rich as it can be, we need everyone to feel safe to really share and really listen. Therefore, what is said in this conversation stays in this conversation, and may not be repeated outside it.
- Our aim is to create a space where we can understand others and understand ourselves, not to give advice or to argue ideas of objective truth. With that in mind, in this conversation we will agree to speak in the first-person, about our own truth.
- We will assume good faith in one another.
- We will open ourselves to listen and learn from one another.
- We won't rush to fill the silence.

Some Special Ground Rules For This Conversation Guide:

The material in this conversation guide covers some particularly sensitive issues—sexual violence and the culture surrounding it. In order to try to make this space as conducive as possible to a conversation in which everyone can participate fully, we've added a few additional rules:

- **Do not assume that there are no survivors of sexual violence in the room.** 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men on campus are survivors of sexual violence of some kind. As you speak, please keep in mind the likelihood that someone in this room experiences these issues as very personal indeed.
- **If someone has said something that offends you personally**, say “ouch,” to indicate this. **If you have said something that came out sounding unintentionally hurtful**, say “oops,” as an acknowledgement and apology.

- **Needless to say, you can choose to pass** and not share or participate on a specific part of the conversation.

Can we all agree to these things? If you feel, for whatever reason, that you cannot agree to these things, then please take this opportunity to exit. By staying in the circle, we all signify our intention to abide by these commitments.

2. ASK AND SHARE

Welcome to our conversation. Let's take a moment to introduce ourselves. Please tell us your name and where you call home. Please also tell us about a time when you chose to notice something you might otherwise have ignored—whether or not you responded in an active way in the moment. You can use the space below to make some notes to yourself.

3. LEARN

The decision to ignore or notice happens many times a day: we ignore (or don't ignore) emails, Facebook messages, tweets, phone calls, letters, even someone we know across the street. We choose whether to read the news, and what kind of news to read. We choose whether to pay attention to the natural world around us, to a distracting noise, to a friend's irritating quirks. Life would be impossible without this filtering. If we noticed everything, we'd go crazy. And if we notice nothing, it's meaningless.

Sometimes we actively ignore what's happening in the world, whether oceans away or on our street corner—whether it's because we feel overwhelmed by it, because we have "empathy fatigue," because we don't feel that we can have an impact, or for some other reason. Sometimes we choose to ignore behavior around us that we know is wrong or in which someone is getting hurt because we're afraid to intervene or afraid to be unpopular, or because we assume that someone else will step in. These choices also have implications—for us, for those around us, and for the world we live in.

So the question is, what do we choose to ignore? And by extension, what do we choose to notice?

Last year, there was a fiery public discussion about whether it was appropriate for comedians to make jokes about sexual assault—and, if so, what kind. In the middle of this conversation, actor and comedian Patton Oswalt wrote an essay in which he shared about something he had chosen to ignore—and the moment when he decided to start noticing.

It's titled "A Closed Letter to Myself About Thievery, Heckling and Rape Jokes." The full essay can be accessed here: <http://pattonoswalt.com/index.cfm?page=spew&id=167>

Please read this excerpt out loud as a group:

The comedians I've known who joke about rape – and genocide, racism, serial killers, drug addiction and everything else in the Dark Subjects Suitcase – tend to be, internally and in action, anti-violence, anti-bigotry, and *decidedly* anti-rape. It's their way – at least, it's definitely *my* way – of dealing with the fact that all of this [horrible stuff] exists in the world. It's one of the ways I try to reduce the power and horror those subjects hold for me. And... I was secure in thinking my point of view was right. That "rape culture" was an illusion.... *I've* never wanted to rape anyone. No one I know has ever expressed a *desire* to rape anyone. My viewpoint must be right. Right?

See if any of these sound familiar:

There's no "evidence" of a "rape culture" in this country. I've never wanted to rape anyone, so why am I being lumped in as the enemy? If these bloggers and feminists make "rape jokes" taboo, or "rape" as a subject off-limits no matter what the approach, then it'll just lead to more censorship.

They sure sound familiar to me because I, at various points, was saying them. Either out loud, or to myself, or to other comedian and non-comedian friends when we would argue about this. I had my viewpoint, and it was based on solid experience, and it...was...wrong.

Let's go backwards through those [faulty] conclusions, shall we? First off: *no one is trying to make rape, as a subject, off-limits. No one is talking about censorship.* In this past week of re-reading the blogs, going through the comment threads, and re-scrolling the Twitter arguments, I haven't *once* found a single statement, feminist or otherwise, saying that rape shouldn't be joked under *any* circumstance, regardless of context. Not one example of this.

In fact, every viewpoint I've read on this, *especially* from feminists, is simply asking to kick upward, to think twice about who is the target of the punchline, and make sure it isn't the victim.

Why, after all of my years of striving to write original material (and, at times, becoming annoyingly self-righteous about it) and struggling find new viewpoints or untried approaches to any subject, did I suddenly balk and protest when an articulate, intelligent

and, at times, angry contingent of people were asking me to apply the same principles to the subject of rape? Any edgy or taboo subject can become just as hackneyed as an acceptable or non-controversial one if the *exact same approach* is made every time. But I wasn't willing to hear that.

And let's go back even *further*. I've never wanted to rape anyone. Never had the impulse. So why was I feeling like I was being lumped in with those who were, or who took a cavalier attitude about rape, or even made rape jokes to begin with? Why did I feel some massive, undeserved sense of injustice about my place in this whole controversy?

The answer to that is in the first incorrect assumption. The one that says there's no a "rape culture" in this country. How can there be? I've never wanted to rape anyone. Do you see the illogic in that leap? I didn't at first. Missed it completely.

And just because I find rape disgusting, and have never had that impulse, doesn't mean I can make a leap into the minds of women and dismiss how they feel day to day, moment to moment, in ways both blatant and subtle, from other men, and the way the media represents the world they live in, and from what they hear in songs, see in movies, and witness on stage in a comedy club.

There is a collective consciousness that can detect the presence (and approach) of something good or bad, in society or the world, before any hard "evidence" exists. It's happening now with the concept of "rape culture." Which, by the way, isn't a concept. It's a reality. I'm just not the one who's going to bring it into focus. But I've read enough viewpoints, and spoken to enough of my female friends (comedians and non-comedians) to know it isn't some vaporous hysteria, some false meme or convenient catch-phrase.

I'm a comedian. I value and love what I do. And I value and love the fact that this sort of furious debate is going on about the art form I've decided to spend my life pursuing. And I don't want to be on the side of the debate that only argues from its own limited experience.

I'm a man. I get to be wrong. And I get to change.

As we reflect on this text, here are a few questions to consider:

Interpretive Questions

- What had Oswald chosen to ignore? What factors helped him to do so?
- What changed for him? What does that transformation look like?
- Do you agree with Oswald that "people only bring their own perceptions and experiences to bear when reacting to something....And, since they're speaking

honestly from their experience, they truly think they're correct.... Dismissive, even..."? Why or why not?

Reflective Questions

- Have you ever had a shift in perspective of the sort that Oswald describes?
- In what ways have ignoring or noticing rape culture impacted your life?
- How do we stop ignoring things that might be helpful for us to see?
- Are there times that it's good or useful to ignore something? If so, how do we determine what those things are?

Use the space below to write some notes to yourself.

4. DO

The choice to ignore or to see is one we make dozens, even hundreds of times, every day. It can be about seeing someone's faults with a generous eye, or not focusing on certain demands on our time in order to have a moment of quiet. But it can also involve not paying attention to our own needs, or someone else's needs. It can be about complicity in a problematic situation or system. We have the responsibility to, at the very least, be thoughtful in our choices about what we ignore—and what we decide it's time to stop ignoring.

Hopefully our conversation today has helped us all to reflect on our practice of noticing and ignoring, and to understand ourselves and each other a little better.

Before we conclude the conversation, please choose a partner from this group. (If there's an odd number of people in the group, there can be one group of three.)

Here are a few final questions to consider:

- Picture your day tomorrow. What's one way that what we discussed today will change what you do or how you do it?
- What's one obstacle to you making that change, and how can you overcome it? Who might you need help from in order to make this change?
- How can you help create shifts in perspective around rape culture in your community or on your campus?
- What could we do together as a community based on what we talked about today?

After people share their answers to these questions and we conclude this conversation, please exchange contact info with your partner and set a time both to check in by phone, text or email in the next 24 hours, and to meet in person sometime in the next week. When you check in, discuss the changes you articulated wanting to make. How has that been going for you? What's been challenging? What do you need in order to integrate that change more fully into your life?

Use the space below to note your response to these questions, and then we'll do a final round of sharing.

Thank you for being part of this conversation. Please share this conversation guide with others in your community. And join our conversation online at **AskBigQuestions.org**.



In September 2014, Generation Progress and the White House launched a new campaign, "It's On Us", to end campus sexual assault. It's On Us is a cultural movement aimed at fundamentally shifting the way we think about sexual assault. The campaign is a rallying cry inviting everyone to step up and realize that the solution begins with us. It's a declaration that sexual assault isn't just an issue involving a victim and a perpetrator, but one in which the rest of us have a role to play. We are reframing sexual assault in a way that inspires everyone to see it as their responsibility to do something, big or small, to prevent it.

The It's On Us campaign has over 65 partners ranging from technology corporations to sports conferences to advocacy organizations. Hillel International is a key partner of the campaign. Learn more at ItsOnUs.org.



Ask Big Questions is an initiative of Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life in partnership with the Einhorn Family Charitable Trust.

Visit AskBigQuestions.org to answer questions, learn from others, and join the movement.

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WHAT DO WE CHOOSE TO IGNORE?

ASK **BIG**
QUESTIONS

CONVERSATION GUIDE
FOR FACILITATORS

Note for Facilitators: This document is designed to be the centering point for a group conversation. You should plan for the conversation to last between 60 and 90 minutes, depending on group size. Most parts are meant to be read by members of the group, so you should plan to ask participants to take turns reading sections. Alternatively, you can choose the first reader of a section, and then that reader chooses the next reader. Additional guidelines and suggestions for planning and leading a successful conversation can be found at the end of this guide.

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Note for Facilitators: Give people a moment to organize their thoughts before you start asking for volunteers. It may be helpful to model this introduction for participants, so consider introducing yourself first. Be sure everyone states their name. You don't need to go in order around a circle. Allow people to introduce themselves when the spirit moves them.

3. LEARN

The decision to ignore or notice happens many times a day: we ignore (or don't ignore) emails, Facebook messages, tweets, phone calls, letters, even someone we know across the street. We choose whether to read the news, and what kind of news to read. We choose whether to pay attention to the natural world around us, to a distracting noise, to a friend's irritating quirks. Life would be impossible without this filtering. If we noticed everything, we'd go crazy. And if we notice nothing, it's meaningless.

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The answer to that is in the first incorrect assumption. The one that says there's no a "rape culture" in this country. How can there be? /'ve never wanted to rape anyone. Do you see the illogic in that leap? I didn't at first. Missed it completely.

And just because I find rape disgusting, and have never had that impulse, doesn't mean I can make a leap into the minds of women and dismiss how they feel day to day, moment to moment, in ways both blatant and subtle, from other men, and the way the media represents the world they live in, and from what they hear in songs, see in movies, and witness on stage in a comedy club.

There is a collective consciousness that can detect the presence (and approach) of something good or bad, in society or the world, before any hard "evidence" exists. It's happening now with the concept of "rape culture." Which, by the way, isn't a concept. It's a reality. I'm just not the one who's going to bring it into focus. But I've read enough viewpoints, and spoken to enough of my female friends (comedians and non-comedians) to know it isn't some vaporous hysteria, some false meme or convenient catch-phrase.

I'm a comedian. I value and love what I do. And I value and love the fact that this sort of furious debate is going on about the art form I've decided to spend my life pursuing. And I don't want to be on the side of the debate that only argues from its own limited experience.

I'm a man. I get to be wrong. And I get to change.

As we reflect on this text, here are a few questions to consider:

Interpretive Questions

- What had Oswalt chosen to ignore? What factors helped him to do so?
- What changed for him? What does that transformation look like?
- Do you agree with Oswalt that "people only bring their own perceptions and experiences to bear when reacting to something....And, since they're speaking honestly from their experience, they truly think they're correct.... Dismissive, even..."? Why or why not?

Reflective Questions

- Have you ever had a shift in perspective of the sort that Oswalt describes?
- In what ways have ignoring or noticing rape culture impacted your life?
- How do we stop ignoring things that might be helpful for us to see?
- Are there times that it's good or useful to ignore something? If so, how do we determine what those things are?

Use the space below to write some notes to yourself.

Note for Facilitators: This is the heart of the conversation. Give people several minutes to prepare their thoughts. Then invite people to divide into pairs or triads and share their responses. Give them a good amount of time for this—10-20 minutes. It may be longer, depending on how much momentum they develop. Then reconvene in the large group and ask people to share from their small-group conversations.

A few tips on facilitation:

- The large-group debrief should take another 20-30 minutes.
- Begin by asking for a volunteer to share an insight from their conversation. You might begin by asking, “What came up?”
- When each person is done, thank them for their comment.
- Don’t feel a need to rush or to fill silences.
- If someone begins to monopolize the time, you might say, “I want to be sure that everyone has a chance to speak, so let’s try to make room for another person.”

For other ideas on facilitation, please refer to the AIR-IT guide at the end of this document. When you sense that the group has finished sharing its responses to these questions, invite people to share any further insights or reflections from the conversation, before moving to the conclusion.

4. DO

The choice to ignore or to see is one we make dozens, even hundreds of times, every day. It can be about seeing someone’s faults with a generous eye, or not focusing on certain demands on our time in order to have a moment of quiet. But it can also involve not paying attention to our own needs, or someone else’s needs. It can be about complicity in a problematic situation or system. We have the responsibility to, at the very least, be thoughtful in our choices about what we ignore—and what we decide it’s time to stop ignoring.

Hopefully our conversation today has helped us all to reflect on our practice of noticing and ignoring, and to understand ourselves and each other a little better.

Before we conclude the conversation, please choose a partner from this group. (If there's an odd number of people in the group, there can be one group of three.)

Here are a few final questions to consider:

- Picture your day tomorrow. What's one way that what we discussed today will change what you do or how you do it?
- What's one obstacle to you making that change, and how can you overcome it? Who might you need help from in order to make this change?
- How can you help create shifts in perspective around rape culture in your community or on your campus?
- What could we do together as a community based on what we talked about today?

After people share their answers to these questions and we conclude this conversation, please exchange contact info with your partner and set a time both to check in by phone, text or email in the next 24 hours, and to meet in person sometime in the next week. When you check in, discuss the changes you articulated wanting to make. How has that been going for you? What's been challenging? What do you need in order to integrate that change more fully into your life?

Use the space below to note your response to these questions, and then we'll do a final round of sharing.

Give people a minute to reflect on the question. Then ask anyone who wants to share to do so. When you sense that the group has finished sharing its response to this question, invite people to share any further insights or reflections from the conversation, before moving to the conclusion.

Thank you for being part of this conversation. Please share this conversation guide with others in your community. And join our conversation online at **AskBigQuestions.org**.

AIR-IT: A GUIDE TO FACILITATING CONVERSATION

A: ASK BIG QUESTIONS.

Big Question	Hard Question
Anyone can answer it. Example: "For whom are we responsible?"	Experts will answer it best. Example: "What's the best economic policy for the United States?"
Focuses on wisdom and experience. Example: "What's the best advice you've ever received?"	Focuses on intelligence and skill. Example: "Are human beings naturally good or evil?"
Uses plain language.	Uses technical language.
Directed at a subject (me, you, us). Example: "What could we sacrifice to change the world?"	Directed at an object (it). Example: "Is it better to cut spending or raise taxes to balance the federal budget?"
Opens up space and invites people in as participants	Closes space and leads people to feel like spectators.
Leads to sharing personal stories.	Leads to debates about truth claims.
Emphasizes a both/and approach.	Emphasizes an either/or approach.

I: INVITE PERSONAL STORIES.

Big questions lead to sharing personal stories. The facilitator acts to support this by:

- Creating the space (physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual) of trust in which these stories can be shared and honored.
- Weaving: Summarize, reflect back, and keep the stories and observations tethered to the big question. This helps the group to maintain integrity and not feel that it is fragmenting or fraying.

R: REALLY LISTEN.

Ask Big Questions conversations are marked by real listening. The facilitator's reflecting back and weaving is crucial to this. Participants should be able to answer questions like: "What did so-and-so say? What do you think they meant when they said it? What did it evoke in you?"

IT: USE INTERPRETIVE THINGS.

Ask Big Questions conversations often use a text, poem, artwork, song, natural object or other "interpretive thing" to help center the conversation and create a common point of access for all participants.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN PREPARING FOR A DISCUSSION

Where?

- Does the place where you're having the conversation create a space in which people can feel safe?
- Is it a closed space? Does it have a door you can close to ensure privacy and confidentiality when needed?
- What can you do to make the space visually appealing or lovely? Does it have windows to let in light? Do you want to play some music?
- Can everyone sit comfortably in a circle?

When?

- Are you scheduling the conversation at a time when everyone can be physically awake and present?
- Will people be hungry? Will you provide food or drink?
- Will they be tired or sleepy after a meal?
- How long will the conversation be?
- How will you break up the time if necessary?

Who and How?

- How many people will participate? Will there be enough to sustain diverse conversation? Will there be too many to keep the conversation centered?
- How will you get the word out and then remind people?
- Do you need to make any special arrangements for people with special needs (i.e. physical disabilities)?
- Greetings – Who will welcome people to the conversation and how will they do it?
- How will you have everyone introduce themselves? (Big Questions are great for introductions!)
- How will you close the conversation?
- How will you follow up with people?
- How will you capture their contact information?

What About You?

- What will you do to get yourself ready?

It's On Us Bystander Intervention Tips

1. Talk to your friends honestly and openly about sexual assault.
2. Don't be a bystander – if you see something, intervene in any way you can.
3. Trust your gut. If something looks like it might be a bad situation it probably is.
4. Be direct. Ask someone who looks like they may need help if they're okay.
5. Get someone to help you if you see something – enlist a friend, RA, bartender, or host to help step in.
6. Keep an eye on someone who has had too much to drink.
7. If you see someone who is too intoxicated to consent, enlist their friends to help them leave safely.
8. Recognize the potential danger of someone who talks about planning to target another person at a party.
9. Be aware if someone is deliberately trying to intoxicate, isolate, or corner someone else.
10. Get in the way by creating a distraction, drawing attention to the situation, or separating them.
11. Understand that if someone does not or cannot consent to sex, it's rape.
12. Never blame the victim.
13. If you are a victim or survivor, or helping someone in that situation go to notalone.gov to get the resources and information you need. You can also call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE.

After a Sexual Assault

It's hard to know what to do, how to feel, or what your options are after a sexual assault. Please know that you're not alone. Below are some things to keep in mind. If you are in immediate danger or seriously injured, call 911.

1. Your safety is important. Are you in a safe place? If you're not feeling safe, consider reaching out to someone you trust for support. You don't have to go through this alone.

2. What happened was not your fault. Something happened to you that you didn't want to happen—and that's not OK.

3. Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.HOPE (4673). You'll be connected to a trained staff member from a [local sexual assault service provider](#) in your area. They will direct you to the appropriate local health facility that can care for survivors of sexual assault. Some service providers may be able to send a trained advocate to accompany you.

When you call the National Sexual Assault Hotline, a staff member will walk you through the process of getting help at your own pace. You can also visit online.rainn.org to chat anonymously. Hotline staffers can also provide information on topics you might have questions about, including:

- [Receiving medical attention](#)
- [Reporting options](#)
- [Preserving evidence](#)

How to Respond to a Survivor

When someone you care about tells you they've been sexually assaulted or abused, it can be a lot to handle. A supportive reaction can make all the difference, but that doesn't mean it comes easy. Encouraging words and phrases avoid judgment and show support for the survivor. Consider these phrases:

- 1. "I'm sorry this happened."** Acknowledge that the experience has affected their life. Phrases like "This must be really tough for you," and, "I'm so glad you are sharing this with me," help to communicate empathy.
- 2. "It's not your fault."** Survivors may blame themselves, especially if they know the perpetrator personally. Remind the survivor, maybe even more than once, that they are not to blame.
- 3. "I believe you."** It can be extremely difficult for survivors to come forward and share their story. They may feel ashamed, concerned that they won't be believed, or worried they'll be blamed. Leave any "why" questions or investigations to the experts—your job is to support this person. Be careful not to interpret calmness as a sign that the event did not occur—everyone responds differently. The best thing you can do is to believe them.
- 4. "You are not alone."** Remind the survivor that you are there for them and willing to listen to their story. Remind them there are other people in their life who care and that there are service providers who will be able to support them as they recover from the experience.
- 5. "Are you open to seeking medical attention?"** The survivor might need medical attention, even if the event happened a while ago. You can support the survivor by offering to accompany them or find more information. It's ok to ask directly, "Are you open to seeking medical care?"
- 6. "You can trust me."** If a survivor opens up to you, it means they trust you. Reassure them that you can be trusted and will respect their privacy. Always ask the survivor before you share their story with others. If a minor discloses a situation of sexual abuse, you are required in most situations to report the crime. Let the minor know that you have to tell another adult, and ask them if they'd like to be involved.
- 7. "This doesn't change how I think of you."** Some survivors are concerned that sharing what happened will change the way other people see them, especially a partner. Reassure the survivor that surviving sexual violence doesn't change the way you think or feel about them.

Continued Support

There's no timetable when it comes to recovering from sexual violence. If someone trusted you enough to disclose the event, consider the following ways to show your continued support.

- **Check in periodically.** The event may have happened a long time ago, but that doesn't mean the pain is gone. Check in with the survivor to remind them you still care about their well-being and believe their story.
- **Avoid judgment.** It can be difficult to watch a survivor struggle with the [effects of sexual assault](#) for an extended period of time. Avoid phrases that suggest they're taking too long to recover such as, "You've been acting like this for a while now," or "How much longer will you feel this way?"
- **Remember that the healing process is fluid.** Everyone has bad days. Don't interpret flashbacks, bad days, or silent spells as "setbacks." It's all part of the process.
- **Know your resources.** You're a strong supporter, but that doesn't mean you're equipped to manage someone else's health. Become familiar with resources you can recommend to a survivor, like the National Sexual Assault Hotline 800.656.HOPE (4673) and [online.rainn.org](https://www.online.rainn.org).

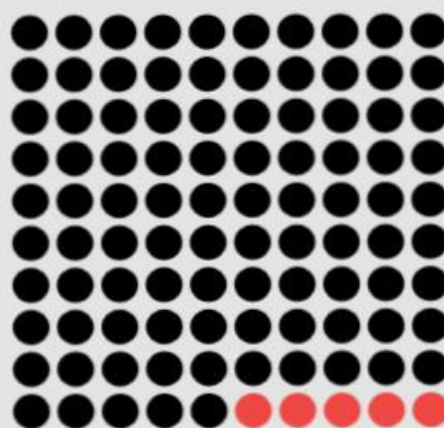
A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Why Colleges and Universities Must Respond to Campus Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault on Campus: a look at the numbers



1 in 5
women
is
sexually
assaulted
in college



Only **5 percent** of
sexual assaults are reported.

40% of survivors fear reprisal
by their attacker

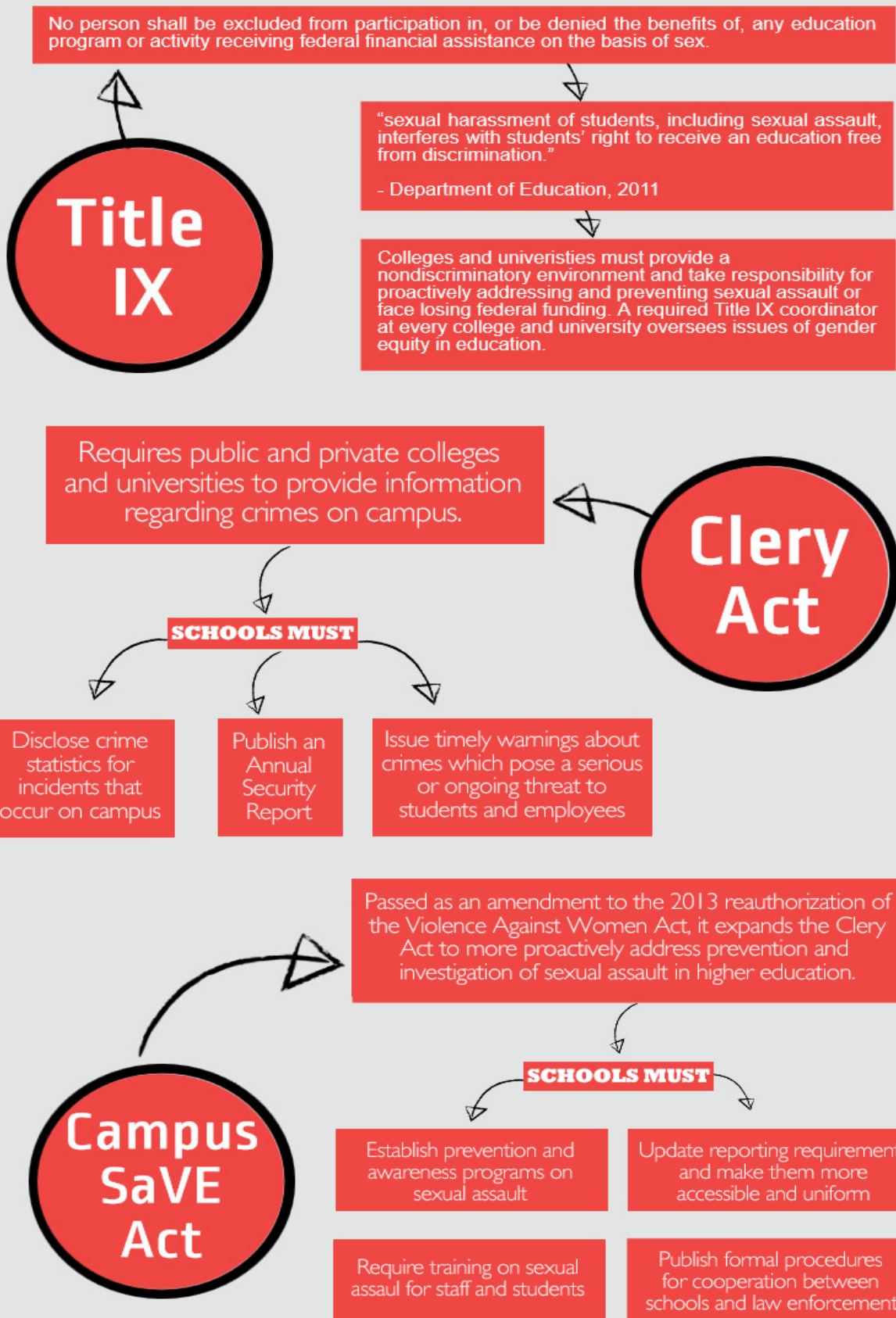


8 in 10
survivors knew
their attacker
(friend,
significant other,
etc.)



1/3
of sexual assault
survivors are
first-year
students

Federal laws on campus sexual assault



How Colleges and Universities Can Act to Prevent Sexual Assault and Support Survivors

SCHOOLS MUST

Take up all reports of sexual assault for adjudication. This can be especially important in states where male-male or female perpetrated sexual assault is not recognized.



Provide on-going prevention and awareness programs for students and employees to address issues of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.



Ensure survivors have access to everything they may need to continue their education. This can include dorm and class transfers, academic accommodations, and mental health support.



SCHOOLS SHOULD ALSO

Move quickly to suspend and expel offenders to ensure both the survivors' safety and maintain a safe environment for other students.



Investigate reports of sexual assault to identify patterns and change security practices to better protect students in the future.



However, Gaps Remain

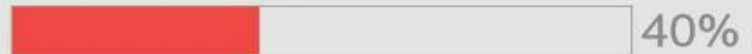
Despite the many tools available to colleges and universities to address sexual assault, too many still fail to properly address the problem.



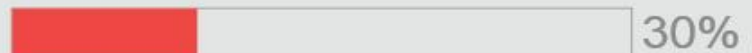
A survey found colleges and universities...

For more information, visit genprogress.org

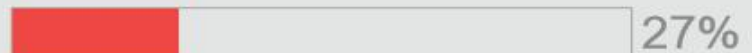
Reported not investigating a single sexual assault in the past five years



Offered no training on sexual assault to students nor law enforcement officers



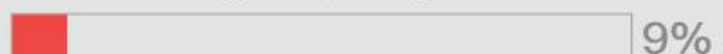
Left oversight of cases relating to student athletes to their athletic departments



Had not hired a permanent Title IX Coordinator



Reported more sexual assaults to the Department of Education than they actually investigated



Sources:

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By: Zenen Jaimes Pérez

**GENERATION
PROGRESS**

Generation Progress is a national organization that works with and for young people to promote progressive solutions to key political