

KNOW YOUR IX

CAMPUS

ORGANIZING

TOOLKIT



CAMPUS ORGANIZING TOOLKIT

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KNOW YOUR IX

We affirm and actively support every survivor's right to seek justice and healing in the way that they choose. The work we do is always centered in the needs and experiences of survivors themselves.

We recognize that sexual and dating violence are manifestations of systemic gender oppression, which cannot be separated from all other forms of oppression, including but not limited to imperialism, racism, classism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism. The experiences of survivors are shaped by their individual identities and these connected systems of oppression. We also recognize that institutions play a central role in enabling these systems of violence and oppression.

We recognize that people of all identities, including but not limited to those based on race, gender, and sexuality, can experience and be impacted by sexual and dating violence. We strive to challenge narrow and inaccurate representations of what assault, violence, and survivorship look like. We also acknowledge that these forms of violence disproportionately affect people of color, women, and transgender and gender nonconforming people. With this understanding, we work to ensure inclusive policies and accessible resources in schools and beyond.

We affirm direct action as a tactic to challenge the silencing of survivors and pressure power-holders to support survivors and carry the weight of gender violence. Direct action can help expose the violence normalized by our institutions and larger society.

We seek to foster transparency around issues of sexual and dating violence because we believe that a bottom-up approach to building power is the only way to achieve justice and hold our schools accountable.

We support campus-based adjudication of sexual and dating violence cases as a non-carceral alternative to the criminal legal system, which does not work to support or protect many communities, and strenuously oppose efforts to make reporting to law enforcement the only option for student survivors of sexual and dating violence.

STATEMENT OF OUR VALUES

We recognize that public conversations around sexual and dating violence often focus on white, straight-presenting, and cisgender female survivors. With this understanding, we work to amplify the voices and support the work of groups often marginalized within these conversations.

We practice democratic decisionmaking and an organizational structure that does not reinforce or replicate oppressive systems of power. We recognize that survivors and student activists on the ground are the experts on their own needs on campus, and center student and survivor leadership in setting the goals and strategies of the campaign.

We believe that ending sexual and dating violence on college campuses is a pivotal part of making higher education accessible for all students—and part of the broader struggle for education justice.

We recognize that surveillance, incarceration, imperialism, and ideologies of normalcy are tools of state dominance, and we recall the (continuing) histories of the state's co-optation of progressive movements' practices and goals. We aim to resist and reject the violence of the state in and through our work. We believe no one is disposable and also affirm the importance of holding individuals accountable for the harm they cause.

We seek to create regional and national communities of activists who share these values and will work together to address sexual and dating violence on our campuses.

DEAR FELLOW SURVIVORS,

We're angry.

We're angry at the people who raped and abused us, at the institutions that failed us, at the friends and classmates that blamed or shamed or silenced us in the wake of violence. We're angry at the injustice of our world and at the tolerance of inequality in our schools.

That anger has been generative for us. It's driven us to fight for change on our campuses and in our communities. And it's led us to those who share our anger at injustice, helping us combat the overwhelming sense of isolation and loneliness many of us have felt after sexual violence. Our anger has led us to people who have become some of our very dearest friends, people who, like us, refuse to be complacent with a world of rampant violence, oppression, and injustice.

All this is to say: that we, the organizers at Know Your IX, have found activism to be an instrumental tool in our own healing processes, a way of caring for ourselves after harm. It's through activism that we've found support networks, validated our traumas, and worked toward a future in which the experiences we've endured are no longer inevitable for students in the generations to come.

As you embark on your own process of healing, know that we stand with you. Know that we have felt and feel and honor the feelings you may have, whether of anger or sadness or isolation or hopelessness. Know that we validate those feelings, that we do not believe they are wrong or inappropriately "negative." Know that we can build a more just world. Know that a community of survivors fights with you.

Activism isn't easy. Take care of yourself. Ask to be taken care of. Seek out resources, like counseling, to which you are entitled on campus. As Audre Lorde once said, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." Find your people—the ones who demand a better world—and start living it together. Create for yourselves a community of care.

The path to liberation is not short, and it surely is not smooth, but we are confident that we will win.

In solidarity and with love,
The KYIX Team

"Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing."
- Arundhati Roy

DEAR ALLIES,

Supporting someone who has endured sexual or dating violence can feel overwhelming—not because you don't want to be supportive, but because you may not be sure of how best to respond. For activists, friends, family, teachers, and other allies: here are a few pointers.

- **DO let them know that you are here for them** in whatever way they need. You cannot make the pain go away, but you can listen.
- **DO express anger and sadness at their injustice**, while avoiding pushing them to action they do not want or letting your anger take up more space than their response.
- **DO validate their feelings** about the experience, acknowledging pain without catastrophizing. Try to mirror the language used by the survivor. If they start to minimize what has happened to them, let them know that you believe them and that there is no need to minimize what happened to them.
- **DO let them know that rape is not a way to balance out the other good things.** Survivors will often express that they shouldn't "complain" about having been raped, particularly if they are privileged in other aspects of their life.
- **DO express admiration for their courage.** Recognize how difficult this must be for them to share.
- **DON'T question the validity of the survivor's claims.** For many survivors, not being believed is a large fear that can be significantly harmful and retraumatizing. Remember that false reports are extremely rare.
- **DON'T make excuses for the perpetrator.** Their actions are inexcusable, no matter what.
- **DON'T tell the survivor what they must do.** You should ask what they need and how you can help them. You can suggest different courses of action or resources available, particularly if they ask for your advice. However, be careful not to present your suggestions as the 'correct' or only next steps. Know that every survivor has unique needs and will process in their own way.
- **DON'T minimize the assault or harassment.** Remember that one kind of rape, assault, or harassment—by a stranger, an acquaintance, a friend, a partner—isn't more or less "legitimate" than another.
- **DON'T question why the survivor has decided to tell you now**, even if it has been months or years since the assault. It often takes many months, or even years, for survivors to come to terms with their experiences or feel comfortable sharing them with others.
- **DON'T share the survivor's story without their permission.**

And lastly, be strong and take care of yourself. You'll be better able to respond to the survivors' needs if you are meeting your own.

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ABOUT KNOW YOUR IX

Know Your IX is a national survivor-led, youth-powered organization empowering students to end gender violence in their schools in order to build a world in which all students can pursue their right to education free from violence. At the core of our animating vision, politics, and work is a belief that the voices and needs of those most directly affected by sexual violence should inform our collective mobilization against it.

To that end, we educate students about their rights to an education free from sexual violence through our one-stop-shop website (<http://knowyourIX.org>); train, organize, and support over 150 student activist groups in effecting smart change on their campuses; and work to transform law and policy to ensure meaningful structural action at the federal and state levels to end gender violence. We have successfully petitioned the Obama Administration to take landmark steps to create transparency, have won key economic protections for low-income student survivors, and have defeated dangerous mandatory policing provisions that would strip victims of their privacy and autonomy in their sexual assault cases.

In July of 2015, we were pleased to welcome Carry That Weight into the Know Your IX family. Carry That Weight began as an activist campaign at Columbia University and grew to be a national network of student activists working to end sexual and dating violence on their campuses. Carry That Weight's work was inspired by the performance art piece created by Emma Sulkowicz, a Columbia student who boldly carried her dorm room mattress with her every day as long as her rapist remained on campus—right up to her walk across the stage on graduation day. The symbol of the mattress has come to represent the burden that survivors too often struggle to carry alone. Carry That Weight, now a part of Know Your IX, demands that colleges and universities help survivors carry the weight of sexual and dating violence by creating equitable, sensitive, and transparent policies.

We want to hear from you! If you want to share questions or ideas, get involved in our legislative or campus activism, or get strategic support from our student organizing team, please contact us.

Mahroh Jahangiri, Executive Director: mahroh@knowyourIX.org



Dana Bolger at Title IX Roundtable Discussion, U.S. Senate, June 2014

AUTHORS

This toolkit was written by and for youth activists who are a part of this struggle. In partnership with student organizers around the country, we have compiled tips, policy recommendations, and emerging strategies for student organizers based on our experiences on the ground.

Many thanks to the principal authors of this toolkit: John Aspray, Ava Blustein, Anastasiya Gorodilova, Mahroh Jahangiri, Maddy Moore, Allie Rickard, Sejal Singh, Zoe Ridolfi-Starr, and Brendane Tynes. Thanks, too, to Dana Bolger, Alexandra Brodsky, and Alyssa Peterson for their contributions, and to Hope Brinn, Katarina Hyatt, Yana List, and SurvJustice for drafting the Clery Act resource that first appeared on our website. Our deepest gratitude to partners in this struggle and early collaborators on this toolkit, Carry That Weight, No Red Tape, and the United States Student Association. We are, as always, grateful to mentors, including Fatima Goss Graves, Nancy Cantalupo, and Michelle Anderson, whose guidance and support have shaped our thought over the years. Most of all, thank you to the student organizers of the Campus Action Network whose wisdom has shaped all of the content contained here.

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What is gender violence?

Gender harassment and violence include rape and sexual assault; dating, domestic, or intimate partner violence; stalking; and online harassment. Other names for 'gender violence' are interpersonal violence, gender-based violence, or sexual violence. Colleges often refer to it as 'sexual misconduct.' People of any gender identity, sexuality, age, and ability are affected.

Violence, including gender violence, asserts and reinforces hierarchies of dominance, power, and privilege. Historically, rape (and the threat of rape) has been used by white men to establish and maintain slavery, colonialism, and war and to subordinate women and other marginalized peoples.

What is the impact for victims who are students?

Gender violence limits victims' ability to learn, denying them their right to education. One in five women, as well as many men and gender nonconforming students, will suffer sexual assault during their time in college. As a result, many survivors go to great lengths to avoid their perpetrators on campus, skipping shared classes, avoiding shared spaces, or hiding in their dormitory rooms. Others struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, eating disorders, anxiety, flashbacks, and nightmares, even attempting suicide or engaging in self-harm. Without support from their school, formerly successful students watch their grades drop as they struggle to participate in, or even attend, their classes. In short: gender violence limits its victims' ability to access education. Though this toolkit will focus primarily on sexual violence on college campuses, **this is a serious and under-addressed issue at the primary and secondary school level as well.** Many sections of this toolkit—including Knowing the Law and Taking Action—can be used by younger activists.

Who does gender violence impact?

Most campus victims are assaulted by someone they know. People of all genders and sexualities are sexually assaulted, though, in the vast majority of cases, cisgender men are the perpetrators. Further, while **17%** of heterosexual women are assaulted, bisexual women suffer assault at a far higher rate: **46%**. Gay and bisexual men are **over ten times** more likely to experience sexual assault than heterosexual men. **One in four** transgender people have been assaulted after the age of 13. Statistically, rates of violence against some women of color are higher than those for white women; for instance, 43% of Black women, 46% of Native women, and 53% of multiracial women are assaulted. People with disabilities are three times more likely to experience sexual violence than people without disabilities.

KNOWING THE LAW: WHY DO SCHOOLS HANDLE GBV?

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Why Do Schools Handle Gender Violence Complaints?

In response to coverage of university mistreatment of sexual assault survivors, many observers have wondered why schools handle these crimes at all: why not just leave it to the police?

Well, federal law requires it.

Title IX mandates schools to combat sex discrimination in education. One of the most common objections we hear to campus adjudication is “but isn’t rape a crime?” It absolutely is, and students who report to their schools can also report to the police. However, rape and other forms of gender-based violence manifest and perpetuate inequality, and federal anti-discrimination law recognizes that. To make sure that all students, regardless of their gender identity and expression, have equal access to education, schools are required to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence. This isn’t a replacement for reporting to the police; it’s a parallel option for survivors based in civil rights—rather than criminal—law.

For many survivors, campus reporting is their only option.

Many victims of sexual violence—especially those who are Black, Muslim, undocumented, and trans—don’t want to turn to the criminal legal system: they may fear skepticism and abuse from police, prosecutors, or juries; they may not want to go through the ordeal of a long trial; they may fear retaliation from their assailant, who will most likely not end up prosecuted, let alone convicted; and they may be hesitant to send their assailants to prison. But even survivors who do report to the police are often abandoned by the system. Only a quarter of all reported rapes lead to an arrest, only a fifth lead to prosecution, and only half of those prosecutions result in felony convictions. Additionally, not all state laws cover sexual violence perpetrated by women or a person the same sex as the victim; some don’t recognize men as victims at all. Schools, unlike the state, must take up every report for adjudication and response according to the victim’s wishes. For most campus survivors, then, their school may be their only resource for justice and safety.

Colleges and universities can also respond to survivors’ needs that go unaddressed by the criminal legal system.

A criminal trial is brought against a defendant by the state—not the victim—in defense of the state’s interests. That means that what the survivor needs is sidelined. In contrast, schools, unlike criminal courts, are focused on the victim and are required to make sure they have everything they need to continue their education. Examples include academic accommodations, dorm and class transfers, and mental health support. While many observers assume victims’ first priority is retribution, that may be one (or none at all) of many valid needs—and the police just can’t get a survivor an extension on her English paper due the week after they were raped.

And lastly, colleges and universities can act quickly to support students.

Schools can respond to many survivors' needs even without a campus hearing. That means a student can not only access the accommodations listed above—including extensions, dorm and class transfers, and mental and physical health resources—but that they can access them **in the immediate aftermath of an assault**. That means students have access to resources urgently needed to stay in school. Schools, unlike the criminal legal system, are also in the position to suspend or expel offenders quickly to ensure a safe campus; if they had to rely on the criminal legal system to try the case, the college would have to wait years for the assailant to be taken to prison (which only happens in three in 100 cases). As the school waited for the trial to conclude, the victim would be left on campus with their perpetrator—or perhaps forced out of school for their own safety.

*Alexandra Brodsky, Suzanna Bobadilla, and other student activists deliver over 100,000 petitions at an ED ACT NOW protest in 2013—successfully pushing the Department of Education to publish the list of **colleges and universities currently under investigation** for Title IX violations.*



KNOWING THE LAW: WHAT ARE THE FEDERAL LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOLS?

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Title IX

Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments is a federal civil rights law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in education. It requires parity in men's and women's athletics, protections for pregnant/parenting and transgender students, and women in STEM fields. It's also a powerful tool for combating campus violence.

Under Title IX (and other federal laws like the Clery Act), your school is obligated to keep its students safe and to guarantee survivors basic rights. Schools routinely ignore the law, so knowing your rights is the first step in fighting back.

Title IX requires all schools receiving federal funding to combat gender-based violence and harassment and respond to survivors' needs in order to ensure that all students have equal access to education. While the text of Title IX itself is short, the Department of Education's **Office for Civil Rights (OCR)** has helpfully clarified exactly what the law requires, through its **Dear Colleague Letters** in [2011](#) and [2014](#). Below are a few obligations that every university should implement—both on paper and in practice.

All students are protected:

Title IX protects all students (and faculty and staff), regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, age, ability, part-time or full-time status.

- Title IX's prohibition of discrimination based on sex extends to discrimination based on gender identity, perceived gender identity, sexual orientation, and non-conformity with traditional gender roles. Schools are required to investigate incidences of sexual assault involving parties of the same sex like any other case and provide culturally competent resources for LGBTQ students.
- Title IX protects students regardless of national origin, citizenship status, or immigration status. Schools should make reporting options, information, and training on sexual violence accessible to English language learners. OCR recommends schools be mindful of unique issues involving foreign students and how an investigation may affect their visa status.
- Federal laws, including Title IX, protect students with disabilities from discrimination. Services must be provided for students with previously documented disabilities as well as students who may have developed a disability (such as PTSD) as a result of sexual violence. Reporting options, trainings, information, and resources must be accessible for people with disabilities.
- Title IX protects students who have experienced sexual violence on campus, off campus, and online. However, there might be limitations on what your school do if the perpetrator is not affiliated with your school. If a perpetrator is not affiliated with the complainant's school, the school could still attempt to make an inquiry into the allegations, but the school's ability to take

direct action may be limited. Whether or not the perpetrator is affiliated with your school, your institution is still responsible for providing appropriate remedies for the survivor(s) and/or the broader school population.

Title IX Coordinator:

The Dear Colleague Letter requires every educational institution receiving federal funding to have a Title IX Coordinator. The contact information (name/title, office address, telephone number, email address) of the Coordinator should be easily available on campus and online.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the institution is compliant with Title IX, including identifying any patterns of systemic inequity or violence. The Coordinator may not have any other job responsibility that creates a conflict of interest with their responsibilities under Title IX. When a school does not have a Title IX Coordinator, **it is non-compliant with Title IX.**

Notice of Nondiscrimination:

Schools must publish a notice of nondiscrimination stating that they do not discriminate on the basis of sex in their educational programs or activities, and that this is required by Title IX. The notice must:

- state that questions regarding Title IX should be referred to the school's Title IX coordinator or to the Office for Civil Rights;
- inform all students and employees of the designated Title IX coordinator's name or title, office address, telephone number, and email address.

Grievance Procedures:

Schools are required to adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence. Grievance procedures must:

- provide provisions for adequate, reliable, and impartial investigations for complaints, which includes providing both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator with opportunities to present witnesses and evidence;
- designate reasonably prompt time frames for the major stages of the complaint process;
- give written notice to both parties of the complaint's outcome.

The Office for Civil Rights evaluates a school's grievance procedures' compliance with Title IX in a number of ways. For the full list, see OCR's [2014 "Questions and Answers"](#) under C-5.

Notification of Sexual Violence or Hostile Environment:

OCR considers schools to have received notice of student-on-student sexual violence in several situations, including (but not limited to) when a "responsible employee" (see OCR's 2014 ["Questions and Answers,"](#) pp.14-18) has been informed, when a grievance complaint is filed, and/or through indirect means such as social media.

In cases of hostile environments that are well-known among the student body, OCR evaluates whether the university should have known about the hostile environment.

Interim Measures and Investigations:

Schools should provide periodic updates to students on the status of the investigation—and take interim steps to protect students before the final outcome of an investigation.

The school should inform the complainant of any available resources (i.e., victim advocacy, housing assistance, academic support, counseling services, disability services, health and mental health services, legal assistance, and the right to file reports with campus officials and/or local law enforcement).

Retaliation:

Federal civil rights laws, including Title IX, protect against retaliation. Schools cannot retaliate against any individual who files a complaint of Title IX violations or participates in a U.S. Office for Civil Rights investigation. Schools must:

- take steps to prevent retaliation against students who filed a complaint on their own behalf or on the behalf of others, or provided information as a witness;
- ensure that complainants know how to report retaliation by any party;
- act promptly to address the problem when notified of retaliation.

Remedies for a Complainant:

Remedies for complainants may include, but are not limited to: providing a safety escort to and from classes; ensuring that the complainant and alleged perpetrator do not attend the same class; moving the complainant or alleged perpetrator to another residence hall; counseling services; medical services; and/or academic support, like an extension on a paper or tutoring. Any reasonable accommodations necessary for a victim to stay in school should be provided at no cost to the victim.

In some instances, a school is required to reimburse survivors for lost tuition or accrued student loan interest. According to OCR, "The scope of a school's responsibility is tied to the scope of a school's culpability." For

example, if your school's failure to remove your perpetrator from your class meant that you were forced to take classes with your perpetrator for several weeks and your grades suffered, or you had to take time off from school as a result, your school should reimburse your lost tuition or allow you to retake the class free of charge. In contrast, if your school takes prompt and effective steps to eliminate the violence and prevent its recurrence, your school would not usually be expected to reimburse lost tuition and related expenses."

Violation of Title IX:

A school violates a student's rights when (1) the alleged conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to limit or deny a student's ability to participate fully in or benefit from a school's educational program (i.e., the creation of a hostile environment) and (2) the school fails, upon notice, to enact prompt and effective steps to end the violence, eliminate the hostile environment, prevent its recurrence, and, as appropriate, remedy its effects.

When OCR finds that a school has not taken prompt and effective steps to address sexual violence, OCR will seek appropriate remedies for complainants and/or the broader school population. When conducting Title IX compliance investigations, OCR seeks to obtain voluntary compliance from schools. If a school does not come into compliance voluntarily, OCR can initiate proceedings to withdraw federal funding or refer to the U.S Department of Justice for litigation.

The Clery Act

The Clery Act is a federal law that institutes a number of reporting obligations, educational programming requirements, and transparency provisions on schools.

Clery requires colleges to report crimes that occur "on campus" and school safety policies. This information is available each year in an **Annual Security Report (ASR)**, which must be publicly available on your school's website. The Clery Act also requires schools to have timely warnings when there are known risks to public safety on campus.

The Clery Act also requires colleges to complete primary prevention and awareness educational programming for new students and employees, as well as ongoing prevention (including bystander prevention and risk reduction programs) and awareness campaigns. These must include education on the definition of various acts of sexual violence and on the school's reporting system and disciplinary proceedings.

Finally, the Clery Act requires colleges to publish information on victims' rights (including the right to written notification of available services for mental health, victim advocacy, and legal assistance the right to change academic, living, transportation, or work situations even if a victim does not formally report), as well as to implement "prompt, fair, and impartial" disciplinary proceedings that ensure equitable process to both parties. For instance, officials conducting disciplinary proceedings must be trained annually on

sexual violence investigations and determinations; both the victim and the accused have a right to have an adviser of their choice present during the disciplinary process; both the victim and accused are required to receive the final results of a disciplinary proceeding in writing; and both the accuser and accused have a right to appeal disciplinary proceeding decisions or changes to the final result.

One way to find out if your college is in compliance with the Clery Act is to review your school's Annual Security Report. The ASR must be publicly accessible on the school's website and in an easy to understand form that includes the incidents of crime and their current stage in the disciplinary/investigatory process or final result. If the most recent ASR is not available on October 1st, or there is no notification to current students and employees that it is available on that date, your college is not in compliance.

Campus police or security must provide information on recent reports within two business days, unless it jeopardizes an investigation or victim confidentiality, in their Clery Crime Log. If a report you made is missing from the log or is mischaracterized in the log, then your college is not in compliance. Common violations include failing to list Greek houses or other locations that are not physically on campus, but still covered under the Clery Act. If you believe your school has left off crimes from locations related to campus, your school may not be in compliance.

Listed crimes should include: **sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking**, murder, manslaughter, robberies, aggravated assaults, burglary, motor vehicle thefts, and arson. Schools are also required to report hate crimes, which include larceny-theft, simple assault, intimidation, destruction, damage, or vandalism of property, and other crimes regarding bodily injury when the victim was selected based on gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability, or religion must be reported specifically as crimes of prejudice.

Be aware that there might be additional—and sometimes conflicting—state laws in your school's state. If your school fails to meet one or more of these requirements, you may be able to file a Title IX complaint and/or a civil suit in federal court against your school. If you want to learn more about victims' rights under the Clery Act or you believe your school may have violated these laws, **check out our website** for more information on next steps.

CREATING YOUR DEMANDS: POLICY BEST PRACTICES BEYOND TITLE IX

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Title IX mandates bare minimum legal standards that schools are required to meet. But your school can and should do more to prevent sexual and domestic violence, support survivors, and keep students safe. We have compiled these Policy Best Practices based on Title IX legal standards and the needs and experiences of students, activists, and survivors—consider incorporating some or all of these into your demands! Also, remember that some—but not all!—of these practices are required by law (we’ve marked those below) and that every school is different, so you may want to adjust or add to these suggestions based on your community, the size and location of your school, and the specific ways your school may be failing that aren’t addressed here.

Transparency

Clearly Published Policy on Gender-Based Violence

Your school should have a clear policy on gender-based violence that is easy to access and understand and is available online. Your school is legally required to publish grievance and reporting procedures—if they don’t, they are not in compliance with Title IX (or the Clery Act). The policy should have clearly defined terms and explicitly state that Title IX protects all survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including male and gender non-conforming survivors.

- Suggested terms to define include: sexual harassment, hostile environment caused by sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual exploitation, stalking, retaliation, intimidation, and consent.
- Your school’s policy should explicitly prohibit both physical and cyber-stalking and harassment.
- The policy should clearly state that your school can investigate sexual and domestic violence complaints when incidents occur off-campus or on a study abroad program, as long as the parties are “affiliates” of your school (i.e., students, faculty, staff, etc) and the conduct is severe or pervasive enough that it creates a hostile learning environment.

A Welcomeness Standard

Defining Consent

Across the country, activists have successfully pushed to replace definitions of “no means no” definitions of consent with affirmative consent, otherwise known as “yes means yes.” Under this idea, consent requires an affirmative, unambiguous, and conscious decision by each participant to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity.

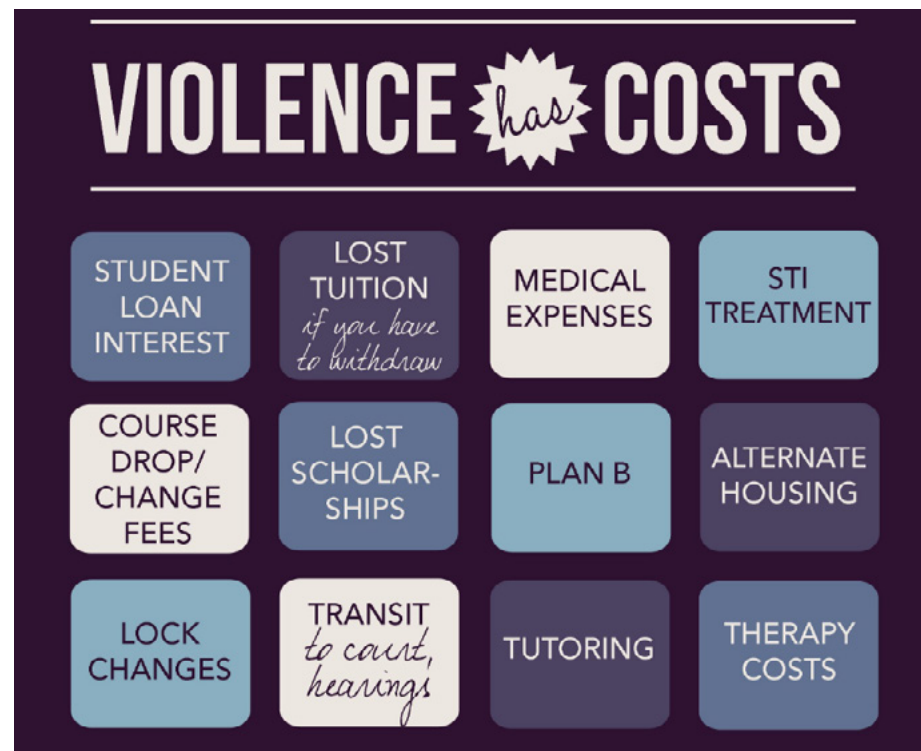
But, while affirmative consent is absolutely improvement on the “no means no” framework, the existing

civil rights standard, known as welcomeness, provides even more protection to students against sexual harassment (which includes gender violence). Welcomeness, while functioning very similarly to affirmative consent in practice, is better equipped to handle cases where people affirmatively agree to sexual activity under conditions of coercion and where there are power disparities between the parties.

Furthermore, welcomeness acknowledges that the attitudes behind unwanted sexual comments are the same discriminatory attitudes behind sexual assault and rape; and so, rather than falsely treating violence and harassment as separate issues to be governed by separate standards, welcomeness positions sexual violence as a very serious form of sexual harassment that interferes with an individual's ability to access education in violation of Title IX.

What Are Welcomeness and Sexual Harassment?

Welcomeness is a standard that is used to define what would constitute sexual harassment, which is a civil rights violation under Title IX. Sexual conduct is unwelcome if a person did not request or invite it, and regarded the unrequested or uninvited conduct as undesirable or offensive. Acknowledging how individuals from different backgrounds will experience conduct differently—for example, a woman may regard uninvited sexual comments as offensive in a way that a man would not—individuals who adjudicate claims are asked to judge whether conduct is welcome from both subjective (the victim's perspective) and objective standpoints (the construct of a "reasonable person"). [Some feminist legal scholars have called for the courts to adopt a "reasonable woman" standard in lieu of the "reasonable person" standard in order to ensure adjudicators are considering differences in perception between genders.]



EXAMPLES OF UNWELCOME CONDUCT

Some examples of conduct that could be considered unwelcome could be uninvited and/or unrequested advances or propositions or requests for sexual activity or dates; asking about someone else's sexual activities, fantasies, preferences, or history or discussing one's own preferences; displaying sexual objects, pictures or other images; invading a person's personal body space, such as standing closer than appropriate or necessary or hovering; making sexual gestures with hands or body movements; or delivering unwanted letters, gifts, or other items of a sexual nature. In addition, nonconsensual sexual contact, sexual exploitation, and nonconsensual sexual penetration are unwelcome behaviors that constitute sexual harassment and violate state criminal codes.

Importantly, welcomeness also has strong caveats against presuming conduct is welcome in the context of a previous relationship, other sexual acts, and lack of resistance:

- Under welcomeness, the fact that a student may have accepted the conduct does not mean that he or she welcomed it. Nor does acquiescence in the conduct, the failure to complain, silence, or lack of resistance automatically mean that conduct was welcome. For example, a student may decide not to resist sexual advances of another student or may not file a complaint out of fear. In addition, a student may not object to a pattern of demeaning comments directed at him or her by a group of students out of a concern that objections might cause the harassers to make more comments.
- Furthermore, students that willingly participated in conduct on one occasion are free to indicate that the same (or different) conduct has become unwelcome and the initiating party should cease conduct immediately.

It's important to note that not all forms of unwelcome sexual behavior are sexual harassment. For example, a single uninvited sexual comment will not constitute harassment if it does not result in what is known as a hostile environment or occur on a quid pro quo basis (see below for a further discussion of this point).

Sexual harassment is **unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature**, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when they:

- Create a hostile environment, meaning that they are sufficiently serious to deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the program. A single or isolated incident of sexual harassment or gender-based harassment may create a hostile environment if the incident is sufficiently severe. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to create a hostile environment, particularly if the harassment is physical. For instance, a single instance of rape is sufficiently severe to create a hostile environment.
- AND/OR: Occur on a quid pro quo basis, meaning that a teacher or other employee conditions either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment, evaluation of academic work, participation in any aspect of a college program or activity, and other decisions affecting the individual on the student's submission to unwelcome sexual conduct.

Sexual harassment policies must make distinctions between conduct that is harassing and conduct that is covered under the principles of academic freedom and conducted in the service of the institution's educational mission. Accordingly, material or discussion that is appropriately related to course subject matter or curriculum would not be considered harassment, even if it does engender discomfort in an educational setting.

Policies should cover sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking as well as harassing conduct based on a student's gender expression, gender identity, transgender status, gender transition, or nonconformity with sex stereotypes that creates a hostile environment. Policies should also make clear that an individual cannot welcome sexual or gender-based conduct while incapacitated.

WHY WELCOMENESS OVER AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT

While the affirmative consent movement is an absolute improvement over "no means no," activists should push for schools to adopt "welcomeness" as the standard in their sexual misconduct policies.

Welcomeness is focused on civil rights and equality while affirmative consent is a criminal standard.

Affirmative consent is a criminal standard, meaning that it is used to distinguish between acceptable and criminal conduct. By contrast, welcomeness, as a civil rights standard, contends with gender violence because it perpetuates inequalities based on sex. As Title IX is also predicated on these equality principles, welcomeness is the more appropriate standard. Furthermore, many affirmative consent policies, such as [California's new law](#), focus on sexual activity and ignore discriminatory implications of these acts. This makes these policies less nimble in dealing with discriminatory actions based on sex (such as ongoing sexual comments) that may not constitute "sexual activity" but could still interfere with an individual's education.

Welcomeness is broader than affirmative consent and takes power disparities into account.

Welcomeness offers the same benefits as affirmative consent; silence or a lack of resistance does not mean conduct was welcome and conduct can be welcome in some instances and not others. However, affirmative consent can end up permitting harmful conduct that would be allowable under an unwelcomeness standard. For instance, if an individual was pressured into saying "yes" to sexual activity because of power disparities (i.e. their partner was a member of the faculty), their acquiescence may satisfy an affirmative consent standard. But, as welcomeness clearly states that acquiescence in the conduct doesn't necessarily mean the conduct is welcome, the person would have recourse under that policy.

Welcomeness is already the standard under Title IX.

In 2001, the Department of Education issued guidance that directed schools to use a welcomeness standard in instances of sexual harassment. Unfortunately, many schools failed to adjust their policies accordingly and persisted with a "no means no" standard. For these schools, affirmative consent is a significant improvement. But, as welcomeness is still the standard favored by the Department, instituting a less protective affirmative consent standard creates an enforcement issue. For example, if a student experiences sexual assault at a school with an affirmative consent policy, it is unclear if they should appeal to their school's affirmative consent policy or argue that the conduct was unwelcome, as schools are ultimately governed by how the federal government interprets Title IX's requirements.



Yearly Campus Climate Surveys with Published Results

Since reporting rates are so low, a school's **Clery Act** crime statistics aren't an accurate source of information on the prevalence of sexual assault on campus. Anonymous campus climate surveys, in contrast, can more accurately measure the prevalence of sexual and dating violence (and for this reason, many schools are resistant to their implementation). To maintain consistency amongst schools and to make sure schools ask the right questions, the Department of Justice has developed **a standardized survey instrument** for schools. Published data from climate surveys can provide valuable information that's helpful to improve campus safety, including information about: students' knowledge about reporting procedures and resources for survivors, their beliefs about sexual violence, and the unique ways sexual violence may affect different communities.

Aggregate Data

While colleges cannot publicly release the sanctions given to a specific, named individual [because sanctions are considered an "educational record" protected by the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**], they can and should publish aggregate statistics so that students, parents, and alums can hold schools accountable for their responses.

Your school should publish aggregate statistics showing, at a minimum:

- how many cases are reported;
- how many survivors were denied accommodations that they requested;
- how long, on average, cases remained open;
- how many students were found responsible; and
- how students found responsible were sanctioned.

Your school might claim that publishing this data is a violation of FERPA, but it's not. In fact, the Department of Education has required many colleges found in violation of Title IX to publish this information. Learn more about FERPA at [NotAlone.gov](https://www.justice.gov/oeis/NotAlone) and how to push back.

Prevention

Effective Prevention Education

Under the Campus SaVE provisions of the Clery Act, all schools are legally required to provide prevention education to first-year students and include information on students' reporting options and resources. But research shows that a single session during orientation isn't good enough. Your school should require

KYIX Bootcamp: Chapel Hill, NC, April 2016

continuous, comprehensive, in-person prevention education for everyone on campus. That includes first-year students, transfers, graduate students, professors, and staff.

Effective consent education must be skills-based and interactive (rather than merely informational), inclusive, and community-based.

An effective consent education program should also:

- Highlight the prevalence of sexual violence—and the fact that everyone can and should be a part of creating a positive, consenting sex culture.
- Be tailored to your campus and community and to situations specific to campus life.
- Be inclusive of all identities, including gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, ability, and documentation status.
- Disrupt dangerous myths about who is most likely to experience sexual and dating violence and address unique challenges students holding those identities may face.
- Explain on and off campus resources and reporting options clearly and provide written materials regarding both.
- Be long term. Consent education programs proven to work are those that are administered over the course of several lengthy sessions.
- Give a comprehensive definition of consent, including examples of how consent can be given in practice and what, on its own, does not constitute consent (such as silence and incapacitation).
- Provide skills-based training on using, giving and asking for consent.
- Address the role of alcohol and substances as a tool of perpetrating sexual violence, including a discussion of the definition of “incapacitation” and practical examples of when a student is too drunk to give consent.
- Provide training in recognizing and preventing dating and domestic violence.
- Link sexual violence to broader issues of power: the program should explicitly discuss social norms that encourage gender violence (such as violent constructions of masculinity).

Stalking Prevention

Schools should not publish students’ addresses online (whether they live on or off campus) without students’ affirmative consent. Many survivors live in fear of their abusers or stalkers finding out where they live.

Bystander Intervention

Under the Clery Act, universities are **legally required** to provide bystander intervention education. Bystander intervention is a strategy that teaches students to identify and safely intervene in situations that may lead to sexual violence. There is reliable evidence that these programs can make a student significantly more likely to intervene in a dangerous situation and reduce general risk factors for committing sexual violence. An effective program shares many of the traits discussed above: it should be skills-based, interactive, inclusive and accessible, and well-structured.

An effective bystander intervention program should also:

- Discuss why bystander intervention is important, both within the college context and beyond.
- Include detailed examples of unsafe situations and a facilitated discussion in which students learn what behavior requires intervention.
- Identify, discuss, and combat barriers to intervention.
- Include clear examples of intervention methods.
- Avoid graphic content or material that is likely to be triggering. Content warnings should be given at the beginning of the session and peer counselors should be available for students who may need it.
- Contain inclusive material and discuss how gender, sexual, racial, and other identities can impact our assessment of potentially unsafe situations.
- Take place over multiple sessions. Research suggests that effective bystander intervention programs involve—at a minimum—four to six hours of training.
- Be rooted in community organizations. Evidence shows that bystander intervention works best in community settings. Students should be encouraged to attend these sessions within community groups, whether that’s a dorm room floor, Greek Life, a debate team, or a student club.

Bystander intervention can be a critical tool to protect your friends and peers. Schools, however, are often quick to implement bystander programs in response to campus activism—a good step, but not nearly enough. Bystander intervention is an individual tool which can’t, on its own, solve a structural problem; if you get a friend out of a dangerous situation tonight, that doesn’t mean that that the same perpetrator won’t just assault someone else. Bystander intervention is great, but it’s not a substitute for comprehensive consent education, fair disciplinary processes, and support resources for survivors.

Survivor Services & Resources

24/7 Rape Crisis Centers

All schools should have either a confidential, 24/7 rape crisis center on campus or a memorandum of understanding agreement (MOU) with a local rape crisis center and domestic violence service providers that students can access at any point. The White House has created a sample [memorandum](#) that your school can use.

Many schools that employ staff during the week to provide services can experience gaps in coverage over the weekend. A large number of survivors suffer violence on the weekend and asking them to wait until Monday to speak with an advocate may deter many from accessing accommodations—at that time or ever. Make sure that survivors at your school have access to crisis services at all times.

Accessing rape crisis centers should not automatically trigger a formal report or otherwise lead to a disciplinary proceeding. Staff should be designated as confidential, with the exception of reporting anonymous, aggregated statistics under the [Clery Act](#).

Your school should either have a **Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner** (SANE nurse) on campus or provide access to someone nearby. A SANE nurse is specifically trained to provide evidence collection and immediate support for sexual assault survivors.

Gender-Based Violence Response Office

Your school should have an office with survivor advocates and professional staff dedicated to supporting survivors and helping them access resources and accommodations. This office should be separate from the office that receives student reports of gender-based violence; survivors need to be able to access accommodations and support without filing a formal report. The size of this office should correspond to the size of your school: for a small school, one survivor advocate may be enough, but large schools will likely need more. An advocate should be promptly available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Additionally, some survivors feel more comfortable with a well-trained peer advocate. Consider pushing for a peer advocate program at your school, but keep in mind that peer advocates are a supplement, *not a replacement* for professional staff.

Your school should have at least one separate staff position for a professional focused on prevention. While administrators may say that hiring additional staff is too expensive, consider letting them know that extra prevention salaries are a small price to pay to reduce sexual and domestic violence.

Confidential Support

Schools should make clear where survivors can access confidential support, as opposed to whom they can *make a report*. We encourage pushing for a policy that balances a variety of options for survivors to disclose confidentially while making sure that a community is aware of the violence occurring on campus. The White House [confidentiality policy](#) is a good place to start.

[Department of Education guidance](#) specifies three classes of employees for confidentiality purposes:

- **Licensed counselors or pastoral counselors:** If a survivor reports to employees in this group, they are not obligated to report any information to anyone.
- **People who commonly advocate for survivors, like health center staff and women's center staff:** this group is not obligated to report survivors' experiences but must submit non-identifying information about prevalence (i.e., as part of annual Clery Act disclosures) so school officials are informed of the hostile environment that exist on campus.
- **"Responsible Employees":** These include faculty, campus police, and other administrators. If members of this group hear a survivor's report, they must report to the Title IX Coordinator, even against the survivor's wishes. The Title IX Coordinator can proceed with an investigation against a survivor's will, but should only do so if certain exacerbating factors exist (i.e., the assault was committed by a known serial perpetrator, or with a weapon).

Schools now have the option to reasonably designate individuals into the second group and they **should be encouraged to do so**. The second option was intended to provide survivors with more options to seek help confidentially as opposed to the previous system, which allowed only licensed people or pastoral counselors to receive confidential reports. Unfortunately, many schools have chosen not to create this second group for liability reasons, leaving survivors with fewer options. Because heavy mandatory reporter policies tend to discourage survivors from disclosing to anyone at all, we suggest pushing for RAs, peer mentors, and other peer employees to be in the second category; but, as always, you should advocate for whatever is best for your particular campus community and context.

Emergency Contraception and Prophylaxis

Your school should guarantee access to emergency contraception and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) free of charge to all survivors. Emergency contraception, like Plan B or Ella, can be used to prevent pregnancy for up to five days after unprotected sex, and PEP can be used to protect against HIV. Unfortunately, both treatments are time-sensitive—they become less effective the later you take them—so make sure survivors have access to them as soon as possible. In some states, emergency contraception is available without a prescription, so your school should be able to provide it 24 hours a day. Your school should widely publicize that emergency contraception and PEP is available for free.

“Hey, why are you
such a **slut**?”

—his teammate,
minutes after my
attack, in front of
everyone

Why don't you take a
year off, get a job at
Starbucks, and come back
after he's graduated?

—Dean

Affordable Care

Your school should guarantee that survivors have access to counseling and medical attention in a timely manner and without having to file a formal complaint. Medical care, including mental healthcare, should be provided at no cost to the survivor—the high cost of counseling can preclude people from accessing it, with significant psychological and educational consequences. If a survivor requires a remedy in order to access an equitable education, their school must provide that remedy at no cost to the victim.

Accommodations

Under Title IX, colleges and universities should provide survivors reasonable housing, academic, and other accommodations. For example, if a survivor lives in the same dorm building or is in the same discussion section as their assailant, schools should assist them (or their perpetrator) in moving to another building or class. When taking steps to separate the complainant and the accused student, a school should minimize the burden on the complainant. As the Office for Civil Rights notes, schools typically should not remove complainants from classes, housing, or extracurriculars while allowing alleged perpetrators to remain. For more detailed information on the accommodations schools must provide, see sections “G” and “H” in the Office for Civil Rights 2014 [“Questions and Answers”](#) document.

- **Services** — Beyond what’s required by law, schools should (at an individual survivor’s request) remove perpetrators from shared spaces like sports teams, dorms, and classes instead of the survivor. Administrators should discreetly assist survivors with other academic accommodations (like securing extensions on papers or ensuring there are no academic penalties for missing class to secure a civil protection order).
- **Accessibility** — Your policy should include examples of common accommodations and a detailed, explicit explanation of how to access them. Survivors should be able to access accommodations without filing a formal report and survivors should be guaranteed reasonable accommodations at no cost.
- **No Contact Orders** — No Contact Orders, which state that perpetrators and survivors can’t contact each other directly, online, or via friends, are a common and critical accommodation schools should provide. No Contact Orders often include a distance requirement that requires a perpetrator and a survivor not to be in the same room.
- **Transportation** — If survivors can’t afford transportation to vital services (for example, to a hospital or to counseling, to get a rape kit, or to get a restraining order,) your school should provide it free of charge.

From Surviving at Amherst, photo credit Jisoo Lee

Visibility

How well does your school publicize these resources? Students can't use them if they haven't heard of them. Likely first points of contact, like Resident Advisors (RAs) or Teaching Assistants (TAs), should be trained extensively on how to direct survivors to resources—and, if applicable, to disclose any mandatory reporter status they may have prior to a conversation involving information they would have to report.

Response & Adjudication

Amnesty

Students should be guaranteed complete amnesty by the college for disclosing in good faith sexual misconduct they suffered or witnessed while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances. Many survivors are afraid to come forward because they believe their schools will punish them for conduct code violations like underage drinking. Some schools have used honor codes prohibiting premarital sex, same-sex relationships, or "homosexual behavior" to retaliate against students, especially those who are LGBT, reporting gender violence. Your school shouldn't have these policies but if they do, they should certainly include amnesty policies to protect these survivors against such codes.

Reporting Options

Your school is legally required to designate (at least) one Title IX Coordinator and publish their name, title, office address, telephone number, and email address online. Students should also be able to anonymously report online. Information on how to report in both ways should be widely accessible on campus and online.

Survivor's Rights

Schools should have written and publicized policies guaranteeing survivors rights under an adjudication process. These should be available online and provided, in writing, to survivors as soon as they make a report. The same document should also have a comprehensive list of the resources available, clear explanations of how to access them, and an explanation of the adjudication process.

In particular, the document should notify survivors of their right to the following (as a reminder, not all of these are required under current law):

- The right to an attorney — Survivors should have access to an attorney at any point in the process, including the hearing, any investigatory interviews, and any meetings with case managers. If students can't afford an attorney, the university should (but is not legally required to) provide one, such as by making an agreement with a local nonprofit which advocates for survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

- The right to a personal supporter — In addition to an attorney, survivors should have a right to a personal supporter (such as a friend, advisor, or parent) present at any meetings or hearings involved in the disciplinary process.
- The right to file a federal Title IX complaint, civil or family court report, or a simultaneous criminal complaint at any time. (This is legally required.)
- The right to be free from retaliation by the school, the accused, and/or their friends, family, and acquaintances. Title IX prohibits retaliation.
- The right to participate, or decline to participate, in the investigative, criminal justice, and/or campus justice process free from any pressure or influence from college officials.
- The right to review all available evidence in the case file with adequate time to consider and respond.
- The right to be treated with dignity, sensitivity, and fairness throughout the process.
- The document should also include all of the resources and procedural protections recommended in other parts of this guide.
- The right to choose to submit evidence during the fact-finding stage demonstrating the impact of the violation, including but not limited to medical and/or counseling records, changes to a student's grades and other academic performance.
- The right to receive written or electronic notice, provided in advance and reasonable under the circumstances, of any meeting or hearing they are required or are eligible to attend.
- The right to exclude irrelevant mental health history.

Investigation

- **Qualified Investigators** — It takes years of specialized training (not just a few hours) to fully understand the complicated dimensions of gender-based violence. Reports must be investigated by impartial individuals with extensive professional expertise in gender-based violence to ensure they are effective, professional, and trauma-informed.
- **Case Managers** — Schools should provide survivors who report with a qualified case manager, someone they can contact whenever they have questions about the process and who is responsible for keeping them up-to-date about any developments, helping them secure accommodations and interim measures, and preventing retaliation. At many schools, survivors and accused students will be given the same case manager, which can make many survivors (and accused students) uncomfortable, deterring them from coming forward. Your school should guarantee that survivors and perpetrators will never have the same case managers.

- **Survivors' Stories** — Investigations (and hearings) should be designed to limit the number of times survivors must re-describe the incident to as few individuals as is practicable.
- **Timely Investigations** — Schools must conduct the major stages of investigations and grievance procedures in a reasonably prompt timeframe. OCR recommends about 60 days, depending on the complexity of the case.

Evidence

- All schools should use the preponderance of the evidence (otherwise known as “more likely than not”) standard for adjudicating complaints. The preponderance of the evidence is the standard used to adjudicate civil rights cases in court. Since Title IX is a civil rights law that exists to protect each student’s right to an education free from harassment and violence, the preponderance of the evidence standard is the most equitable and appropriate standard. Schools should not use a different standard, such as “clear and convincing” or “beyond a reasonable doubt”.
- All policies should explicitly state that a survivor’s dress and past sexual history is irrelevant to the investigation and outcome, and will be excluded from evidence.
- A respondent’s past findings of responsibility (whether in civil, criminal, or university disciplinary records) should be included as evidence at sanctioning.
- Your school should guarantee that survivors have equal opportunity to present evidence and witnesses, should develop a clear procedure for both parties to present evidence and witnesses, and shouldn’t deviate from that established procedure without a compelling reason.
- Your school should interview all available witnesses with relevant information. If your school declines or fails to interview a witness suggested by either party, they should provide an explanation to the party in writing.
- Both parties should have equal access to available evidence in their case file and should have sufficient time for them and their attorneys to review it before a hearing.

Hearings

- Some schools have a history of giving the perpetrator more notice about information that will be presented in the hearing. Your school’s procedures should ensure that both parties have equal notice about the hearing procedure, the information and evidence that will be presented, and about their opportunities to speak.
- Members of the hearing panel should be explicitly trained not to ask victim-blaming questions, including questions regarding the survivor’s irrelevant sexual history.
- During hearings, some universities only put up a thin screen between a survivor and a perpetrator, which is traumatic and could deter survivors from reporting or filing a complaint in the first place.

In order to reduce trauma for survivors, schools should install a closed-circuit camera system to allow survivors to participate in the hearing without fear of being in the same room as their perpetrator.

- Survivors who have obtained court-issued protection orders (which often require perpetrators to keep a certain distance away) should not be penalized by these requirements. If a protection order is in effect, schools should make sure that the burden of complying with that order falls on the perpetrator who can then participate via closed-circuit camera.

Notice

Both parties should be informed of any outcomes, including findings of (non-)responsibility, sanctions, and appeals outcomes, in writing within 24 hours of the decision being made.

Sanctions

- Any student who is found responsible for gender-based misconduct, but is allowed to remain on or return to campus should be required to participate in a comprehensive, evidence-based consent education program in addition to other sanctions.
- Survivors should have the opportunity (though not the obligation) to state the sanction they would most prefer during the point of the proceeding when the decision-maker is considering appropriate sanctions.
- School administrators should be cognizant that “justice” does not mean the same for everyone and not all survivors want the same outcomes for cases. While schools should strive to apply sanctions consistently, they should have a policy of “standard sanctions”, not mandatory sanctions. Mandatory sanctions often discourage survivors from reporting, especially if they were assaulted or abused by an intimate partner.

Appeals

Your policy should set clear, equitable guidelines for the grounds on which to make an appeal to a neutral decision-making body at your school. Perpetrators shouldn’t be able to appeal without reasonable grounds to do so, and your policy should guarantee equal rights to appeal the decision (i.e., if perpetrators can appeal the severity of a sanction, a survivor must be able to appeal leniency). Note that, at many schools, students who are found responsible have their sanctions reduced on appeal almost automatically; talk to survivors and fight for the aggregate data we talked about in Section (I) to find out if this is happening on your campus.

Retaliation

School administrators and campus police should ensure that students who report gender-based misconduct are free from any retaliation, whether from school administrators, staff, faculty, or other students. There

should be a clear explanation of how to report retaliation in your policy, and students who retaliate against survivors should face appropriately serious consequences. **Retaliation is illegal under Title IX.**

Decision-Makers

All decision-makers, including (but not limited to) members of any adjudication panel (if your school has one), sanctioning officers, appeals officers, and case managers should be impartial individuals with training in sexual and domestic violence. University administrators such as deans of student life or academic advisors generally lack the knowledge necessary to effectively adjudicate these cases and their stake in protecting the school's public image suggests a conflict of interest; we do not believe they are appropriate decision-makers in this context.

Both parties should have the opportunity to challenge investigators, case managers, and decision-makers involved in the hearings, sanctioning, or appeals process. If anyone in those positions has a relationship with the accused student or victim, they should be removed from roles in the disciplinary process.

Confidentiality

Your policy should clearly state that survivors are not prohibited from discussing their complaint and its outcome when seeking support from friends, family, or others who may be at risk of being assaulted by the perpetrator. Survivors should never be afraid to intervene in another potential assault because they could face disciplinary sanctions, and forbidding survivors from talking to friends is isolating and often detrimental to survivors' mental health. Schools should take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of both parties.

Many schools require survivors to sign nondisclosure agreements or threaten to punish them if they disclose. **That's illegal.** Survivors may be restricted from discussing what happened specifically in a hearing due to FERPA requirements, but Title IX guidance states that survivors cannot be restricted from sharing the outcome.

Institutionalizing Reform

- Your school should have a working group on gender-based violence that meets regularly and includes students and survivors. Some schools hold these meetings but keep meeting agendas, membership, and minutes secret. They may claim that this is because survivors who are part of the group don't want to be identified and because private information about cases is discussed. Of course, details about individual cases shouldn't be made public. However, any specifics and identifying information can be removed from minutes and agendas; students should still have a record of the broader policy discussions and decisions happening in those meetings.
- Every student who formally reports gender-based violence, and any respondent in such a case, should be given an online evaluation form where they have the opportunity to provide detailed

feedback on the student's experience with the reporting and adjudication process, as well as accessing necessary resources and accommodations. This evaluation should only be provided after a case has reached its final resolution and responses should be sent to the working group on gender-based violence mentioned above.

- Your school should hold a mandatory, regular, and comprehensive review of your harassment policy. As part of this process, your school should solicit broad community feedback from students and survivors on campus through a variety of means, including anonymous methods.

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CREATING YOUR DEMANDS: POLICY BEST PRACTICES BEYOND TITLE IX

2. UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE

I. Scope of the Issue

II. Knowing the Law

Why do schools handle GBV?

What are the federal legal requirements for how schools should handle gender violence?

Title IX

Clery Act

III. Best Practices: What should my school be doing?

Transparency

Prevention

Resources

Response & Adjudication

Institutionalizing Reform

IV. What are the issues on my campus?

What are the issues on my campus?

The problem of sexual and dating violence on campus isn't about the mishandling of one case or the actions of one abuser—and while organizing around specific cases can be powerful and important, ending gender violence in schools is going to require systemic policy change. Schools need to make structural changes to prevent gender-based violence, hold perpetrators accountable, and provide survivors the accommodations, resources, and fair, effective adjudication systems they need.

Schools can fail survivors in a lot of different ways, so one of your first steps should be identifying the specific ways in which your school is causing harm, and creating a set of demands to improve it. Whether you decide to organize around your school's adjudication system, a lack of crisis response and counseling resources, inadequate prevention and education, or all of the above, these tips will help you plan and implement a campus campaign.

Find your college's gender-based violence policy and have all your group members read it.

- Have all of your members read through your school's policy and annotate it. Flag parts of the policy that blame victims, violate Title IX, or seem off in any way. Mark parts that are confusing and write down any questions that you have.
- Look at our [Best Practices](#) section for ideas on what might be missing in your policy. Nothing in here is set in stone—add and adapt suggestions based on what survivors at your school need.
- Familiarize yourself with what your school is legally required to do under Title IX, the Clery Act, and any local or state laws that apply to your school. Flag anything in your policy that seems to conflict.

Get as much feedback as you can on your college's policy.

- Sit down with as many members of your group as possible and work through your policy point by point. Have everyone bring their annotated copies of the policy to this meeting so that you can combine everyone's comments and questions into one document.
- Share this document with survivors who may not be involved in your group but whose feedback is crucial. It's essential that you get as much feedback as possible from survivors who have gone through the adjudication process so that your proposals are informed by the experiences of those who know first-hand what's working and what's not.
- Find other ways to get additional feedback. Consider creating a google form where survivors, including recent alums, can share their experiences anonymously with your group to be able to better inform your policy proposals.

- Keep in mind that the majority of problems with your policy may be things that are not included or are not specifically articulated; **your policy's biggest problems may be not with the existing content, but rather with what's missing from it.**
- Remember that even if a policy is good on paper, your school may not be following it in practice. Many schools will ignore or violate rights guaranteed to survivors. Talk to survivors about whether protections that are promised are being afforded to them in reality.

Transfer your annotations, comments, and questions into concrete proposals.

- Take your annotations and comments and create clear policy proposals to bring to your administration. For aspects of your policy that are unclear or that you are confused about, formulate specific questions to ask administrators. This work is best accomplished in a small working group that can devote dedicated time to this task.

Get as much feedback as you can on your policy proposals.

- Once you have formulated your policy proposals, have everyone who was involved in the process of creating them provide feedback. Does your proposal ensure that no one, particularly those from marginalized communities, are left out? Try to anticipate any unintended negative consequences of your proposals.
- Consider other conversations that are going on in your community and on the national level. Be creative and think about leaders of other campus movements with whom you can speak to get the most insight and input on your proposals.
- Look at existing policies or demands from activists at other schools if you are running into problems with specific aspects of your proposals, such as writing a good consent definition. Contact the KYIX team for advice as well.
- Think about other ways to get community input. Consider having an open workshop to receive input from students outside of your core members. Be proactive about hearing from a wide range of survivors and communities—for example, work with your campus LGBTQ students group, Black Students Association, and Active Minds chapter.

Find out which administrators have the authority to answer the questions you have about your policy and its implementation and get a meeting with them.

- You may need to meet with several different administrators who oversee different aspects of the adjudication process. For instance, it's essential that you find out who the correct decision-makers are within your administration; if it's not clear who the decision-makers are at various stages of the process, that's the first question you should ask. Your college's Title IX coordinator, deans, provost, and president are all possible administrators with whom you may need to meet.

- Your first meeting should be centered around getting answers to your questions that have come out of analyzing your policy and crafting your policy proposals. Depending on the answers you receive, you may need to create or revise your policy proposals. If you only have a few minor questions, you can also email questions to decision makers. (Getting answers in writing is always a plus.) If you're unable to get answers, consider going ahead with the proposals that you've formulated.

Turn your detailed policy proposals into easy-to-message campaign demands.

- Your policy proposals may end up being detailed and dense. That's a good thing: you should be specific about what pieces should be changed and how, so that you can take the specifics into your negotiations with administrators. But many other community members won't read a detailed policy document, so you'll also have to come up with an effective way to communicate to students, decision-makers, and media.
- Come up with "buckets" that your policy proposals broadly fit into. Turn each bucket into a punchy, memorable campaign demand that your more detailed proposals fit under.
- For example, one demand could be "A 24-hour Rape Crisis Center," which is clear and easy for other students to understand. Under that demand, you can fit specific proposals about staffing, the security and privacy of the space, and the services you want it to provide.
- Your campaign demands should be as self-explanatory and specific as possible, while being short enough to fit easily on a flyer at your actions.
- You should have ten (10) or fewer campaign demands—any more and people will stop paying attention.

Create a policy campaign plan.

- Once your proposals are complete and you have answers to as many of your questions as you can get, create a campaign plan for how to pressure your administration to make the changes you want.

The most important thing to remember while writing demands is this: **effective policy work is survivor-centric.** Your proposals need to be grounded in survivors' experiences and needs, or they won't solve the problem. That means it's critical to gather survivor stories to assess how your school is handling reports of sexual and domestic violence. Make sure to provide a safe space for these stories to be shared, with the option of anonymity for those who choose to speak out. Peer-facilitated survivor support groups can also be a safe space to learn about how survivors are experiencing your school's adjudication process. If you use survivors' stories in your policy proposals, make sure that you get their consent first. If you are using someone's story, make sure that it's anonymous and generalized so that a survivor cannot be individually identified from the information you include. Make sure to analyze your school's sexual assault prevention

efforts and response from a variety of standpoints, taking into account race, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability, and other factors.

There's no one-size-fits-all policy to fighting sexual and dating violence on campus: what works best at a big state school might be different from what works at a religious university, a community college, or an urban liberal arts school. That can make creating demands challenging, but it also gives you the chance to shape innovative, unique policy priorities tailored to your community.



Other Tips for Developing Policy Proposals & Demands

- **Be Specific:** Make your policy proposals as specific as possible. For example, instead of stating that better counseling and response services are needed, explicitly state that you demand a 24-hour rape crisis center with trained counselors available on-site, or safe 24-hour transportation to a hospital or campus facility that offers a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE nurse). The more specific you can be about how these reforms can be implemented, the better.
- **Learn The History:** Research the history of your school's current gender-based misconduct policy. Figuring out how, when, and why your school's existing policies were put in place is crucial. Some administrators (and faculty and staff) have been around since the last time policies were revamped and that could be an important part of their perspective on any potential changes. Was there a heated debate on standards of proof five years ago? Or maybe one administrator led the charge the last time around? A good place to look is your school newspaper's archives, which may have information on sexual assault controversies or major policy changes on campus. Reach out to alums who were active in the past. Activists who have since graduated can be important sources of knowledge about the policy, the institution, and administrators you may deal with (and they can be useful allies!).
- **Work in Google Docs:** It's helpful to be able to share your work with other students and get feedback throughout the entire process. The "suggest" feature lets you track changes and see who suggested what edits, which makes it easier to keep track of changes in a document that multiple people are working on. Also, never delete any comments or writing in your document that have not been resolved! Don't accidentally throw away work that you'll then have to redo. If you have to, move them to another document so you can find them again if needed.
- **Living Documents:** Try not to let perfection be the enemy of progress. There will likely always be more ways that you can improve your school's policy. Many groups have released their proposals as a "living document," a document that can be continually edited and updated as you learn about new problems or come up with creative solutions. If you decide to do that, make sure to note that on the document.
- **You Can Do This:** You don't need experience in policy or legislative work to effectively analyze your school's policy. Most of us had no experience doing this work when we started. Work together, stay focused on why you care about this work, and you'll end up learning a lot along the way.

WHERE TO START: BUILDING A TEAM

3. TAKING ACTION

I. Building a Team

- How to Build a Team
- Creating Accountability
- Organizing By, For, and With Survivors
- Intersectional Organizing
- Thinking Long Term

II. How to Plan a Campaign

- What Tactics to Use
- Examples: How to Plan Your Direct Action
- How to Work with Administration

III. How to Work the Media

- The Basics
- Telling Your Story
- Talking Points
- Sample Talking Points

Building a Team

Title IX is a civil rights law that requires schools to keep their students safe. But if your school, like so many others, is flouting this federal law, it may take a movement to hold administrators accountable—and to ensure that all students can access education free from discrimination.

Follow these steps to form a group, build power, and fight to improve your school's policies, practices, resources, and prevention strategies. While this guide explains how students at other schools have organized, nothing here is set in stone: adapt it in ways that suit your campus community and its unique needs.

Build a Core Team

Fighting gender-based violence on campus is a big undertaking, and no one person can do it on their own. Make a list of 10-15 people you know who you think might want to work with you. You can draw from your friends and classmates, activists you know are organizing on other issues, and the leaders and members of existing clubs on campus.

Sit down and have a one-on-one conversation with them about why this work is important and explain what you envision. *Ask about why they care about this issue and what motivates them.* Ask if they'll get involved. From there, you'll have a group of 5-7 people who will form your core team to start the campaign.

As you're building a core team, try to reach out to people with a wide range of experiences and expertise. Your team will be stronger if your core members have a broad range of skills and interests, whether that's group facilitation, policy analysis, or media/communications. Even more importantly, **your team will be stronger if your core group centers survivors of gender-based violence themselves, especially those whose experiences have often been marginalized in national conversations about campus sexual violence (including survivors of color, undocumented survivors, and LGBTQ survivors).** Survivors experience violence—and are failed by their schools—in different and unique ways.

Hold a First Meeting

The first meeting is a way to bring the core team together to talk about your group, go over this toolkit, and start planning your campaign to fight gender-based violence on your campus. Consider encouraging your team to read up on Title IX (read [these primers](#)) before the meeting so that the group is on the same page, and knowledge and information are accessible to everyone.

There's a lot to talk about in the early stages of organizing. *What are the specific problems facing survivors on your campus? What needs to be done to create a more just and safe campus environment? How will you make*

your group inclusive and survivor-centered? What are your values and the collective values of your group? How are you going to make changes happen?

Brainstorm what potential solutions could look like. It can also be productive here to do some research on what other schools' activist organizations are doing, as well as any laws in your state that might encourage or hinder progress.

Establish a Decision-Making Structure

Sexual violence is about power. Given that interpersonal violence is part of a larger system of inequality and oppression, we encourage activists organizing to end sexual violence to root their activism in anti-oppression principles. This can mean intentionally creating a decision-making structure that not only gets things done, but actively works to empower marginalized voices and dismantles traditional hierarchies.

Creating such a structure means considering both the needs of individuals and the needs of the collective, attempting to give every member an equal chance to be heard, and encouraging efficiency within the group. Creating a system that subverts traditional power structures can look different to everyone. Your group should discuss what system works best for you. Think creatively about how to make a system that values every member's contributions, especially survivors whose experiences are often marginalized or erased in existing power structures.

There are many factors to consider when creating a decision-making structure, such as the size of your group and the amount of time or energy that members are able to commit. **Some decision-making structures that have worked for activists are:**

- Holding elections for leadership positions with titles like President, Vice-President, or Director;
- Choosing a group of leaders with titles like Coordinator or Organizer;
- Forming a Board whose members share power and responsibilities ;
- Delineating roles like Treasurer, Wellness Coordinator, Peer Supporter;
- Selecting members to be in charge of certain actions, meetings, or duties.

Some groups elect positions for a semester or year-long basis, and others rotate duties. Having structures with elected positions often saves time in group meetings because position-holders oversee logistical needs and guide the direction of the campaign. Still some activists have found opportunities to upend traditional power structures with non-hierarchical groups in which all members share equal decision-making power and responsibilities year-round.

Build A General Body and Email List

You should build a general body of students who want to participate in or support your group's work, but who aren't ready to commit the hours that your core team will be putting in. General members and an email list will help you build your student power and those members can play valuable roles in your group: as community voices supporting your policy, extra bodies for direct actions, peer educators, and future leaders.

Here are a few ways to build and diversify your general body. The methods we focus on in this section emphasize in-person ways to communicate your vision and values, and make concrete asks of potential participants to get involved.

One-on-one meetings

Set up meetings with new volunteers and get to know them. Find out why they are motivated to make change and what they're willing to do. Plan social events for members so that the group can bond and get to know each other outside of meetings. This will help you move individuals up to higher levels of engagement and to build a cohesive, supportive team.

Petitioning

Petitioning is a good tactic early in a campaign, because it has a couple of different functions. Petitioning can demonstrate community support for your demands, help gather emails of supportive students who can participate in your actions, and give you facetime with lots of other students to explain the problems you've identified and the demands your group is making.

Know Your IX has a digital organizing software that's available to our student members. It can help you create petitions online, automatically send letters to your targeted decision-makers, and streamline social media sharing to get maximum exposure of your petition online. To use or learn more about this software, reach out to our team at info@knowyourIX.org.

Write a petition about your campaign demands (or pick one or two to really focus on) and start collecting signatures, both online and in person. When petitioning, make sure you're getting everyone's emails; these lists will come in handy at a later date to recruit more volunteers to work on the campaign.

Go to an area on your campus in pairs with a clipboard, and talk to everyone and anyone about your campaign. Open areas such as your student center, dining halls, and even high-traffic footpaths on-campus are good places to clipboard. See the next page for some **best practices and a sample rap for petitioning**.

CLIPBOARDING BEST PRACTICES

Be prepared. Write a rap (a quick pitch) that your team should use while petitioning. You should also write some more detailed talking points, so that you'll all be comfortable answering any questions about the campaign. Talking points should include some facts and figures about gender violence on campus, a summary of your campaign demand(s), and a personal pitch about why this matters to you.

Bring all the materials you need. Make sure to bring enough copies of the signature pages so that you won't run out. Bring copies of your petition in case people are interested in reading it. If you have them, bring stickers or buttons that people can wear to show their support for your campaign, and a few copies of articles about sexual assault on your campus or about student activists fighting back.

Set goals. Set specific goals for petition signatures for each shift.

Raise your profile. Talk about your group, what you hope to achieve, and what your group values.

Escalate your asks and get commitments. Once they've signed, ask if they'd be interested in getting involved in the campaign.

Always Remember:

- Ask everyone!
- Approach, make eye contact, wave and say "hello." Be enthusiastic!
- Tell them who you are and who is running the campaign.
- Ask questions and listen. Get them interested in the campaign.
- Before they leave, make sure that they have correctly filled out your petition.

SAMPLE CLIPBOARDING RAP

"Hey! Take a second to support survivors of sexual assault and dating violence on campus!"

If someone bites...

"Hi, I'm Jane and I'm a student organizer with [Your campus organization]. Would you be willing to sign our petition calling on Dean John to create a 24/7 Rape Crisis Center on Campus? 1 in 5 college women are sexually assaulted on campus and we need to make sure survivors have resources, counseling, and support.

"Awesome! Thanks for signing. If you're interested in getting involved with our campaign, check the box at the end of the row!"

Class/Student Group Raps

Another good way to get the word out about your campaign is to get in front of a classroom before class starts or to visit a student group and ask for their support. This is especially useful when you're trying to get people to come out for a big action or event. You'll talk about your issue for 2-4 minutes, then pass around one or more clipboards with your petition on it, and ask students for their support. For class raps, you should start with your own classes, and then move on to other classes. In larger classes, you'll need a few folks to help pass out and collect clipboards. For student groups, you should start with groups you are already involved with and then reach out to other groups.

Here are some best practices for doing class/group raps:

- **Be Strategic:** You want to make sure that the audience you are addressing has students in it who are likely to be interested in taking action on your issue (i.e. attend the demonstration, sign up as a volunteer, sign a petition). You may want to make class raps to ethnic/cultural studies, Africana studies, political science, sociology, women's studies, urban studies, public policy, etc. Think about ways in which instructors can make your campaign more enticing. Political science instructors will sometimes give students extra course credit for participating in activities that allow students to engage themselves in the nation's political process, such as letter-writing or phone-banking. For groups, reach out to groups working on issues related to gender-based violence, queer and student of color groups, progressive political groups, and other activist groups that share your values.
- **Get Permission:** You should ask professors and TAs if they are willing to allot a few minutes at the beginning of the class period for you to make your "rap" to the students. Instructors are usually pretty agreeable as long as you let them know ahead of time what you are addressing the class about. For groups, reach out to them in advance and ask if you can come to their next meeting.
- **Get Your Point Across Quickly:** You only have a few minutes to get your point across, unless your instructor or the group agrees to give you time to make a more in-depth presentation. Stick to the basic who, what, when, why, and how, and remember to appeal to the interests of the group of students that you are addressing. Introduce your organization, talk about gender violence on campus and how urgent it is, then provide a way that the people listening can help.
- **Get Contacts and Commitment:** Make sure that you end your rap by calling students to action. This may be getting students to commit to volunteering for the campaign or to attending an event. You should also send around a general interest form for students to sign if they want to get more involved. Writing your email on the board for interested students to follow up can be useful as well.

Canvassing/Dorm-storming

This involves going door-to-door in residence halls and student neighborhoods to talk to people about the campaign, and/or leave a flyer with information. This technique is labor-intensive, but can lead to deeper conversations and new potential recruits.

Phonebank

This is something you can do when you have a whole bunch of contacts from petitions and want to reach out to those people to get involved with your group, encourage them to attend a rally, or anything else. Phonebanks are the systematic calling-through of a list for a specific purpose. If you're having a Volunteer Kick-off Meeting, call through the people who checked "I Want to Get Involved" and invite them. If you're having a rally, call through everyone and ask them to attend. If you are setting up clipboarding shifts for next week, call through your existing volunteer list. Phonebanks need at least 3 people to be fun and are best served with pizza and beverages.

Volunteer Kickoff Meeting

Have a group meeting about the vision of your organization and the campaign for which you've been gathering petitions. Use this as an opportunity to orient and train new volunteers and get them committed to outreach shifts or to another project that matches their interests and skill levels. Free food helps to bring people out.

General members should be included in planning and decision-making, and should actively be provided opportunities to build important skills, grow as activists, and take on leadership with new initiatives.

Hold Weekly Meetings

Having weekly meetings will enable you to plan actions, organize your campaign, bring in new members, and keep up the momentum. You may want to hold core group meetings to discuss sensitive topics or confidential direct action plans separately from general meetings.

Plan agendas for each meeting that you can disseminate beforehand (but watch out not to put too much information about confidential plans in your agenda).

Remember to have someone take notes that will be made available to all members after the meeting. You may choose to list to-dos or action items in your notes to remind members of their responsibilities for the week.

Train Your Team

It's important to make sure your team has the skills and support necessary to be successful organizers, or help them learn and practice these skills over time. **For instance:**

- Ask members of your core team to read this toolkit! It will help to familiarize you and your co-organizers with the relevant laws, best practices, and organizing strategies.
- It is possible that your group will need some form of sensitivity education. Because gender violence is an intensely personal issue, your student group members will need to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of survivors in the group and in the larger community. If you think that it would benefit your team, consider contacting a local rape crisis center, advocacy group, or peer educators for basic sensitivity training.
- Compile contact information for on-campus sexual assault services, local rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, and places where survivors can seek pro-bono counseling and legal support, as well as resources on reporting options and any other important resources that survivors in your community may need. Everyone should familiarize themselves with how to access those resources: survivors may ask you for help and you'll want to have a comprehensive list of options on hand.

Know Your IX can help in others ways too! Email us to connect with student organizers and rad activists with whom you can work through tough questions or share strategies. Visit our website to sign up for our [IX Campus Action Network \(IX-CAN\)](#) in order to receive up-to-date information on the training and support we can provide.

- Every semester we host regional activist trainings—"IX Bootcamp"—for student organizers new and seasoned. These intensive, two-day, in-person workshops train students on everything from learning the law to planning direct actions, from talking to the media to building cross-movement coalitions. The workshops create space to collectively respond to challenges specific to each geographic region and to connect with other organizers on campuses near yours.
- We hold frequent online teach-ins, where you can tap into the latest information on federal laws and guidelines, successful organizing strategies at other schools, and national advocacy campaigns. These virtual teach-ins are announced via email to the IX-CAN listserv, so keep an eye out in your inbox.
- KYIX organizers also offer a number of campus-based, in-person workshops, which you can check out on our [website](#).

Creating Accountability

Mission, Values, and Community Agreement Statements

As a group, write a mission and values statement, as well as a set of community norms and safe space agreements. These documents articulate your group's purpose and the beliefs you share. Creating these together will help to form cohesive goals and shared principles that will make for a more respectful, caring, and productive activist space. These can be "living" documents, meaning that what you write down the first time does not have to be a set-in-stone. Members of your group can continually revise your statements, taking input from new members, and adding or changing parts of the documents as needed. Having these documents somewhere that is always accessible to everyone, whether it be in the room where you meet every week or online, is a great way to make sure the work you are doing as a team is guided by your shared goals and values.

Having a mission and values statement, community norms, or safer-space agreements can enable your group to create an environment that is welcoming and productive for everyone. And since these statements are created collectively, everyone has a stake in making sure that those agreements are kept: if someone says or does something which violates an expectation the group holds, remind the whole group of the community agreements and have a private conversation with the individual to discuss how their actions violated the agreements and make a plan for moving forward in a healthy way.

Creating Accountability to Community

Despite the best of intentions, activist spaces are not immune to violence and prejudice. Dealing with assault, racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other forms of violence can be a challenge. One of the best ways to face violence in activist spaces is to anticipate it.

You'll want to come up with: a) ways for members to communicate that harm was done in the activist space; and b) structures to deal with the harm in a healthy way. [Here are a few suggestions:](#)

- Create community expectations and agreements;
- Create a Google form to anonymously receive feedback about violence;
- Make space for people who have experienced harm to receive support and discuss;
- Designate two confidential support coordinators: these are people who can speak to the person harmed about what they need—and who work with the person who caused harm about how to do better, and if needed, leaving the group.

It is important to remember that in instances of violence, even unintentional violence, it is never the responsibility of the person who was harmed to educate another member. The burden to learn and grow

from an incident of violence is on the person who caused harm. Groups should anticipate that this may not always happen—which is why people (support coordinators, leadership, or others) should be designated *ahead of time* to assume responsibility for speaking with, educating, or setting up sanctions for an offending member.

Another way activists often deal with violence is by "**calling out**" or "**calling in**" a person who is being or saying something violent. Understanding "calling out" and "calling in", and knowing when to use them, can help you feel equipped to deal with violence.

Calling Out

We hear about "calling out" a lot more often than we hear about "calling in". It usually looks like an individual saying or doing something and another person publicly explaining why that action was offensive or hurtful.

Everyone at one time or another has said something out of ignorance. However, violent language/actions, even if they are mistakes, cause harm to others. Calling out is a way to educate someone, ask them to interrogate their prejudice or privilege, and challenge them to acknowledge how their actions or words harmed others. It is also a clear expression that what has been said or done was unacceptable in the community you are collectively trying to build. Because calling out takes place in public, the person is accountable to everyone in the group. Calling someone out in public also educates the other people present and can preempt similar harm.

Calling someone out does not have to come from a place of anger, but it is totally valid to feel angry when someone is being violent or abusive in your activist space. It's okay to express anger, pain, or another emotion when calling someone out. Along with those emotions, it can be useful to explain to the person why what they have done or said is hurtful. People often respond less defensively if they are called out in a way that does not insult them. You may try calling someone out using "I" statements. For example saying, "**When you said _____, I felt hurt because _____**".

Calling In

Unlike calling out, calling in is usually a conversation that takes place in private. Calling in is often used when you have an ongoing relationship with the person who has caused harm and you want to work with them so they can improve in the future.

Calling in usually requires more emotional labor and time on your part than calling out. It is most effective when you have a pre-existing relationship with the person who has harmed that is built on understanding and respect.

Calling in is not about giving someone a pass for being violent. However, it does give the other person an opportunity to learn and better themselves without feeling defensive or embarrassed from being called out

in public. Just like with calling out, most people respond better when they presented with an opportunity to learn about how their actions affected another person and to change their actions in the future. Again, it's okay to express emotions like anger. Try to keep in mind that when you're calling someone in, you're trying to help them grow so they can remain in your group and in your life.

Calling out and calling in are not necessarily opposites or mutually exclusive. Each method can be useful in different situations. Trust your instincts and try to be intentional about how and when you use them. Finally, remember that when it comes time to educate someone about how they've been harmful, do not put the burden on the person who has been harmed to "get over it" or to help the other person grow.

Creating Accountability to Shared Work

Activists frequently raise concerns about an unequal workload. Time considerations, other responsibilities, and burn-out often result in work being shouldered by a handful of people. So how do you hold fellow activists accountable for their share of work without making them feel ashamed or overwhelmed?

There are many ways you can create accountability for shared work while still respecting everyone's other responsibilities and need for self-care. [Here are a few ideas:](#)

- Collectively create realistic timelines and work assignments—ask for input from every member on what they can realistically contribute
- Create structures so someone can take over if a member needs to step back
- Build in time for group self-care or recreation (like a group outing or art-making)
- Create opportunities for different levels of commitment and engagement
- Ask a leader to speak with someone who has been unable to meet work expectations and make a plan for how they can share work in the future
- Assign work based on a member's strengths and interests

One method for evenly spreading out your workload is to task members with specific responsibilities.

[For example, you may designate positions for:](#)

- Social media / communications
- Peer support
- Secretary / historian
- Treasurer
- Representatives/liaisons to various other groups (partnerships coordinator)
- Logistics
- Wellness or self-care

You can usually anticipate a drop in commitment during mid-terms or finals. Sometimes planning your timeline around the busiest periods of the academic year can help you reduce burn-out.

It's also important to allow every member to feel that their contributions are important and valued. Most people will not want to commit time or effort if they feel their work is undervalued. Show appreciation for effort and dedication and give positive feedback to encourage everyone to feel empowered and motivated in the work.

Where To Start: Organizing By, With, and For Survivors

The Importance of Survivor-Centric Organizing

When organizing around gender-based violence on campus, it is crucial that your group centers the voices of survivors in your advocacy and demands. Historically, activist "allies" have sometimes ignored the needs and goals of people who have actually been directly impacted by gender violence and as a result, their policies and tactics have been inadequate or even counterproductive to survivors' needs. To prevent this, your group should include, receive feedback from, and ideally be led by survivors. If there are other survivor-led organizations on your campus, work in collaboration and consultation with them.

The point here isn't that you can't be part of the work if you're not a survivor—of course you can!—or that you should defer to a singular survivor's judgment on all matters (obviously, survivors, like any other category of people, aren't a monolith and don't all have the same opinions). Instead, remember that survivors' voices should be prioritized so that the changes for which you are working are directly informed by, and respond to, what survivors in your community say they need.



Creating a Community of Care

Working to end gender-based violence can be very emotionally draining, especially if you've been impacted by gender violence yourself. Within your group, try to balance accountability to your work with the very real needs of the individual members. Some members may only be willing or able to participate at a low commitment level, whereas others may be inclined to take on a larger portion of the work. It's important to create opportunities for people to get involved at different levels and to create ways for members to take a step back when necessary. Avoid pushing anyone to take on more work than what they feel capable of handling and be sure to encourage everyone (including yourself) to take care of themselves. This requires members to recognize different areas of strength and the community to understand how each piece is important.

Make clear from the beginning that clear and proactive communication is key for your group to function smoothly. It's okay for someone to take a step back because they have a week full of midterms or just need a break, but there should be an easy way to communicate this and notify the group so that other teammates have advanced notice to step in. Working in small groups instead of individually is another great way to evenly distribute responsibilities and can make it easier to keep up productivity if one member needs to step back. Establishing this early on will encourage people to communicate proactively in the future. This means that people will be able to take better care of themselves when they need it (rather than pushing themselves until they burn out and have to stop organizing)—without unfairly unloading the burden on others (who may be struggling with all the same issues themselves!).

A helpful way to address this in your group can be to create Wellness Coordinator and Peer Supporter roles. Wellness Coordinators can be responsible for organizing wellness events for your group (food at meetings, parties, and social time to hang out and not do campaign work) and for individually checking in with members of your group to see how they are doing on their projects. Peer Supporters are group members who make themselves available after meetings in case people need a person to talk to if they are triggered by the content of the meeting. If members of your group would like additional, more regular and ongoing support, consider creating a survivor-run peer support space that is separate from your activist space, where survivors in your group, or survivors who confide in you or contact you for help, can go for personal support.

Finally, avoid assuming whether someone is or isn't a survivor, or asking anyone to disclose that information. If survivors do share their stories with you, do not discuss their experiences in your work without their explicit permission.



Advancing an Inclusive Gender Justice Agenda

Conversations and work around gender-based violence have historically focused on the experiences of upper class, white, straight-presenting, and cisgender female survivors (think about what faces you see most in news articles about campus sexual assault). Ground your campaign in a recognition of the fact that people of all identities experience sexual and dating violence, and that these forms of violence disproportionately affect people who are of color, women, transgender, gender nonconforming, undocumented, disabled, and any combination of the above.

Make sure that your group, goals, and strategies reflect this recognition! This can look like a lot of things in practice: an environment that is welcoming to people of all ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, religions, and economic backgrounds; campaign demands that seek to address a diversity of needs; an aim to create policies that are inclusive and resources that are accessible; and combating harmful myths by giving thought to which individuals take up space within your group and which faces and stories are centered by your group when facing outward. We encourage you to actively reach out to and collaborate with identity-based groups on your campus such as LGBTQ and students of color organizations to ensure you're working with survivors across campus.

But don't just work together as partners on your campaign! Think holistically about how different forms of oppression intersect in survivor's lives: sexual violence operates in tandem with anti-Black racism, transphobia, imperialism, and other forms of violence to impact certain communities in insidious and complex ways. Develop a personal stake in fighting all forms of oppression: this means showing up for and supporting the important work that other student activists are doing to fight violence and oppression on your campus and in your community. Connect the dots between your anti-violence work and that of other groups, and make sure your group develops an organizational stake as well.

Lastly, make sure that these commitments to intersectionality go beyond the symbolic and transactional (i.e., "we'll show up at your rally if you show up at ours"). Showing up is a great first step, but a transformative movement will require your group to embrace intersectionality not just in understanding the scope of the problem, but in how you work toward solutions. For example, the Black Lives Matter movement and #SayHerName campaign have drawn national attention to the violence that Black people, and especially Black women, experience at the hands of the police. You could take this into account in a variety of ways: for instance, when planning actions (do you suspect police might be called to campus in response to a large protest you're planning?) or while developing your campaign demands around sexual violence response (have you made sure demands to improve campus adjudication systems do not require survivors to interact with the police, participate in, or otherwise bolster the reach of the criminal legal system?). It is our responsibility to make sure that our campaigns to end gender violence dismantle—rather than replicate—all other forms of oppression. None of us are free until we're all free.

INTERSECTIONAL ORGANIZING

In 1993, Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" in her seminal article "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." There she described how social justice and identity-centered organizing have routinely failed survivors of violence who embody more than one marginalized identity.

As an example, she used the anti-domestic violence movement in Los Angeles. This movement primarily championed the demands and requests of middle-class white women, whose demands differed greatly from women of color, due to the fact that they had not experienced racial violence. This movement demanded stronger police involvement in domestic violence cases, ignoring survivors of color who lived in communities already terrorized and brutalized by the police. They also demanded more shelters for victims of abuse, but these shelters were often inaccessible to women of color. In this example, the needs of white women survivors became normalized as the needs for all women.. While gains were made for some white survivors, these policies funded institutions at the root of violence against survivors of color.

If the goal of your campaign is to improve the lives of all people whose lives are affected by sexual violence, then be sure to include the experiences of all survivors in your demands. If those distinct harms are not recognized by your organization, you run the risk of excluding vulnerable people who are in most need of a change in university policy. Whenever possible, ensure that your team of organizers is diverse—in terms of gender, sexuality, race, class, ability, and citizenship, and other identities. Everyone on your team should have an equitable voice in the organizing process.

Equity and Inclusion looks like:

Intentionally including and prioritizing the experiences of those typically marginalized.

Creating guidelines in community spaces that address what happens when members of the community say or do something that perpetuates oppressive societal structures (make sure you consult those who would be affected to create equitable guidelines).

Recognizing the nuanced and distinct ways that different systems of oppression affect different people.

Earnestly supporting other activist groups.

Equity and Inclusion does not look like:

Tokenizing people with marginalized identities by not including them in the planning process.

Attempting to equate systems of oppression.

Only including others who fully agree with your team's demands.

Relying on those with marginalized identities to be spokespeople for, or educators on, their identity group(s).

Thinking Long Term

Whether you started a campaign on your campus or joined an already established one, every activist will face the inevitable challenges that come with graduation. Schools know that students will graduate, and many will try to stall meaningful change until leaders leave. That's why many schools see cycles of activism—bursts of action and energy every four or five years, and periods of silence in between. One of the most important responsibilities of an activist leader is to break that cycle and be sure that your movement will continue after you graduate.

To make your movement sustainable, it's essential to have strategies in place to handle turnover and retain institutional memory. Here are a few steps you can take to create a movement that continues to grow long after you and your fellow activists have graduated.

Planning Your Succession

If you can, **start planning your succession early**. This doesn't necessarily mean you have to pick one person to whom you will pass the torch right away. **You can start by:**

- **Creating a system to bring new people into your campaign.** You may choose to make your regular meetings open to all. You may promote your group at activity fairs or use social media to attract people. You may create a nomination system to bring in new activists. No matter how you choose to get more people involved, strive to include a diverse range of perspectives and class years.
- **Pairing new activists with more experienced ones.** Getting activists of different experience levels teamed up will allow newer and/or younger activists to learn first-hand how your group operates. Joining a campaign can often be intimidating for new people who don't yet know how they can contribute. With the mentorship of a more experienced activist, new members can receive the guidance they need and jump in!
- **Strategizing ways to bring new members up to speed.** Pairing new activists with more experienced members is one way to bring people into the fold. Your group may also want to find other creative ways to share knowledge and skill-build, like keeping an updated folder of minutes from past meetings or organizing skill-sharing sessions for new members.
- **Avoiding burnout.** After you graduate, it will be up to remaining members to continue your work with the same commitment and passion you had before you left. Take steps to minimize burnout before you graduate—it will enable your successors to keep up the amazing, innovative work after you leave. For tips on avoiding burnout, check out our toolkit on [“Dealing with Activist Burnout and Self-Care.”](#)

Of course, as you and your core group of leaders probably already know, activist work often does fall on a few shoulders. Beyond the structural work you can do within your group to ensure the work lives on, you

and your team will also need to identify a person (or a group of people) who will replace you as leaders. Some of these successors may already be apparent to you—these are often people who have more time left at your institution than you, but are already just as active, dedicated, and driven as you. When you think you have found your successor(s), try planning ahead to make the transition easier. **You can do this by:**

- **Having conversations with your potential successor(s) early on.** Make sure your successor(s) feels comfortable and ready to step in. If they don't feel ready yet, figure out together how you can help them get there. After all, leading a campaign is a choice only that individual can make for themselves. Avoid pressuring them into taking on the leadership role. Listen to them. Do they want this responsibility? Do they feel ready? Do they need something from you to prepare them? What are some of their concerns? What are they excited about? If they do want to be your successor, remind them that you have confidence in them and support them!
- **Beginning to make the transition before you graduate.** This can be difficult. You and your core team may be accustomed to leading and hesitant to start transitioning leadership while you are in the middle of your campaign, but the earlier you can start getting your successor used to leadership, the better. The change can be gradual. Start by sharing your responsibilities with your successor and slowly but surely, allowing them to find their footing as leaders in larger ways. Know when to step back and let your successor grow your campaign without you.
- **Supporting your group's work as an alum.** For more about what you can do as an alum, check out our [Alumni Toolkit](#).

Remember that picking up where you left off can be time-consuming and difficult. It is better for your successors to already be integral to your activism before you graduate.

Institutional Memory

Without institutional memory, future activists will have a hard time knowing what has and has not worked, making it harder to develop an effective strategy for the future. **To create institutional memory that will help maintain your movement's momentum, you might consider:**

- **Creating lasting records.** This can be done a number of ways. Your school's library probably maintains an archive. You may want to submit your work for the archives to keep, including copies of petitions, lists of demands, posters and works of activism-inspired art. You can also write articles, op-eds, or letters to the editor for a school newspaper, which will be archived. Chances are you are already using the internet to communicate your activism to a broad audience. Maintaining an updated record of your work online is a convenient medium for future activists to access past materials. Some have found other ways to document their work, such as connecting on-campus activism to their research on larger movements against sexual and intimate partner violence in a thesis. Get creative! Keep in mind that this is an opportunity for you to document all the innovative and influential work you and your fellow activists are doing and to tell your side

of the story. Remember: the institution will inevitably try to preserve its “side”, likely attempting to whitewash, dilute, or outright erase your narrative in the process.

- **Keeping detailed internal notes.** Someone should take careful notes at each meeting, so that future activists can see how goals emerged, strategies evolved, roles took shape, and the campaign progressed. Each major event or action should have a detailed action plan in writing. After each major event, you should have a debrief about what worked and what didn't, and collect that information somewhere that will be accessible to future activists. Keep running records of policy goals. Consider creating a Who's-Who map of the various decision makers your group works with, your historical and current relationship with them, and any information you know about their relation to the issue and their power on campus.
- **Contextualizing your own work within your institution's history of activism.** You may find that your predecessors laid the foundations upon which you are currently working to change your institution. If you can find records of the activism that came before you, you may learn a lot from people who came before you and avoid the pitfalls they encountered. Situating your work within this context will make your work and future activism stronger—and it can also be very rewarding to see the history of the movement you're now leading. Knowing your institution's past will allow you to recognize patterns, connect with alums who may want to support you, and find innovative ways to accomplish your goals.
- **Working with faculty and other allies.** Current student survivors are the experts on the challenges students face right now and the best solutions to address them. That said, you may find that faculty and staff who have been at your school for a long time will remember previous work and have institutional knowledge to share (and can pass your own on after you leave). Tenured faculty in particular can be powerful allies because of their knowledge of the ins and outs of your school's administration and their ability to influence key decision-makers.
- **Building long-lasting frameworks at your institution.** Your goals of raising awareness and seeking immediate justice are extremely important. Equally important are goals that will establish enduring systems at your school that will protect survivors in the future and institutionalize systems to address issues that arise in the years to come. Some goals may seem unattainable at first, like creating a stand-alone, fully-functioning on-campus rape crisis center. Activism may wane, but if you can accomplish goals like creating long-lasting support resources for survivors, improving reporting and adjudication processes, and instituting meaningful policy changes, your work could forever impact campus culture and the experiences of students at your school.

Succession planning and preserving institutional memory are two sides of the same coin, and you may find that steps to achieve one do a lot to achieve the other. Sharing your knowledge and work with future generations of activists will sustain the institutional memory of your movement. Whether it is planning your succession or trying to extend institutional memory, be sure to make a plan early and be intentional about building new leadership to continue the fight—and preserve an accurate narrative of it—after you're gone.

KYIX Bootcamp: NYC, November 2015



ORGANIZING YOUR CAMPUS: CAMPAIGN PLANNING 101

3. TAKING ACTION

I. Building a Team

- How to Build a Team
- Creating Accountability
- Organizing By, For, and With Survivors
- Intersectional Organizing
- Thinking Long Term

II. How to Plan a Campaign

- What Tactics to Use
- Examples: How to Plan Your Direct Action
- How to Work with Administration

III. How to Work the Media

- The Basics
- Telling Your Story
- Talking Points
- Sample Talking Points

What is Strategy?

Once your group has identified an objective or a set of demands, the next step is to plan your campaign strategy. Your strategy is how you turn the resources you have into the power you need to achieve the change you want.

Creating a campaign strategy is essential for a strong, sustainable campaign. Planning strategies carefully and revising them continuously as campus climate and group membership evolve can prevent setbacks often caused by a lack of a clear and cohesive vision, team fragmentation, or disorganized actions. A great strategic plan helps us understand how we are going to “win” something before we even start organizing our first event, and keeps us focused on achieving our goals effectively and collectively. Your strategic plan will have three essential components, the Three Ts: **Targets, Timeline, and Tactics.**

Target: Who has the power to make the changes you’re fighting for?

Timeline: When could these decisions be made? When are your target(s) most susceptible to pressure?

Tactics: What concrete actions are you going to use to put pressure on your target(s)?

How to Plan Your Strategy

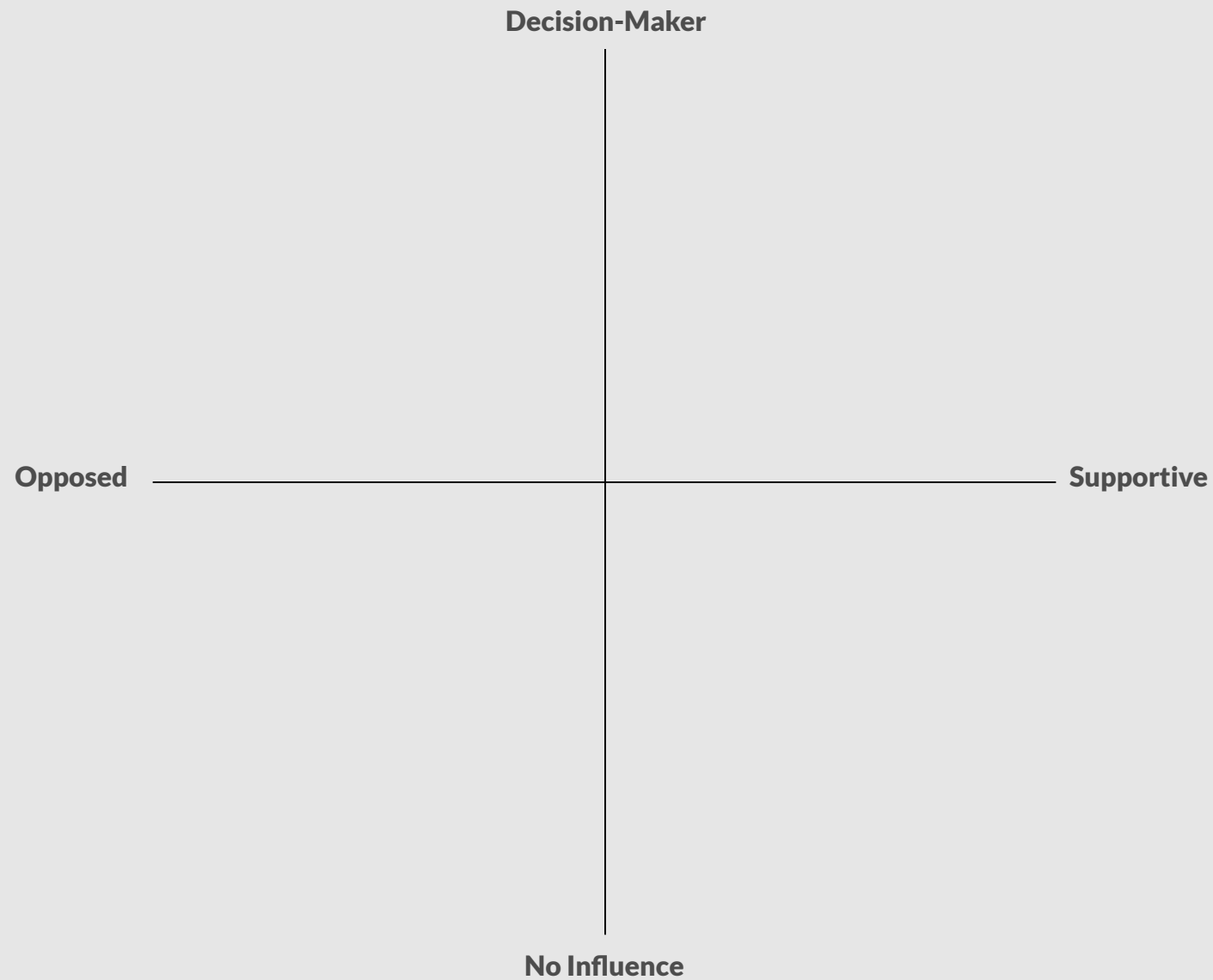
The first step in campaign planning is identifying your **Three Ts** using this strategy chart.

Targets

This column is a place to identify the people in positions of power who have the ability to enact the changes you are advocating for. A target is always a person, not a group, body, or institution. Do the **Power Mapping exercise** on the next page with your team with your team to help you get started. Power mapping will help us analyze our campus structure to identify key decision makers. Pressuring the wrong administrators is not a good use of your time, energy, or power. Find out who at your college has the power to make your particular demand(s) happen. Once you have identified these power-holders, research their stances and previous actions on gender-based violence issues. It will also be helpful to research past sexual and dating violence activism on your campus to learn what changes have been made before, and which administrators were involved in those processes. If you find that you are not able to work with these administrators, research other individuals or groups on campus that could help you pressure the key power-holders. Consider reaching out to alumni, prominent donors, and others who may support your cause.

Once you have mapped out the power dynamics on your campus, you can identify who your targets are. There are two types of targets: Primary Targets are people who can directly give you what you want; Secondary Targets are people who have power over your Primary Targets and who might be more easily

EXERCISE 1. POWER MAPPING



You can use this chart to map out the power-holders at your school. Follow these steps:

1. Identify your primary targets. Who has the power to make the changes you demand? Since the decision-makers have the most power, you will put them near the top.
2. Decide if each power-holder is more likely to be supportive or opposed to you and place them along the chart accordingly from left to right.
3. Identify your secondary targets. Who else has power in your community? Who can influence the primary targets you listed? Write them down and place them depending on how much power they have and if they would oppose or support you.
4. It can be helpful to draw lines connecting the targets so you know how the targets influence each other.

accessible than your Primary Targets. A smart campaign will work on pressuring both Primary and Secondary targets. If you are trying to get free emergency contraception for survivors at your campus health office, the Primary targets might be the Vice-President of Health Services and the President of the School, and the Secondaries might be your student government, Office of the General Counsel, or the Board of Trustees.

It's essential to spend time identifying the appropriate targets for each of your goals and direct actions. If you target the wrong people, you are unlikely to achieve your goals because the pressure you've applied is in the wrong place within your school's administration. Within a complex campus administration, it can often be challenging to figure out who actually has the power to make the decisions you want. Campus administrators who want to avoid addressing your concerns will often say, "Sorry, it's not my call!" and send you around in circles to others who make the same excuse. Is it the Office of General Counsel? Is it the deans, the president, the provost? Is it the trustees? Is it the Title IX coordinator? This will vary on different campuses, and is one reason that recording your group's institutional memory is so important. If you're having trouble identifying the decision-makers, you can also try asking older student activists or activist alums, talking with student government leaders who understand the behind-the-scenes decision making processes, or connecting with other student activists groups to see what they know about how these kinds of decisions are made.

Timeline

Making a timeline will help your team stay focused on your goals and avoid burn-out by achieving small wins along the way. To make a timeline, first break down your demands into short, medium, and long-term goals. The main focus of this section is the intermediate goals, which are the objectives you'll achieve through your specific campaign. These demands describe how your campaign will make concrete improvements in people's lives, give people a sense of their own power, and alter the relations of power in your community. The short term goals are things you can achieve leading up to and in support of your intermediate goals, like getting a meeting with the Board of Trustees or having student government pass a resolution in support of your demands. Your long term goal is the ultimate achievement that your organization could accomplish over a longer time period—the big picture change that motivates all of your work.

Next, lay these out in a timeline. It's helpful to consider the following questions:

- **When are decisions on this issue made?** For example, a Board of Trustees meeting, a Task Force report, or an annual policy review.
- **When are decision makers vulnerable?** Prospective students weekend, family weekend, during public speeches, and when being considered for an award, job, or other recognition are good examples of times when decision-makers might be more susceptible to pressure.
- **When can you get the most publicity?** The summer or winter vacations are tough times to get media attention.

- **When is your team the strongest?** Do you want younger leaders practicing leading big events before older leaders graduate? Do you want a complicated action right before finals?
- **When are other groups organizing big events on or off campus?** You don't want to compete with other student activist or social justice groups for media attention—the entire anti-violence movement is stronger when we plan and work together, and consider each other's timeline when shaping our own.

Tactics

Tactics are the actions, events, and activities that make up your campaign. They will often vary depending on the target: a tactic that works to influence a professor will look very different from one that works to pressure the head of Greek life. Flexible, resourceful, and creative tactics are great for attracting attention to your campaign and keeping your strategy fresh. For example, students at Columbia University turned a fine imposed on them for their protest into an opportunity for a [snarky direct action protesting the school president](#), while students at University of Kansas [created a mock recruitment video](#) to distribute to incoming and prospective students, in which they criticized the school's mishandling of rape cases. The tactics you select at various points during your campaign could be influenced by your size, energy, and resources, the strengths and styles of your current activists, the specific targets you're trying to influence, and other factors.

Tactics typically fall into one of three categories:

- **Base-Building tactics** help you build your list of supporters and bring new members on board with your organization. Examples include tabling at student activity fairs, class raps, or making a petition and collecting email addresses.
- **Educational tactics** help educate your base about the campaign, the issues on campus, and your goals. These might include teach-ins, poster campaigns, trainings, speak outs, blogs and storytelling platforms, and articles or op-eds.
- **Power tactics** are the actions your organization and allies undertake to pressure your targets to concede to your demands. Protests, event interruptions, marking or altering campus spaces, and petition deliveries are good examples of power tactics. A power tactic typically is never the first time your target is exposed to your demands; for example, you don't want to plan a huge protest blasting your target, the Dean, for not meeting your demands if it's the first time you're introducing the demands. Power tactics are what you do to win, but educational and base-building tactics are crucial to building a groundwork of awareness, community support, and organizational capacity.

Other examples of tactics include press conferences, media events, public hearings or forums, strikes, lawsuits or Title IX complaints, reports, and creative and performance pieces. Often, campaigns will begin

by base-building and work up to educational and power tactics, but a great campaign will continue to incorporate base-building and educational events throughout the process in order to maintain momentum. As the campaign escalates, your community and your targets should become more and more aware of the issue and your demands.

These components are the primary building blocks of your campaign. As you plan out your strategy, here are a few other factors you might want to consider:

Organizational Considerations

Think about your organization's capacity to run this campaign. **Resources We Have** is an inventory of the resources available for running this campaign, both materially as well as in terms of leaders, volunteers, and political connections. **How We Want To Build** focuses on how this campaign can help your organization expand these resources. Will you reach new potential supporters by collecting lots of emails? Will you raise more money? Will you strengthen the leadership experience of your existing team? **Internal Problems** is a place to reflect on what challenges you face within your group that could limit how you run this campaign. It's important to identify your strengths and limitations as an organization so that you can assess what your group is capable of and set practical and achievable goals for your campaign.

Allies, Opponents, Constituents

Assess the communities and organizations relevant to this campaign. **Constituents** is where you list what groups of people you want to empower through this campaign and join your group. **Allies** is where you list groups that might work alongside you, but will not join your organization. **Opponents** is where you list people who will work against your organization.

Let's Plan Your Strategy!

Remember, your strategic plan is a crucial step towards organizing a successful campaign, but it's not a static document. Your plan should change as your group grows, your campus climate shifts, events happen that influence your timeline, your skills increase or your resources expand, or your goals change. The best strategies are constantly adapting as organizers learn and change direction.

Check out this chart for an example—and work with your team to fill one out for yourselves!

SAMPLE STRATEGY CHART

TARGETS	Primary: Dean of Students, Vice President of Student Affairs/ Student Life, Board of Trustees, President of University, whomever is responsible for implementing gender-based violence policy.	Secondary: SGA, Faculty Senate, Donors, Board of Trustees
	September: Work with other groups to find issues and write inclusive demands; recruitment during New Students events	
TIMELINE	November-December: Escalate to power tactics; large demonstration during Homecoming weekend and alumni events (11/24).	
	October: Basebuilding - Create petition on Action Network with KYIX, escalate to educational tactics	December 20: Board of Trustees meeting
	Short-Term Goals: - SGA resolution endorsing our demand for a Rape Crisis center on campus - Win a Meeting between target and survivors - Get Admin to come answer questions at a public forum.	Intermediate-Term Goals: - Administration adoption and implementation of our policy goals
Long-Term Goals: - Eliminate rape culture and continue to advance pro-survivor policies		
TACTICS	Basebuilding: - Create petition on Action Network with KYIX circulated through clipboarding, class raps, and dormstorming - Volunteer Recruitment Meetings - One-on-ones with potential recruits - Recruit from rallies and educational events.	Educational: - Teach-ins - Bringing speakers to campus from Know Your IX - Write an op/ed for the school paper - Survivor speak out - Educational Flyering - Having literature to hand out about your demands
	Power: - Weekly Petition Deliveries to Admin Target - SGA Resolution - Big Rally and Mattress Delivery to Admin - Sit-ins & Occupations (Highly Escalated Civil Disobedience)	

ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	Resources We Have: - This Toolkit - # of Core Leaders in your group - # of Members in Our Group - Supplies (clipboards, posters, etc.), - Equipment (printer, meeting space, buttonmaker, etc.) - Your organization's budget - Consultation and support from KYIX and the national movement - Existing relationships with other organizations and activists	How We Want to Build: - # of New Leaders to be Developed - # of New Members to recruit - Amount of money to be fundraised - New equipment/supplies donated - New relationships with other organizations you want to build.	Internal Problems: - Lack of money - Lack of members/volunteers, - Interpersonal issues within your organization - Cycle of graduation and training younger members - Ideological/tactical disagreements within your organization (e.g., education/awareness versus direct action and protest).
	ALLIES, OPPONENTS, & CONSTITUENTS	Constituents: - Students	Allies: - Campus Groups and Students Organizations (Campus Women's Center, LGBT Campus Center, Rape Crisis Center, Association of Black Students, and others) - Community Organizations (Know Your IX, SAFER, rape crisis center) - Women & Gender Studies Faculty

EXERCISE 2. CAMPUS STRATEGY CHART

TARGETS	Primary:		Secondary:	
TIMELINE	Short-Term Goals:		Intermediate-Term Goals:	
	Long-Term Goals:		Long-Term Goals:	
TACTICS	Basebuilding:		Educational:	
	Power:		Power:	

ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	Resources We Have:		How We Want to Build:		Internal Problems:	
	Constituents:		Allies:		Opponents:	

CAMPAIGN TACTICS AND DIRECT ACTIONS

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Organizing on Your Campus: Tactics and Escalation

As an activist, getting your campaign into the view of administrators, the media, and the wider student body is an important task. You may have heard about organizers on other campuses making headlines or bringing about change with rallies, disruptions, and petitions. Diversifying and escalating your tactics help pressure your targets into action. Here are some tools to help find the best strategy for your campaign.

Direct Actions and Escalation

Direct actions are used to publicly expose existing problems on your campus, call out and pressure administrators for their inaction or wrongdoing, and rally community support. Holding protests and large rallies, delivering petition signatures, interrupting prospective student admissions sessions, and other similar direct actions are essential to build power and support behind the movement on your campus. Administrators may try to divert your group's energy into closed-door meetings and task forces or advisory boards with no decision-making power. This will stall your movement and drain the support and energy you could gain from your student community. Therefore, it's essential to use direct action tactics to publicly pressure your target administrators, expose the prevalence of gender-based violence on your campus and the urgent need for change, and rally community support.

The direct actions that other schools hold may or may not be the best for your campus. As students at your school, you know what works best for your community. Since your campaign is part of a much larger movement nationwide, you have many allies who can help you plan direct actions. Hear about a powerful direct action on another campus? Try to get in touch with the organizers to get ideas on how you can plan your own. You can also reach out to Know Your IX organizers or other organizers in your region online, through conferences, or in other ways. There are many opportunities for you to be inspired and for you to inspire others!

Inside/Outside

A productive strategy to use can be the **inside/outside double approach**. While direct action is critical to increasing visibility and public pressure on the administration, it's often *critical* to have a team working *with* the administration on envisioning new policies and directions.

For the inside/outside tactic, it is best to have two teams—who will certainly coordinate with each other behind the scenes, but do not appear in the same administrator meetings and protests. This is not to say that the goals of these two teams should be different—on the contrary, they must align—but rather that they will come at the issue with different approaches. It's hard to do one well without the other. Administrators are often less likely to cooperate fully with the people who are protesting, talking to journalists, and increasing

public pressure. Therefore, having a team who is proposing the same ideas in formal meetings can be the best way to get your demands across. Administrators are still hearing these demands from students, but they are presented to them as the best way to tackle the increasing public pressure from the protests going on outside. With this inside/outside approach, it is crucial to maintain communication of progress between both teams to ensure that both are always working towards the same goals effectively.

When deciding which members of your team should be inside or outside, play to team members' strengths. For outside actions, look for people in your group who are ready to lead direct actions with confidence, speak to the media in a compelling and self-assured way, bring energy to an action, and potentially risk getting in trouble or dealing with public attention. For the inside tactic, you need a team of people who are good negotiators and will stand firm, but show they are willing to work with those in power. You'll also need someone who can take fast, accurate notes. The inside team should be ready to back one another up. They should be well-prepared with knowledge of your demands and best practices so they can avoid being given the run-around by administrators.

Note: Be careful not to use recording devices in closed-door meetings with administrators unless you have all parties' consent, as this is illegal in some states. Check the laws in your state and plan accordingly. In every meeting, keep accurate and detailed notes to help future organizers plan effective strategies.

Escalating your tactics

You may find that although you have garnered many signatures on your petition, facilitated meetings, and created awareness-raising campaigns, survivors' experiences on campus are not improving. Whatever your reason, escalating the intensity of your tactics in targeted, intentional ways is essential for pushing change forward. Remember that escalation does not have to be a last resort: escalation in various stages of a movement can be extremely beneficial. Plotting out ways to gradually raise the stakes every step of the way will help your campaign become a powerful movement.

When considering stepping up your strategy, decide if you want to keep your plans secret or if you want to warn power-holders that continued inaction or hostility will result in escalation. Sometimes, the element of surprise can work to your advantage and allow you to create actions that administrations or others would have otherwise tried to prevent. Other times, administrators think they can simply ignore you and wait until your movement dies out. Using escalation will send the strong message that your movement is not going away and actually, further inaction on the power-holders' part will make their jobs harder.

When planning escalation:

- Escalate in ways that target **reputation** and **money**. Administrators' main priorities are usually protecting the reputation of your school and looking after the bottom line. The two are often intertwined so use them to create incentives for your school to do better.

- **Targeting your school's reputation** means making sure everyone knows your school is failing to protect its students. Sometimes, alums, parents, donors, faculty, and the general public will be shocked to hear of your school's failings. Getting them involved will add some much-needed pressure. It also means pushing back against the common excuse that all universities are mishandling sexual violence and that your school is different from any other. Pressure administrators to make your school a leader in this movement and to stand out as a good example. (Some common ground you as students may share with administrators is your mutual concern for your community; you may find administrators are more willing to listen if you remind them you are all working toward the common goal of improving your school.)
- **When targeting cash flow**, keep in mind that many schools get a lot of money from tuition, donations, and federal funding. You can pressure them to act by warning them that inaction or hostility may result in problems with enrollment and fewer donations (especially from alums and parents), and that not complying with Title IX could result in a loss of federal funding. Remind them that mistreating survivors could be financially costly to them. Some ways you might accomplish this are starting a campaign in which seniors pledge not to donate money to the school after graduation unless [insert your demand] is done to prevent sexual violence and support survivors, writing a sample letter to administrators that alums, parents, and donors can sign and send to your administration, or filing a Title IX complaint. It is also a good idea to aim campaigns at power-holders specifically involved in things like your school's endowment and budget concerns, like the chair of the Board of Trustees.
- **Escalate on one specific priority issue at a time.** Escalation can bring an enormous amount of attention and power to your goal. To streamline and capitalize on this surge in power, focus the attention on one goal and remember that achieving that goal should open the door to achieving others.
- **Have a target audience.** Escalation often involves garnering publicity and mass support around an issue. Just as your overall strategy targets power-holders and main groups, focus your attention on those who have the most influence over whether or not your goal is achieved, like the president of your university, a dean, or the Board of Trustees.
- **Have a timeline.** Create a series of dates and "if this happens, then this we'll do this" plans. Escalation often occurs when a deadline you have set has passed and you need a change of strategy. Give your administrators deadlines as well. For example, if you are publicizing a petition, provide a deadline by which you expect the administration to sign on. This increases public pressure by placing administrators' reputations at stake.

Plan the best way to escalate on your campus. Be creative! Escalation can mean many things so have your team identify which sorts of escalation tactics fit your goals.

DIRECT ACTION EXAMPLE A: SILENT PROTEST

Type of Escalation: A silent protest at a large public ceremony marking the opening of a new art installation on campus. Protesters made signs and wore teal or rainbow tape over their mouths and stood in front of the audience while the president of the university made a speech.

When: The ceremony was planned for September, close enough to the start of the semester so that our direct action could cause momentum for the rest of the academic year. Activists chose the ceremony because we knew everyone in the community was invited to this event and many students, alums, faculty and staff members, parents, donors, and members of the press would attend. Specifically, we knew the president of the university would be making a speech.

Goal: We wanted to publicly pressure the president to finally acknowledge the prevalence of sexual violence on our campus and pledge in front of the community that he would personally work with students to properly address these problems. We also wanted to generate greater awareness of sexual violence and our university's institutional denial.

Who: A small group of survivors and activists came up with the plan, created a secret Facebook event, and invited activists and allies to participate. Over fifty students participated in the disruption.

Reasons: We understood that the president's continued silence and denial of sexual violence contributed significantly to the pervasive idea that our school was a place free of rape culture and sexual violence. These beliefs invalidated survivors' experiences, making it difficult for them to receive help from the institution. It also painted a picture of the university as having an already perfect system of resources and adjudication processes. This made it difficult to get support for the proposals we had published in a petition. We wanted the president to be accountable and to put sexual violence at our university into the spotlight. We knew a public disruption of the event might make us unpopular but also felt it would grab the attention of many key stakeholders, including administrators, alums, donors, and the press.

Actions leading up the event: Student activists and survivors had long felt that the president's silence on the issues of sexual violence enabled the institutional denial of systemic and cultural problems. Activists had used opportunities both in public and private to challenge the president's apparent belief that sexual violence was not an issue. An activist group addressed their petition specifically to the president, delivered the petition directly to his office, and repeatedly called upon him to respond publicly by a specific deadline. Instead, other administrators repeatedly spoke to students in place of the president and the deadline passed. On multiple occasions, students asked for the president to meet with students or make a public statement about the issues of sexual violence with no response.

Result: Put in an awkward position, the president had no choice but to start his speech acknowledging the protest and making a statement about the issues of sexual violence facing the community. After that event,

it was clear that the protest had gained the attention of donors, who were shocked at the way students had been ignored, the press, the Board of Trustees, and the administration. Even though the president was not proactive after the event, he did agree to meet with certain survivors in closed-door meetings. More importantly, the attention the disruption garnered gave activists and survivors the platform to speak about their experiences and demands, and gained them important support from stakeholders and the public. Many students, donors, alums, and members of the press spoke with activists after the event, prompting a more engaged movement to end sexual violence on our campus.

Here's a brief list of ideas for escalation:

- A public protest, demonstration, sit-in, or occupation
- A well-publicized media campaign on social media or in the press
- An art project or performance art piece
- A banner drop
- A strike by student workers or other university employees
- A mass walk out of classes or exams
- Starting a mass email/call campaign with alumni, parents, donors, and others
- Passing a student government resolution
- Filing a Title IX complaint or lawsuit

Passing A Student Government Resolution

Your escalation can include tactics besides public protests. Passing a student government resolution is a great way to increase awareness, educate your student government on the importance of your demands, and gain support for your campaign on campus.

Resolutions typically must be sponsored and introduced by an elected member of student government, so you may need to gain support from someone in this position if you do not have it already.

Student government resolutions can quantify the scale of student support to your targets; you can now say to your targets that your movement has the support of the thousands of students that make up your campus and your campus' student leadership. This representation can be especially strong if your target is an elected official who may be interested in number of votes, but similarly powerful if your target is a college administrator.

Having your student government endorse your demands officially can also create legitimacy that you can tap into throughout your campaign. Through an official endorsement, there is also the potential for your student government to commit to putting in work to support the campaign itself or provide resources, both of which can be useful.

Small-Scale Direct Actions

Sometimes the most effective direct actions are small and unexpected. Organize groups of activists to arrive at events where prospective students or alumni will be gathered, or at which your main power-holders will be speaking to a large audience or the media. Depending on the nature of the event, you can organize pointed questions to ask during Q&A sessions, hold signs with powerful messaging, or interrupt with chants and statements on a megaphone. Keep in mind that because these types of protests can be extremely effective, they can cause backlash. Create contingency plans ahead of time with your group on how to respond to campus police or other administrators who may try to shut down your action. Consider any rules your school has in place surrounding student protests and any related disciplinary sanctions. Have members of your group identify ahead of time if they are comfortable with violating campus rules and risking retaliation by the school; this is a personal decision, and some organizers may prefer to stay behind the scenes. When planning any action, think about how the particular action will affect your campaign's image, messaging, and relationships with targets.

Action secrecy

When planning actions, it's important to not share too much information with people outside of the core members of your group. If your administration gets word of your action in advance, they will likely try to prevent it from happening. For general meetings and events, it's important to be inclusive and keep the general community in the loop. Still, consider how you'll avoid having too much of your strategy making its way to people who may oppose your movement. It is a good idea to communicate via non-school email addresses, since some schools monitor school email addresses. Discuss with your group in advance what information should and should not be shared with the general community and establish a protocol for how information will be shared internally.

Organizing on Your Campus: Plan Your Direct Action

A direct action can be a powerful tool to reveal injustice and demand change. Direct actions can take many forms and require several people with different strengths. Everyone comes to the movement with personal experiences, skills, and abilities. Below are just a few examples of potential actions and roles. Find what works best for your campus and consider the different degrees of responsibility and risk.

DIRECT ACTION EXAMPLE B: PETITION

Incendiary Event: A student decided to go public with a press conference about their experiences with sexual assault on campus and the university's subsequent failure to adequately try to hold responsible their assailant. This created a lot of momentum and emotion on campus, with many students shocked by this singular case. This was not enough to spur change however, and preliminary efforts were unorganized and therefore less effective.

First Steps & Approach: A general interest meeting was held to share experiences and grievances and discuss university policies and skill sets. Students decided to adopt an inside/outside approach: an existing group that had been working with the administration on policy change would continue to do so in formal meetings, while another team would create pressure through direct action campaigns. Before every action, organizers made sure to communicate with the student who initially brought forward their complaint to make sure they were still comfortable sharing their name. The direct action team planned a protest during a tour for prospective students and parents. Administrators agreed to meet with the group of students who they already knew to discuss policies put forth by protesting students.

Outreach: Students created a listserv of initial attendees at the general interest meeting and used targeted outreach to connect with a diverse range of campus groups, including graduate students, undergraduate students, LGBTQIA+ groups, and the Center for Students of Color. Students used non-school emails for communication to make sure all conversations and plans remained confidential.

Petition: In coordination with students from the above-mentioned groups, the direct action team put together a petition, listing demands from the University. It was publicized on social media, as well as on targeted listservs (such as to alums and parents). Since these interest groups could threaten to withhold donations, the petition proved to be a successful tactic. The petition included a deadline by which relevant university administrators (the Dean of Student Life and the President) had to sign on, indicating their commitment to addressing these issues and providing a date by which they would propose initial solutions. Administrators signed on by the deadline and established a Committee to propose more concrete solutions.

PLAN YOUR DIRECT ACTION: STEP-BY-STEP GUIDES

HOW TO PLAN A LETTER OR PETITION DELIVERY

What you need:

- A letter with a concrete demand for the target—have at least 2 copies with you. Check out the [sample letter in the Resources section](#).
- Photocopies of your petitions collected thus far
- Optional: Signs to hold during the action
- A group of 5 or more people
- 30-60 minutes

Roles:

- **Spokesperson:** Reads the statement you've prepared
- **Photographer:** Takes photo and video at the action. Pictures are crucial to engaging the broader campus community at large, sharing with press, and having something to show from your actions.
- **Social media:** Tweets/posts about action during and afterward using the photos/video taken at action.
- **Press Liaison:** Notifies press of the action in advance, invites reporters to attend action, and follows up with press afterward to coordinate interviews.
- **Security Liaison:** Handles and stalls campus security if they try to shut down your action.

Prior to the action:

- Recruit participants, create an action plan, and decide on roles.
- Create all the materials you need: Check out the [sample letter to administration](#) and adapt it to address concerns specific to your campus. Create signs to hold at the action—try to make the messages on your signs very short and powerful!
- Practice: Run through what you will say a few times. Speak with emotion, clearly and loudly.
- Scout the location: Find out the location of your target administrator's office. Discreetly visit the location prior to the action to familiarize yourself with the space and think through logistics: how and where will you enter and exit, where will you stand once inside, how many people will you need to bring to make an impact, etc.
- Contact media: Find out how to leverage media for small actions in the [Media section](#).

Agenda for the action:

- Arrive in advance at a location near the target's office. Give yourself at least 15 mins to make sure everyone has time to arrive and get organized for the action.
- Go to the office and when you arrive, have the spokesperson tell the receptionist or target's assistant that you want to speak with the target.
- If you are allowed to speak with the target directly (this is unlikely!), the spokesperson should tell them that you're there to deliver a letter, give them a copy of the letter, and then read the letter aloud to them. Once you've read the letter, ask the target directly: "Will you do X?" (This could be agree to a meeting, make a specific change, etc.) If the target says no or doesn't directly answer the question, go back and forth with them until it's clear you aren't getting anywhere. At the point, the spokesperson should wrap up the meeting.
- If you are not allowed to speak with the target directly, the spokesperson should read the letter aloud in the office area that you are able to enter, give a copy of the letter to the office assistant, and ask them to pass it along to the target.
- Exit the office and regroup outside.

After the action:

- Immediately afterwards, keep everyone together for a quick debrief about how everyone thought the event went, and remind everyone of next steps. Keep the energy high—you just took a step forwards in your campaign! If you have press at the action, this is a good time to answer any questions they have.
- Email the letter to the target to make sure they formally receive your letter.
- Publicize your action! Upload the photos/video you took and share them on social media. Follow up with reporters if you contacted them in advance and share the images with them. If you are just contacting reporters after the action, send them your media advisory, letter, and photos/video.
- Have your Press Liaison handle any press requests following the action. It's likely that reporters will want to interview members of your group for direct quotes to include in their articles.
- Hold a planning meeting to absorb the new people from the event and move forward on your escalation plan.
- Hold letter delivery actions weekly to build new leaders! You can do letter deliveries to whichever administrators have power to make the changes you want. Consider rotating which targets you deliver letters to each week, and make sure to edit your letter to reflect the specific power each target has to make change.

HOW TO PLAN AN ADMISSIONS INFORMATION SESSION ACTION

What you need:

- A letter to hand out to prospective students and families. [See a sample](#) in the Resources Section.
- A statement to read during the action. [See a sample](#) in the Resources Section.
- Signs to hold during action
- A group of 5-10 people
- 30-60 minutes

Roles:

- **Spokesperson:** Reads the statement you've prepared
- **Photographer:** Takes photo and video at the action. Pictures are crucial to engaging the broader campus community at large, sharing with press, and having something to show from your actions.
- **Flyer Distributors:** Hand out flyers to prospective students and families during action.
- **Sign holders:** Stand with spokesperson and hold signs during action.
- **Social media:** Tweets/posts about action afterward using the photos/video taken at action.
- **Press Liaison:** Notifies press of the action in advance, invites reporters to attend action, and follows up with press afterwards to coordinate interviews.
- **Security Liaison:** Handles and stalls campus security if they try to shut down your action.

Prior to the action:

- Recruit participants, create an action plan, and decide on roles. Find out which of your members are available to take part in the action and create a plan and roles based on the ones detailed here.
- Create all the materials you need: check out the [sample admissions action letter and action statement](#) in the Resources Section and adapt them to address concerns specific to your campus. Create signs to hold at the action—try to make the messages on your signs short and powerful!
- Practice: it helps to run through what you will say a few times in advance. Practice speaking (and practice speaking loudly if you will not have a megaphone).
- Scout the location: Find out where and when admissions sessions happen, and confirm the location and time for the day you plan to hold the action. Discreetly visit the location prior to the action to familiarize yourself with the space and think through logistics: where will you wait outside

to be able to see when the session starts, how and where will you enter and exit, where will you stand once inside, how many people will you need to bring to make an impact, etc.

- Contact media.

Agenda for the action:

- Be discreet and arrive well in advance of the start time of the admissions session. Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes in advance.
- Once the prospective students and families have entered the room where the session is taking place, wait 5-10 minutes to make sure they have time to be seated.
- Enter the space. Be loud to take control of the space! Entering while yelling a chant is an effective way to do this. If you are worried that college officials may try to shut the doors on you, link arms when you all are entering to prevent this.
- Start passing out flyers immediately (this can happen while you are still chanting). You'll want to have enough people to hand out flyers to be able to reach everyone in the admissions session in only a few minutes. Getting your flyers handed out quickly is important in case campus safety attempts to shut your action down.
- Have the spokesperson read the your statement. Be loud and passionate! People holding signs can stand with your spokesperson while everyone else hands out flyers.
- Exit the space. Once you're done reading your statement, march out of the session together while chanting again.

After the action:

- Immediately afterwards, keep everyone together for a quick debrief about how everyone thought the event went, and remind everyone of next steps. Keep the energy high—you just took a step towards your campaign! If you have press at the action, this is a good time to answer any questions they have.
- Publicize your action! Upload the photos/video you took and share them on social media. Follow up with reporters if you contacted them in advance and share the images with them. If you are just contacting reporters after the action, send them your media advisory, statement, letter, and photos/video.
- Have your Press Liaison handle any press requests following the action. It's likely that reporters will want to interview members of your group for direct quotes to include in their articles.

Additional things to consider:

- The possibility of having your action interrupted or shut down: admissions officials or campus safety officers may try to stop your action. Think through how you will handle this situation and create a backup plan. If college officials threaten you with disciplinary action, forced removal, or anything else during the action, have your spokesperson tell your audience this.

HOW TO PLAN A RALLY

What you need:

- A group of at least 30 people
- Materials to make signs with slogans (“Support Survivors,” “End Rape Culture,” “[YOUR SCHOOL] protects rapists!” “Fuck your fake concern,” “Rape Happens Here,” etc. Be clever and make them concise and powerful!)
- Handouts with information about the Survivor’s Bill of Rights, specific demands, and resources available for survivors on your campus
- Press packets
- Clipboards with petitions and pens
- One or more mattresses and sheets (optional if choosing to use this symbol)
- Megaphone or other sound amplification device
- Printed list of speakers
- Printed statements of all speeches
- 90 minutes

Roles:

- **Facilitator:** MC of the event, ensures smooth stream of speakers.
- **Speakers:** All of the people who will be speaking at your rally.
- **Speaker supporter(s):** Organizes speakers at the rally, helps manage stress and anxiety, and is available to support speakers after they speak at the rally.
- **Press Liaison:** Distributes press packets at the action and helps connect reporters with students to interview.

- **Photographer:** Takes photo and video at the action. Pictures are crucial to engaging the broader campus community at large, sharing with press, and having something to show from your actions.
- **Logistics/Optics:** Makes sure people are in the right place at the right time, have all the materials and supplies they need, and that your rally is visually powerful.
- **Social Media:** Tweets/Facebooks about the action while it is happening with commentary, quotes, and photos.
- **Security liaison:** Handles police or campus security so everyone else can focus on the rally.
- **Peer supporters:** If your campus has student peer supporters who are trained to support survivors, make sure to have them at your action and let folks know where they will be throughout the event. If you do not have trained peer supporters available, have a few people from your group who are comfortable doing this take on this role for the action.
- **Chant Leaders:** These people lead the chants and should be confident, loud and have good rhythm!
- **Clipboarders:** Make sure 2+ people are walking around with the petition to get signatures.
- **Sign/mattress holders:** Have people who are holding signs or standing with the mattresses next to or behind where speakers will be standing (optional).

Prior to the rally

- Recruit participants, create an action plan, and decide on roles: Find out which of your members are available to take part in the action and create a plan and roles based on the ones detailed here.
- Publicize your event! Make a Facebook event and share on social media. Contact other student groups on your campus and ask them to publicize the event to their members.
- Create all the materials you need: You can put messages on your mattresses with tape or cover them with a sheet and write your demands or other messages on them. Create signs to hold at the action—try to make the messages on your signs very short and powerful!
- Scout locations and reserve space for your rally on a prominent area on your campus. Consider all of the locations you want to include in your event: where will you march from to get to the rally, where will the rally happen, and—if you are delivering demands to a specific target—where their office is located. Think through all of the routes people will need to take to get from one location to the next and consider the easiest, quickest, and/or most symbolic routes to use.
- Create your speaker list and help speakers write statements to read at the rally. Try to limit everyone’s speech to 2-5 minutes each. If you are having a speak out, consider putting out an open call for speakers in advance or let folks know that there will be time for anyone to speak at the action. If you are having a set amount of speakers, think critically about the order in which they will speak—consider what type of stories and information different speakers will be sharing.

WORKING WITH ADMINISTRATORS

3. TAKING ACTION

I. Building a Team

- How to Build a Team
- Creating Accountability
- Organizing By, For, and With Survivors
- Intersectional Organizing
- Thinking Long Term

II. How to Plan a Campaign

- What Tactics to Use
- Examples: How to Plan Your Direct Action
- How to Work with Administration**

III. How to Work the Media

- The Basics
- Telling Your Story
- Talking Points
- Sample Talking Points

How to Work with Administration

There will come a time in your campaign when campus administrators will accept your demand for a meeting, or proactively attempt to meet with you. Many campaigns have been derailed by administrators channeling 100-person rallies into five-person meetings, and using power derived from their position to prevent students from negotiating effectively in those meetings. Getting a seat at the table does not mean it's time to stop protesting or speaking out: that's probably what got you to the table in the first place! Instead, it's time to observe the administrators carefully, understand their priorities, and think carefully about if and how you and your team will work with them.

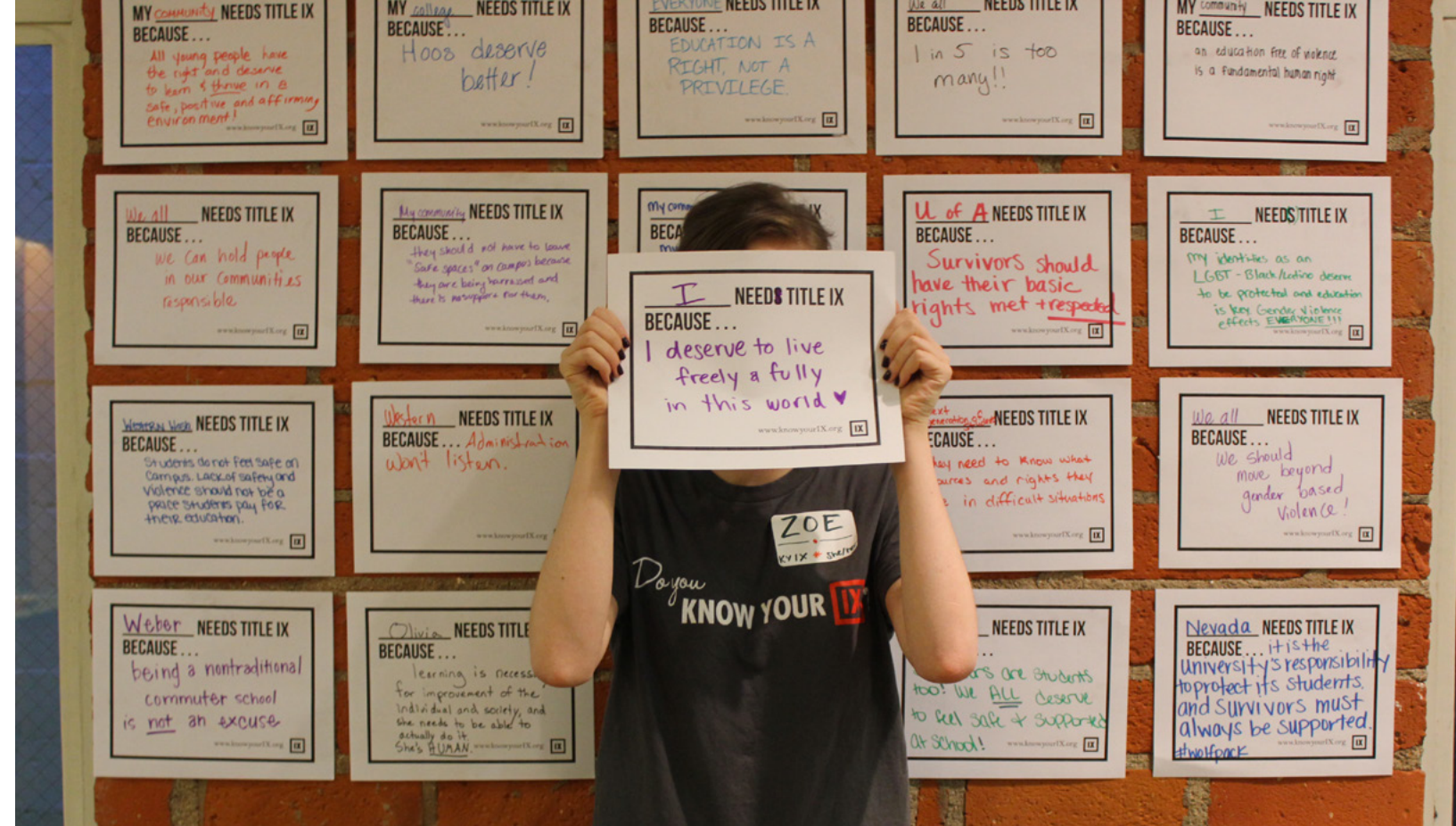
You might find yourself wondering why your target(s) are ignoring you, reacting so harshly, being nice to you, etc. So why are they acting the way they're acting? Like you and members of your student organizations, campus administrators also operate on self-interest. Although campus administrators individually and personally may have a wide variety of motivating forces, as a profession, **administrators of institutions are often motivated by a common set of interests:**

- **Protect the university's bottom line:** despite rampant administrative bloat (the number of administrators on college campuses has doubled in the past 25 years), many universities are finding themselves more cash strapped than ever before. Fundraising has become very important.
- **Protect the reputation of the university:** damaging the reputation of the university can affect enrollment of new students, alumni donations, and the university's relationship to other organizations.
- **Protect the university from liability:** universities do not want to be sued because it is expensive and damaging to the university's reputation.
- **Protect their own careers:** high-ranking administrators hop from one university to the next. They get promoted when their tenure increases the university's budget, the college goes up in the rankings, and they are able to keep the campus calm. Sometimes, administrators even receive bonuses for "good performance."

For these reasons, campus administrators will do anything to make your group "go away" quietly and stop protesting. They'll often make you feel insecure in your own power as a student or a group and create self-doubt. If you ever think that you should just take whatever they're offering, or stop protesting because you don't want to upset your administration, just remember: they have to deal with you. It's their job! They can't turn you away if you keep escalating (as long as you don't turn the public against yourself). Gender violence is too prevalent on our campuses for us to just go away. We have to do our best to avoid being played by administrators.

Here are some common behaviors of campus administrators, and how to react:

Administrator Moves	Countermeasures
Ignore, refuse, or delay in responding to your request to meet.	Escalate: Make more noise with more people. Stage direct actions, and make faculty and community allies. Get published in the campus newspaper about your request to meet.
Agree to meet, bring in the university lawyer to scare students about getting sued, and take control of the meeting.	Make sure your team creates the agenda for the meeting, assign roles for the meeting, and take control. Be assertive in the meeting and don't let them set the agenda or derail you from the topics you want to cover. If they stop you from doing so, you could leave and go to campus media or the student body saying that the administration is unwilling to negotiate in good faith. It might also help to bring in a faculty ally.
Say “maybe” or “no” to students’ demands.	Ask them why they are saying “maybe” or “no.” Get them to document why they are doing so. Expose bad quotes and reasons by sharing with the public. Try to get quotes in writing or recorded whenever possible (but be sure to check your state laws about recording conversations without permission!)
Congratulate you on making the student activists go away or on giving up protesting by meeting with administrators “civily”.	Re-escalate: make more noise with direct actions, get published, make allies, and do something that disrupts the daily operations of the campus administrator. Go over the campus administrator’s head to other higher-ranking administrators (if possible), local politicians, the Board of Trustees/Regents, etc.
Offer to give students a concession, often a “committee,” to solve the problem.	Accept/reject the committee based on what the administrator is willing to concede. Make sure that the committee or task force will have real power; committees without any actual decision-making power are a frequent tactic of administrators and should be avoided. Re-escalate if the concession is not substantive.
Sow disagreement between student activists by playing favorites or drive a wedge between certain students/groups	Decide as a group who will represent you in meetings or on committees, rather than allowing administrators to play favorites or foster competition. Prepare for meetings together, take notes, and debrief with the whole group so everyone is in the loop. If only certain students are allowed to meetings, be sure to communicate and strategize with them proactively. Always try to get more student representation.



Zoe at KYIX Bootcamp: Los Angeles, CA, March 2016

Additional tips for meeting with administrators

- Take notes and/or record the meetings! You'll often catch the most useful quotes if someone is taking careful, thorough notes, and you can potentially catch administrators in lies. Make sure to check on your state's laws about recording conversations without everyone knowing—some states allow it and some don't. Journalists often prefer to have actual recordings rather than notes to back up your claims.
- Discuss the possible outcomes of the meeting beforehand with your group, and establish what actions by administrators will trigger you to take decisive action (like walking out). Establish those triggers, and then assign one person in the meeting the authority to initiate.
- It is almost never a good idea to accept concessions in a meeting without bringing it back to your organization. Establish early on that no one can speak unilaterally for the group.
- If administrators attempt to retaliate against you or your group, make it public! Bring any retaliation by administrators to the media. Consider making a Title IX complaint (Title IX and other federal laws enforced by the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights prohibits retaliation).

HOW TO WORK WITH THE MEDIA

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Working with Media: The Basics

Media coverage is a critical tool in a student activist's playbook. You can use it to get your message out, spur cultural change, and put pressure on your college's administration. Colleges and universities sweep gender-based violence under the rug because taking it seriously can hurt their bottom line. Students can leverage media coverage to push schools to take action.

Parents and donors often think fewer reports of rape, and fewer people punished, is a good thing—but in reality, when reporting is low, it's because schools are discouraging survivors from coming forward or mishandling cases. Using media coverage to show how your school is failing survivors can help educate your community and prospective students about what's actually happening, which in turn can encourage your school to take gender-based violence seriously.

This section covers the basics of how to get media coverage, what materials you should have ready for press before an action, how to speak with reporters, and how to leverage media to build student power. As you run your campaign, we can also help connect you with local and national reporters and media outlets to increase media coverage of the work you are doing; email Know Your IX if you have a story or action you want help publicizing!

Below are the basics of interacting with the press.

The Press List

Every organization should maintain a press list—an up-to-date list of information for media contacts that is kept in a digital spreadsheet and sorted in a way that is useful to your organizing. If you do not have existing relationships with reporters just yet, building a basic list is simple! Check out the websites for campus newspapers, news websites, blogs, and television and radio stations you would like to reach. While it's easy to forget local media, keep in mind that reporters at local papers are always looking for a juicy story and that local and campus news is sometimes picked up by big national publications.

For campus outlets, find contact information for a reporter who is in charge of student life or has written about these issues before. For local outlets, find a contact for a Higher Education reporter. (If you cannot find specific reporters, look for a News Editor or a General Editor). For both outlets, find the contact information for the Opinions Editor, for later use. When compiling these contacts, consider researching specific reporters to see if and how they have covered sexual and domestic violence before—it'll be useful to know whether they can provide favorable coverage or how they have handled the issue. Put all of this information into a spreadsheet to make your Press List.

SAMPLE PRESS LIST

Outlet	Media Type	Contact Name	Contact Role	Email	Phone	Who Knows Them?
The Star Ledger	Newspaper - STATE-WIDE	Bill Mason	Higher Ed Reporter	highered@XXXX	XXX-XXX-XXXX	Sarah, Zoe
WRSU	Radio-CAMPUS	Alice Shepard	Hosts Current Events Show	alice@wrsu.org	XXX-XXX-XXXX	Mariyah

Build Relationships with Reporters

Eventually, you'll want to reach a point where you have professional relationships with the reporters on your Press List. Start by following up with reporters after they cover your action and thanking them with an email or a tweet. Share (positive!) coverage by reporters on your group's social media. Reporters want people to read their stories, so if lots of students read and share their piece, it will encourage them to cover you or the issue again in the future. If you'll be breaking news online (for example, your school is interfering with an action and you're tweeting about it in real time) consider @-ing friendly reporters who may use it for a story.

Once you have established working relationships with reporters, they will likely appreciate personal emails and/or phone calls to let them know about upcoming actions or issues. Keeping reporters in the loop about your upcoming actions will help you build closer relationships and ensure better media coverage in the future.

Media Advisory vs. Press Release

Media Advisories are notices written to alert the media of an upcoming action and are usually sent out up to a week before an action. Media Advisories should include only the essential information about the action—who, what, where, when, and why—in order to allow reporters to plan ahead to cover the action. Include a time for press availability on the day of the action (for when reporters can speak with activists), and contact information for the Press Coordinator. Check out page XX for an example. Press Releases communicate greater detail surrounding an event and are usually released the day of.

Press Releases are usually released the day of an event. Releases should include essential information about the action, contact information, context for the action, quotes from activists. Send releases out to reporters a few hours before an action or immediately after it concludes so that they can use information and quotes from the release in their coverage. Some reporters may just use your Press Release as their story (especially if they are unable to attend your event), so it's important to send this out! Keep in mind quotes in the release do not have to be said at a real place and time—they can (and likely will be) quotes that you write specifically for the Press Release. See the [Sample Materials](#) section for an example Press Release.

Best Practices for Press Releases and Media Advisories

- Make sure to end Media Advisories and Press Releases with three pound signs at the very end of the document. This is a press formality which signals the end of the document.
- Become friends with the "BCC" field in your e-mail! BCC allows you to send an e-mail to 500 people without giving away individuals' contact addresses to the other recipients—reporters will appreciate this!

Embargoes

If you're worried about maintaining secrecy in the lead up to an action when contacting the press, consider setting an embargo. Embargoes are bans that prohibit reporters from publishing specific information before a stated time. Set an embargo when you have sensitive information about an action that you want to share with the press, but do not want the administration or public officials to know about in advance. When doing so, clearly communicate to the reporter which details are embargoed and until what time (provide a specific date and time). Remember that reporters can always choose to ignore an embargo—it's highly unprofessional, but it could happen—so do not send out any information that you absolutely need to remain private.

The Press Kit

A Press Kit is a physical printed packet of materials to have on-hand at your action. **It includes:**

- The Media Advisory and/or Press Release
- Any letters or other materials being delivered to your Target
- Fact Sheets or other handouts that educate reporters on the issue
- Contact information for people from your group who have volunteered to speak with the press and/or share their story as a survivor
- Contact information for your group's Press Coordinator

Who Speaks to the Press?

Speaking with press can be intimidating! And it is unlikely every member of your group will be comfortable speaking with reporters. To prepare members of your group to speak with press, discuss talking points in advance and use some of the following tips.

Give attention to which voices are speaking most. People speaking to the press should represent a range of experiences of survivors and activists. LGBTQ survivors, people of color, and survivors with disabilities face a variety of unique challenges in seeking support and justice, but are rarely offered media visibility. Fight rape culture by intentionally highlighting experiences that counteract misrepresentative, limited, or harmful narratives about gender-based violence.

Make sure your group has been prepped to speak with the media before any action or interview. Taking some time to review talking points and practice answering questions will go a long way in making sure you are fully prepared to speak with reporters. At actions, prepare as many members of your group as possible with basic talking points in case they are asked, and create a system to direct press toward your designated speakers or Press Coordinators. Make sure all of your members know: 1) There is a Press Coordinator and their name is ____, and 2) No one should speak to the press if they haven't been prepped.

For actions and for your group, it's essential that you have Press Coordinators. These people will be responsible for managing all tasks related to interacting with the press. This is a big role so consider assigning two or more organizers.

The Job of the Press Coordinator is:

- To be the main person managing the Press List, including sending e-mails and phone calls;
- To write or manage the writing of any Media Advisories, Press Releases, Talking Points, or the Press Kit;
- To train the people who will speak to press, and coordinate volunteers at the event to direct press to the Press Coordinator;
- To be listed, with their contact information, as the Press Contact for the day of the event;
- To manage press at the event;
- To do follow-up with press immediately after the event and collect stories published about your event.

KYIX Bootcamp: NYC, November 2015



Getting Press Coverage for Actions

Timeline for Large Demonstrations/Actions/Protests

Use this timeline as a reference for how to work with the press for large events—think protests, rallies, and demonstrations where you’re expecting a large turnout.

One Week to Five Days Before the Event:

If you have preexisting relationships with reporters, give them a call or email them to let them know about the event. Provide details about your action and let them know that you will be sending a Media Advisory over in a few days. Remember to clarify if any information is embargoed!

Four Business Days Before the Event:

Send the Media Advisory to your Press List. When sending, place text of the advisory in the body of the e-mail, in addition to attaching as a PDF. Your subject line should start “MEDIA ADVISORY: [INSERT CATCHY TITLE]”. Remember, only send to contacts you think may cover the event.

If you’ve never spoken to these individuals before, give them a follow up call the same day. If on the phone, ask: “Will you or someone from your publication be coming to cover our action?” They might respond saying they haven’t seen the release yet, and will get back to you. Ask for a best number to reach them by and make sure they take your number and e-mail as well. If you don’t have a phone number for reporters that you have not spoken with before, send them a follow up email the next day. Again, remember to clarify if any information is embargoed!

One Business Day Before the Event:

For press contacts who you have not heard from, call or email to confirm that they’ve received your Media Advisory, and ask: “Will you or someone from your agency be coming to cover our action?” If they don’t confirm by today, don’t count on them to be there.

Day of the Event:

Send your Press Release out to your media contacts either a few hours before or immediately after your action.

Press Timeline for Small Actions

Use this timeline as a reference for how to work with the press for small events—think letter deliveries and actions involving few activists with a small or no audience.

One Week to One Business Day Before Your Event:

Sometimes small actions come together at the last minute, making it tough for you to alert reporters a full week in advance—this is fine for smaller actions! Call or email one or two reporters (preferably ones you

already have relationships with) to let them know about the action. Describe the event and send over your Media Advisory. Remember to clarify if any information is embargoed!

One Business Day Before the Event:

If you have not heard from the reporters yet, call or email them to confirm that they’ve received your Media Advisory. Ask: “Will you or someone from your agency be coming to cover our action?” If they don’t confirm by today, again, don’t count on them to be there!

Tips for Handling Press on the Day-of

Get there early. Arrive at the location of the action at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the Press Availability or, if you will only be answering questions after the action, 30 minutes prior to the start of the action.

Be prepared. Bring Press Kits, a clipboard that has a list of which organizers will be speaking to the press, as well blank paper on which to write down the contact info of all the reporters who show up.

Greet reporters. Introduce yourself to reporters as soon as they show up and hand them a Press Kit. Say something like: “Hi, I’m Allie, and I wanted to be sure you have a copy of our press release. Myself and other organizers are available for interviews.”

Have your cell phone handy. Reporters will likely call you throughout the course of the action if they are having trouble locating it or finding an organizer to speak with. Consider keeping your Press Coordinator(s) free on the day of an action so that they can focus on fielding calls and helping reporters.

Working with Reporters Outside of Events

Interview Requests

Journalists will contact you for interviews if they were unable to attend your events as well as for future stories covering sexual and domestic violence activism and related topics. Here are some tips for handling interview requests:

Respond as soon as possible. Journalists typically work on very quick deadlines, so respond promptly, even if it’s just to say you are not available to talk. It helps to designate a point person within your organization to respond to all press emails—they should set their email to forward to their phone or be prepared to check it multiple times a day to stay on top of press requests.

Do not immediately agree to an interview request. If a reporter calls or emails you and wants to interview you for a story, always ask for more information first. Consider asking them for: more details on the story

they are writing, their angle or goals for the piece, any deadlines, and what they're hoping to talk to you about. You can also ask them if they have covered gender violence before and any links to previous work. If you decide you do want to speak with them, let them know what time would be best to talk (this can be as short as "in 10 minutes" or later in the day depending on their deadline). You can also connect them with another student organizer or ask for them to send their questions via email. Some reporters will be willing to conduct an interview online or via email.

Be mindful of who is speaking with the press the most and work to incorporate more voices. The media typically focuses on white, straight-presenting, cisgender female survivors. While these survivors should certainly be sharing their stories, make sure your group encourages and supports folks from a variety of backgrounds to speak with press. Rather than have the person fielding press requests give all of the interviews, spread out interviews between multiple members of your group so that they all gain experience working with press.

Preparing for Interviews

Plan what you want to speak with journalists about and set boundaries. It is up to you to tell reporters as much or as little as you feel comfortable sharing. If you want to speak about experiences of assault or harassment or identify yourself as a survivor to the press, it can be helpful to think about how much you want to share, what words you want to use to describe your experiences, and how you will feel about that information remaining available online in the future. Journalists can be very pushy so setting boundaries can help. **These can include:**

- Choosing not to speak about experiences of assault or harassment, whether or not you are already public as a survivor;
- Choosing only to speak about certain aspects of experiences of assault or harassment;
- Only doing in-person interviews;
- Only doing interviews when you can see their questions in advance;
- Only doing interviews if you are allowed to check the draft of their story or your quotations prior to publication;
- Only doing interviews that are recorded to ensure that the journalist quotes you directly, does not misattribute your words, or does not use them out of context.

Think about how you want to frame the discussion. Successful campaigns are able to focus on how sexual and domestic violence at colleges is a systemic and structural issue rather than something involving a handful of individuals—one survivor, one assailant, one bad administrator. Framing the story as *systemic* rather than *individual* requires some planning. Points of emphasis in your interview might include: highlighting the breadth of the problem, positioning yourself within a broader movement of survivors and student

activists, focusing on administrative failures in addition to the details of particular cases, and describing policy goals for the future.

Think about sharing information on and off the record. There are three ways to share information with journalists: "on the record," "off the record," and "on background". If you say something on the record, everything you say can be used and quoted. Points made "off the record" cannot be published by the journalist (you might want to do this to give a reporter context or an idea for an investigation). A quote given "on background" can be published only under certain conditions that you negotiate with the journalist in advance, usually that they will not print your name. You might use this if a survivor is willing to share their story publicly but would like keep their name anonymous. You should establish whether you want things on or off the record before sharing information with a reporter and communicate that clearly.

It is easy to forget what information you decided to disclose, what information you decided not to disclose, and what information you are willing to disclose off the record. Think through these before an interview and keep them on hand. Remember, the default is that everything is on the record—unless you clearly declare that something is off the record or on background before you say it, it can be used and attributed.

Think about how you want to present yourself visually, especially if you will be appearing in photographs or on television. The media typically has problematic expectations of self-presentation, which can be especially damaging to survivors, women, and trans and gender nonconforming individuals. (Just Google "how to dress appropriately" for some icky examples.) Think through whether (and to what extent) you may want to meet these kind of guidelines while conveying your message. Whether or not you choose to is entirely your decision—remember, do what feels comfortable and truthful to you.

Create and practice talking points as a group prior to your interview. It is important for your group to outline your stance (or lack thereof) on tricky policy questions before members are in front of a reporter. What is your group willing to say about alcohol, Greek life, law enforcement, or any other major issue a typical reporter might raise? Look to the **Sample Talking Points** section for suggested talking points and practice your group's points with fellow organizers, friends, or by yourself ahead of time. Your group might decide they do not have an organizational response to some of these questions. In that case, figure out whether and how you'll want to respond individually.

The Interview

Remember that most reporters do not know much about how colleges handle sexual assault. Be sure to explain things in basic terms and ask them if more clarification is needed.

Try not to feel nervous about making mistakes—we all make them. Speaking with journalists can be very stressful even if you are not speaking about personal experiences. The most important thing is that you feel comfortable. Remember that you have the right to end an interview at any time should you feel otherwise.



If a journalist asks you a question you don't know the answer to, tell them! You don't have to answer every question and it's better to acknowledge that you don't know than to make an error. If other organizers might know the answer, offer to connect the reporter with them after the interview. You can always say, "I want to make sure I have the most accurate information for you—can I get back to you on that?"

If at any time you are uncertain whether you are speaking on or off the record, ask the reporter for clarification. If you would like to switch between speaking on the record to speaking off the record or vice versa, make sure to explicitly state the change to the reporter and wait for the reporter to acknowledge that change. Remember: Nothing is ever truly off the record. If you really don't want it printed, it's always safest not to say it.

For TV: Look at the reporter asking you questions, not at the camera. If you are saying sound bites to a camera with no reporter, look at the camera person, not right at the middle of the camera. Speak slowly and at normal volume. If you're comfortable being emotional or animated, TV loves personality!

For print: Remember to speak slowly! Watch a reporter's hand as they take notes. After saying a sentence, wait until they catch up. This can be tough even for very experienced speakers, but if you talk fast and they have to scribble, they're likely to misquote you.

Print reporters, especially during phone interviews, will often leave long pauses in between questions. It's a tried and true tactic to get you to keep talking and talking. Don't give in! Say your bit and end crisply.

For radio: Speak at normal volume and a little slower than usual so people listening can really hear you.

At the end of your interview, thank the reporter and get their card or contact information. You'll want to add them to your Press List if they are not already on it. Ask the reporter if they would like to speak with anyone else and offer to connect them with other organizers and/or survivors who are willing to speak with the press.

KYIX Bootcamp: Chapel Hill, NC, April 2016

Telling Your Story

For some, deciding whether to go public with your story is an easy and obvious yes. For others, it's a tough call and one that change over the course of a few weeks, months, or years. For all of us, it's a decision only we can each make for ourselves.

If you have family or friends with whom you feel comfortable talking about it, do so. They may anticipate concerns that could be important. However, while your loved ones may want what's best for you, they may not fully recognize the reasons motivating you to go forward or your desire to stay out of the press. They may also have their own reasons for wanting you to make a particular decision: regret for not having gone forward themselves, fear that your assault will reflect poorly on them as parents, or concern that it may alienate some of their friends.

At the end of the day, this is your experience, your activism, your life, and your decision.

If you are deciding to “go public” while organizing for change on your campus, **consider asking yourself:** *What are your personal or organizational goals? Will going public help you accomplish these? Is sharing your story publicly key to your personal healing? Are you hoping to get your rapist expelled? Make sweeping policy change at your school? Increase awareness about violence on your campus, or in a particular community on your campus?*

Take time to identify your goals and evaluate whether your “going public” will help accomplish them. Will sharing your story put serious public pressure on your school to shape up? Will it help you heal personally, or win the accommodations to which you are entitled? Would a campaign based outside of individual narratives of violence be more effective? Easier?

It's important to know that regardless of these organizational goals, sharing your story can help people you don't even know feel less alone and pressure your school to make change. You might even help yourself: going public with your story can help connect you to other survivors and organizers. Many of us have made some of our very dearest friends doing this work—people we might never have met had we not spoken up in the first place. We're ready to become your friends and fiercest supporters too.

But there is no right way to be a survivor: sharing your story publicly is not the right decision for everyone. Some people choose not to share for religious or spiritual reasons. Others are concerned about potential legal risks, or that being publicly identified as a survivor might affect their future career prospects. Some people don't want the attention, in person and online, that sharing publicly can sometimes bring. It's a decision that only you can make—but whatever you choose is the right thing for you!

Check out these additional resources for more information about [pros and cons of going public](#), [writing your own story](#), and [creating your own survivor-centered publication](#).

KYIX Bootcamp: NYC, November 2015



TALKING POINTS

3. TAKING ACTION

I. Building a Team

- How to Build a Team
- Creating Accountability
- Organizing By, For, and With Survivors
- Intersectional Organizing
- Thinking Long Term

II. How to Plan a Campaign

- What Tactics to Use
- Examples: How to Plan Your Direct Action
- How to Work with Administration

III. How to Work the Media

- The Basics
- Telling Your Story
- Talking Points**
- Sample Talking Points

How To Create Talking Points

Creating talking points prior to speaking with reporters will help you stay on message during interviews—and be more confident too. Talking points should be very clear and concise; focus on the major points of your campaign. What are the most important messages you want your audience to walk away thinking?

In order to be the most compelling communicator you can be, your talking points should cover four critical pieces of information:

1) The problem, as you define and understand it (not how the reporter or anyone else wants to situate it). For example: “Survivors on our campus don’t feel safe reporting violence to our school.”

- Offer statistics and anecdotes to support that this is a problem. *For example:* “Time and time again survivors here tell [your student group name] that they don’t trust the administration to take action against their perpetrator.” Or, “[Your group’s name]’s survey found that 9 in 10 survivors didn’t report because they were afraid they’d be punished for drinking under age when they were assaulted.”

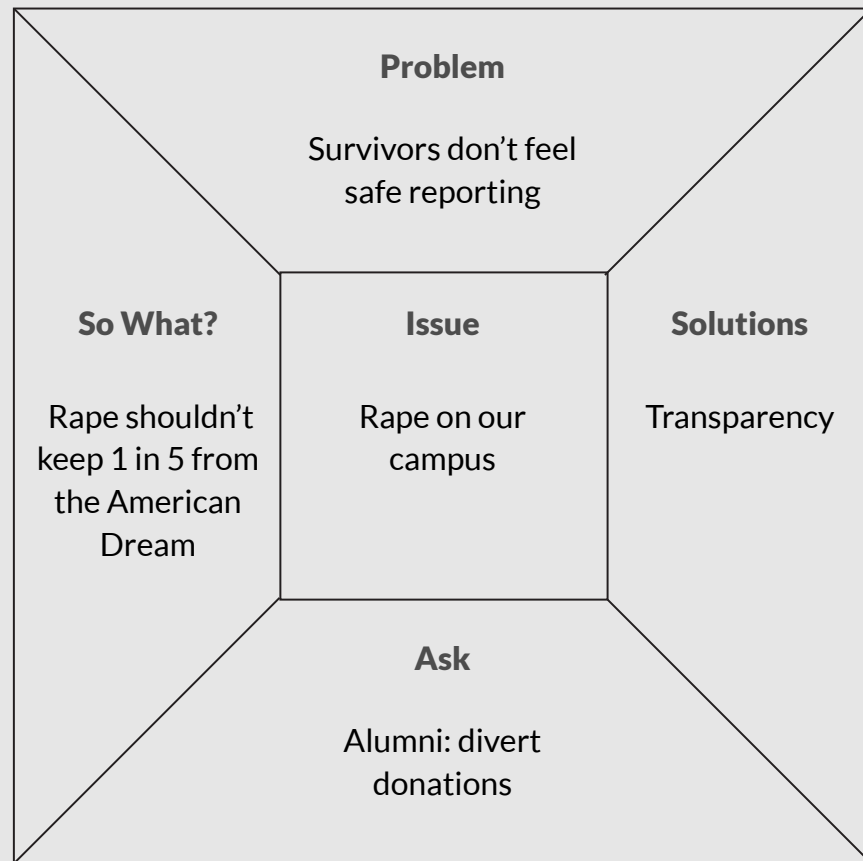
2) Your proposed solution. How can we fix the problem you identified in #1? What do you want changed? This often lines up with the demands of your organizing campaign! Obviously these are complicated issues with complicated solutions, but to be an effective communicator in an interview, you need to pick one (or at most two) fixes and speak only to those.

- *For example:* “What we need is transparency from the administration.” Not: “Here are the twenty-six things the administration needs to do to make change...”
- Explain it in language your audience can understand: *For example:* “[School name] should publish non-identifying aggregate information about how rape cases are handled each year. That information should include how many people report, how many people go through a disciplinary hearing, how many students are found responsible, and how many people are expelled. This transparency will build students’ trust in the process and will also expose where we can make it better.”

3) Your ask. What do you want your audience to do? Sign a petition? Call your college president? Think carefully about who your target audience is, based both on the outlet with which you’re speaking and on your campaign goals. Is it current students? Community members? Alums? Faculty? Parents?

- *For example:* In an interview with your school’s alumni magazine, you might say, “To everyone who cares about this campus and this community: pledge to divert your donations from the university to [your student group name, or a national advocacy group] until [school name] starts treating survivors right.”

EXERCISE 3. MESSAGE BOX



This is a message box. It's a visual tool to help you remember your talking points and stay on message. Whenever you're giving an interview, your goal should be to make it all the way around your message box, from "problem" to the "so what?" On some questions, you'll be able to get to multiple sections of your message box; on others, you may only have time to delve into one of your key points. It's okay to go out of order too! Before an interview, write out a message box with your organizing group and practice. If you're giving a phone interview, you can (and should!) keep the message box in front of you to help you stay on track. For other interviews, you'll need to familiarize yourself enough with your message box so that you can recall your points from memory.

Keep your message tight, crisp, and clear.

Throughout the interview, keep hitting your talking points. Don't stray from them. The more your audience (and the reporter) hears your key messages, the more they'll remember and internalize them. If you bombard your audience (or reporter) with too much information, they'll come away either retaining none of it or remembering a point that wasn't all that important to begin with. Know that reporters like to include lots of sources in their story, so it's not unusual for only a sentence or two of what you say to make it into the piece. That's another reason why you should re-emphasize your key messages again and again throughout the interview, and try not to stray from them.

You can help guide your audience (and the reporter) to the important messages by flagging them with key phrases such as:

- "The most important thing to remember is..."
- "What's most important here is..."
- "It all comes down to this..."
- "It all boils down to..."
- "The key here is..."

What if the reporter doesn't ask me the questions that my talking points respond to?

It doesn't matter! 90% of the time, you're not going to get the perfect question. Think of an interview as an opportunity for you to communicate the points you want to make, not a time to speak to what the journalist wants to hear. You're there to make your campaign's points; you should be in control of your message, not the interviewer. When you get a question that's off your talking points, you should briefly address the question and then pivot to your message. Phrases that can help you pivot are:

- "The fact is..."
- "The real issue is..."
- "That's part of it. What's really important is..."
- "Another key problem/issue/concern is..."
- "The thing that really matters is..."

4) Why it matters. Why should your audience care about this? Depending on who your target audience is, you might appeal to:

- Safety: "This is a matter of campus safety."
- Equity: "Education is the great equalizer in our country. Rape shouldn't keep one in five students on our campus from pursuing the American Dream."
- Family values: "No one's children should have to be afraid to go to school."
- Consumer protections: "The cost of a college education shouldn't include rape."

HOW TO PIVOT IN AN INTERVIEW

Your predetermined talking points:

Problem: Our campus community has no idea which policies and procedures are working to address violence and which aren't.

Solution: Our college needs to conduct and publish the results of a campus climate survey, so that we can learn what's broken and how to fix it.

Ask: Sign our petition calling for a comprehensive climate survey. We're tabling every night in the dining hall.

Why it matters: Nobody at [school name] should have to go to school in fear of being raped.

Interviewer question: "What about the role of alcohol in all this? Isn't this just a problem of booze-soaked campus and students gone wild?"

Your response: "The culture of binge drinking is certainly a public health problem we should talk about here at [school name]. But when thinking about the rape problem here, the real issue is a lack of information about which policies are working and which aren't. The fact is that... [insert your talking point]."

Interviewer question: "What about false rape reports?"

Your response: "The fact is that the vast majority of people make reports in good faith. And, what's more, nine in 10 survivors here don't report their rapes to anyone at all. That's an astonishing number. Clearly something isn't working. That's why [your group name] has a petition demanding the administration to conduct a climate survey, so that we, as a community, can figure out what's wrong and how we can all do better... [continue into talking points]"

Statistics

Using statistics can help bolster your case for action on your campus. When talking to the press, make your statistics as general as possible (while still being accurate); it's much easier as a listener to understand and remember "1 in 5 women students will be raped on our campus" than "19.8% of women students..."

Here are some statistics to get you started. More stats are available [online](#) too!

- A recent 2015 study conducted by the Association of American Universities (AAU) found that **1 in 5 college women** will experience sexual assault sometime in their college career.

- Reporting rates to campus officials and law enforcement are very low. AAU's survey found a range of 5-28% of incidences were reported. Commonly-cited reasons for this low number included survivors feeling it would be too emotionally difficult to report and survivors not trusting their institutions to do anything in response.
- Transgender and gender nonconforming students experience some of the **highest rates** of violence.
- Sexual assault survivors are **more likely to suffer from issues such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder**. Therefore, it is essential that survivors receive adequate support and accommodations.
- It is estimated that **1 in 3 women** and **1 in 6 men** will be sexually assaulted over the course of their lifetime.
- The **majority of campus rapists (80.8%)** reported committing an offense while the victim was incapacitated.

Practice, practice, practice.

Feeling nervous about an interview? Sit down with your organizing group, identify your key talking points, and practice. The more you get used to hearing lots of different questions and bouncing responses off of each other, the better you'll get at addressing them in real life interviews and knowing how to pivot to your message.

Media interviews can be nerve-wracking but remember that, at the end of the day, they're a gift—an opportunity to get your message out to your target audience on your own terms. Give it time and effort, and soon you'll be giving interviews like a pro, and will have gained a lifelong skill too.

Talking Points for Every Issue

We've included some of the most common—and tricky—questions that come up in interviews. Check out our sample responses, and add your own!

SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

ON SEXUAL ASSAULT AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES, WHY WE'RE HERE, AND WHY IT MATTERS

Example Qs:

I've heard of rape problems at other schools, but is it really as big an issue on our campus?

What's Title IX and why is our school under investigation by the Department of Education?

What is your campaign about? How can I do something about sexual assault at our school?

These are some of the friendliest questions you'll get! They're broad and open-ended, and can allow you to easily take your response in lots of different directions. That can also be overwhelming—where to start?—and this is another reason why knowing your talking points cold is so critical. Remember: Broad questions aren't an excuse for you to launch into a million different directions, or to give a really comprehensive, complete response; if you say too many things, your audience (or the reporter) will remember none of them. Save your complex, wonky answers for a memo, and instead recall your talking points and use them—you've got the perfect question to do it.

Sample Starting Points:

- While studies differ on the rate of sexual violence on college campuses, it's undeniable that sexual violence is a pervasive problem facing college students of all gender identities, races, sexual orientations, abilities, and classes across all schools nationwide. No school is exempt from this violence and no institution can honestly claim that sexual assault and harassment is already adequately addressed. We hear from survivors every day that there is more that needs to be done to make students safer and more informed. That is why [insert your demand] is crucial.
- What's common across most college campuses is an institutional tendency to sweep rape under the rug. That's why more than 130 colleges are currently under investigation by the Department of Education. In order to comply with their legal obligations under Title IX, we're calling on our university's administrators to [insert your demand].

ON FALSE REPORTS

Example Qs:

What about false reporting by victims, isn't that an issue?

If dispelling the false report myth is part of your message, try saying:

- What's important to remember is that most victims are telling the truth. In fact, research suggests that around 95-98% of reports are accurate—that's the very same rate as for other crimes. Survivors come forward at great personal expense; they face public criticism, skepticism, and retaliation—rarely see any consequences for their assailant. In contrast, perpetrators who lie about having committed rape get away with it all the time: 97% of rapists never spend a day in jail.
- That's a pervasive myth in our society. We endlessly question, doubt, and criticize sexual assault victims to a degree that we'd never importune, say, a white male victim of physical assault. What's animating this myth, then, isn't the violence per se but the people who typically experience it—women—and the special skepticism our society reserves for them. Our society also generally believes stranger rape is the most common form of sexual assault when in reality, about **90% of campus sexual assaults** are perpetrated by someone the survivors knows. Therefore, survivors often face intense scrutiny because what they are reporting does not match the myths society widely accepts.
- The changes we're pushing for will make our campus process more fair and transparent. This will be good for accused students too, because it will help ensure that each student's rights are clear and protected, that investigations are careful and impartial, and that decisions are equitable and prompt. These policies will help ensure that only people who have committed assaults are found responsible. [You might want to have a couple examples on hand, like making sure both parties have an opportunity to suggest questions and provide witnesses, or ensuring that both parties have the chance to file an appeal and that the appeal be considered by a panel, rather than one random dean in secret.]

ON LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM

Example Qs:

Schools aren't equipped to handle sexual assault cases. Shouldn't we just send these cases to the police?

Why is gender-based violence treated differently at universities than other crimes?

Why don't schools automatically turn over rape cases to the police?

Remember: Unless this is part of your message, don't get stuck on these questions. Give a one-sentence response to the question, and then pivot to **your** message! If this is part of your message, try using the points below.

Sample Starting Points:

- The campus process and the criminal legal system are not mutually exclusive: a survivor can elect to go through one process, both, or neither. But many survivors don't tell anyone at all.
- The cops respond to rape as a crime; schools respond to rape as as **a civil rights violation** and a threat to education. (You can't learn when the person who raped you sits next to you in math class.) When laws conflate the two processes, they discourage victim from reporting to anyone at all.
- Schools are **uniquely positioned** to provide resources and accommodations that the criminal legal system simply cannot. For example:
- Schools' psychological counseling centers can (and should!) provide immediate, free, accessible counseling.
- Colleges can provide housing and academic accommodations that many survivors need to continue their education, like changing a survivor's dorm or removing their attacker from their math class.
- Colleges can provide no-contact orders that keep survivors safe on campus.
- School health centers can provide free or cheap Plan B to survivors.
- Colleges regularly hold students accountable for all sorts of disciplinary violations, like drug possession, theft, racial harassment, and physical assault. Sexual violence isn't exceptional. These are all common violations—some with real human faces—that schools investigate and address all the time. Responding to sexual misconduct is squarely within schools' wheelhouse.
- For many survivors, campus reporting is their only option. Many victims don't want to turn to the criminal legal system: they may fear skepticism and abuse from police, prosecutors, or juries; they may fear retaliation from their assailant, who will most likely not end up prosecuted, let alone convicted; they may be hesitant to send their assailants, who are often (current or former) partners or friends, to prison. Survivors from marginalized communities, including Black, Muslim, Native, and trans students, may fear police brutality. Undocumented students may fear

deportation or police violence if they try to report. Additionally, not all state laws cover sexual violence perpetrated by women or a person the same gender as the victim; some don't recognize men as victims at all. Schools, unlike the state, *must* take up every report for adjudication and response according to the victim's wishes. For most campus survivors, then, their school may be their only resource for justice and safety.

- Survivors who *do* report to the police are often abandoned by the system. Law enforcement officials have a well-documented history of **mistreating survivors**. **Only a quarter of all reported rapes** lead to an arrest, only a fifth lead to prosecution, and only half of those prosecutions result in felony convictions. **Only three in every 100 rapists** ever spend a day in jail. Police are no better than schools at handling sexual and dating violence and, in many cases, are actually far worse.
- **When reporting to police is the only option**, the fear of being mistreated often deters survivors from getting help. Time and time again we hear from survivors that, if their reports to campus officials were to go to police without their consent, they wouldn't report to anyone at all; a **survey of student survivors** that Know Your IX conducted with the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence confirmed that further involving the police will dramatically decrease reporting to schools, leaving perpetrators free to roam campuses with impunity.

Commencement at Harvard: Student activists display Title IX on their commencement caps



ON FRATERNITIES

Example Qs:

Aren't fraternities being unfairly marginalized and singled out for this problem?

If fraternities are part of your message, try saying:

- Our school is institutionally set up to make fraternities dangerous. For instances, only frats are allowed houses. That means women in sororities have to leave the safety and familiarity of their own living spaces in order to go out on a Saturday night. That makes them much more vulnerable.
- Fraternities take full advantage of these discriminatory policies. Numerous studies have shown that men who join fraternities are **three times more likely to rape**, and that women in sororities are 74% more likely to experience rape than other college women.
- National fraternity organizations have made it clear who they care about. Fraternity groups are behind a proposed bill called the Safe Campus Act that would make it much harder for schools to hold rapists accountable—and would ultimately make campuses even less safe.
- The important thing to remember here is that our university has a legal obligation under Title IX to keep students safe, and that means it needs to hold frats accountable by *[insert demand here]*.

KYIX Organizers at the White House



ON ALCOHOL

Example Qs:

How was he supposed to know she didn't want it?

If they were both drunk, how do we know it wasn't a miscommunication?

Why did she get so drunk if she didn't want to have sex?

Didn't she just wake up and regret having sex?

Remember: Unless alcohol is part of your message, don't get stuck on these questions. Give a one-sentence response to the question, and then pivot to your message!

If alcohol is part of your message, try saying:

- Alcohol is the most commonly used date rape drug. Research shows that rapists use alcohol as weapon. Nine in 10 campus rapes are committed by repeat offenders. Rape is an intentional act, not the result of miscommunication.
- Real talk: As a Peer Advocate, I've heard about dozens of rapes on this campus. I've never once heard a case in which the victim wasn't clearly incapacitated, unable to walk, and/or passed out. The vast majority of rapes on this campus involve a victim who's passed out and clearly unresponsive. Where's the confusion there? Don't have sex with people who are unconscious.
- Alcohol's an important part of students' social and sex lives. That doesn't mean we should expect to experience assault, and it certainly doesn't excuse violence of any sort. Drunk drivers don't get off easier for the fact of having been drunk!
- Survivors who were incapacitated at the time of the assault **report at lower rates**. That is why we are calling for *[insert your related demand]*.
- Binge drinking is a public health problem on our campus. But when we're thinking about rape, the real problem is... *[transition into your talking point]*.

FAIR PROCESS

Example Qs:

Are schools violating accused students' due process rights?

Isn't the standard of evidence used in these student conduct hearings too low? Isn't it unfair to accused students?

If addressing process concerns is part of your message, try saying:

- Title IX actually provides more process for accused students than any other federal law on the books. So a student accused of sexual assault enjoys more protections under Title IX than a student accused of non-sexual physical assault! For instance, Title IX requires schools to have prompt and equitable student disciplinary processes, and to respect a number of student rights such as the right to bring an advisor of your choice to a hearing, including an attorney. If processes aren't fair and equitable, it's because schools are violating the law, and they should be held accountable for that.
- We do this work because we care about the right to education. A campus conduct process that is fair and transparent protects the rights and educations of survivors and accused students alike. And that's why [your group name] is fighting for more procedural protections. For example, our school should [insert your demand here, such as providing each student the chance to appeal disciplinary decisions and ensuring the appeal is heard by a panel, rather than one dean with no checks or balances].
- When you look at the concerns raised by accused students, many of the procedural issues they raise are the very same as those that survivors have been raising for years. For example, not being allowed to suggest witnesses; not being notified of decisions; and being put through a confusing, unprofessional, and unnecessarily long investigation are all criticisms that have been raised by both survivors and accused students. That's why we are fighting for a fairer and more transparent campus system for all students: [insert demand here].
- The standard of proof used in campus sexual assault investigations should be the same as the standard commonly used in all other student conduct investigations: the preponderance of the evidence. Schools regularly use this standard for other serious allegations, like physical assault, burglary, hazing, and racial harassment. There is no reason to treat sexual assault differently from other policy violations; efforts to create a higher standard of proof in sexual misconduct cases play into the dangerous tendency to apply extra scrutiny to victims of sexual assault as compared to victims of other crimes. Further, the preponderance of the evidence standard is the very same standard used in civil suits, including for sex discrimination under Title VII; it's a different standard than that used in a criminal trial because a campus disciplinary case, unlike a criminal trial, cannot result in the loss of life or liberty.

KYIX Bootcamp: NYC, November 2015



A READING LIST

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SGA Resolution
Letter to Administrators
Media Release and Advisory
Op-eds
Sample Admissions Action Letter

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Books

- [Americanah](#) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- [Asking for It](#) by Kate Harding
- [Campus Sex, Campus Security](#) by Jennifer Doyle
- [Captive Genders](#) by Eric A. Stanley
- [The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response](#) eds. Roland W. Mitchell and Sara Carrigan Wooten
- [Cry Rape](#) by Bill Lueders
- [Cultural Politics of Emotion](#) by Sarah Ahmed
- [Decolonizing Feminism](#) by Chandra Talpade Mohanty
- [Drops of this Story](#) by Suheir Hammad
- [Missoula](#) by Jon Krakauer
- [The New Jim Crow](#) by Michelle Alexander
- [Rape is Rape](#) by Jody Raphael
- [The Revolution Starts at Home: Confronting Intimate Violence Within Activist Communities](#) eds. Ching-In Chen, Jai Dulani, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, and Andrea Smith
- [Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching](#) by Crystal Feimster
- [Teaching to Transgress](#) by bell hooks
- [Women and Gender in Islam](#) by Leila Ahmed
- [Zami](#) by Audre Lorde

Articles/Essays

- [A Guide for White People on the #BurkiniBan and Discussing Muslim Women](#) by Mahroh Jahangiri
- [Campus Sexual Assault Adjudication and Resistance to Reform](#) by Michelle J. Anderson
- [Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others](#) by Lila Abu-Lughod
- [Eating the Other](#) by bell hooks
- [Helping Rape Victims After the Brock Turner Case](#) by Alexandra Brodsky and Claire Simonich
- [Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy](#) by Andrea Smith
- [Left-Wing Language for Your Right-Wing Needs!](#) by Alex Press
- [The Rising American Student Movement Is Part of a Battle for the Soul of Higher Education](#) by Aviva Chomsky

RESOURCES

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Hotlines

National Domestic Violence Hotline

Website: <http://www.thehotline.org/>

Phone Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

Website: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Phone Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Pandora's Project (Resources for survivors; has specific sections for male and LGBTQ survivors)

Website: <http://www.pandys.org/lgbtsurvivors.html>

RAINN (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network)

Website: <http://www.rainn.org/get-help/national-sexual-assault-hotline>

Phone Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

Online Hotline: <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>

Trevor Project (LGBTQ Suicide Hotline)

Website: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/lifelinechat>

Phone hotline: 1-866-488-7383

Attorneys

Below are a list of attorneys that may be able to support you pro bono or with a contingency fee, depending on your age, location, and particular case:

- **Equal Rights Advocates** runs a **hotline** through which the San Francisco-based organization can provide you with legal information and, if they cannot represent you, referrals to other attorneys.
- If you have questions about your legal rights related to your sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status, you can contact the **Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders'**(GLAD) **Legal InfoLine** (1-800-455-GLAD).
- The **Harvard Law School Gender Violence Program** (pro bono) has specially offered to help campus survivors seeking help through Know Your IX.
- **Legal Momentum**. You can reach Legal Momentum's Helpline at titleix@legalmomentum.org or 1-212-925-6635, ext. 650.

- [The National Crime Victim's Center](#) can help connect you with victim's rights attorneys.
- [Network for Victim Recovery of DC](#) (pro bono) assists survivors within the DC metropolitan area with crisis advocacy, case management and legal support. Contact NVRDC's office at [1-202-742-1727](tel:1-202-742-1727) or nvrdc.org to learn about how their legal staff can assist you in civil, criminal and administrative (campus) processes.
- The [National Women's Law Center](#) (pro bono) is able to assist in filing Title IX complaints and lawsuits in limited circumstances. If the NWLC is unable to represent you, they will make an effort to refer you to another attorney.
- [Public Justice](#) can help you file Title IX complaints and lawsuits on a contingency fee basis (not necessarily pro bono). You can contact the organization for legal assistance by phone at [1-202-797-8600](tel:1-202-797-8600) or by email at caseintake@publicjustice.net.
- [SurvJustice](#) (contingency fee) is a national nonprofit providing legal assistance to survivors in campus disciplinary hearings. You can contact SurvJustice [here](#).
- The [Sylvia Rivera Law Project](#) (SRLP) provides direct representation for low income transgender people and trans people of color in three main areas. If they can't represent you, they can provide referrals and information on a wide range of issues affecting transgender and gender-nonconforming people. Learn more and contact SRLP [here](#).
- The [Transgender Law Center's](#) Legal Information Helpline provides basic information about civil rights laws that impact trans people. You can contact them for help [here](#).
- [Victim Rights Center of Connecticut](#) (VRCCT) provides no-cost legal representation to survivors of sexual assault or harassment in administrative proceedings at universities, including: filing administrative complaints; representing survivors in disciplinary hearings; and advocating for reasonable school safety, health and educational accommodations. They also represent victims in criminal court, protecting their privacy and constitutional rights. You can contact VRCCT by email at mail@vrctt.org or phone at [1-203-350-3515](tel:1-203-350-3515).
- The [Victim Rights Law Center](#) (pro bono) assists victims in Massachusetts and Portland, OR. You can contact the VRLC by phone at [1-617-399-6720](tel:1-617-399-6720) x19 or at their web address [here](#).



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SAMPLE MATERIALS

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PETITION FOR A SURVIVORS' BILL OF RIGHTS



Carry That Weight, in partnership with the United States Student Association and [YOUR CAMPUS ORGANIZATION] are calling on the administration of [YOUR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY] to adopt a Survivors' Bill of Rights. The Survivors' Bill of Rights is a comprehensive set of principles and practices that would expand the rights of survivors of sexual and dating violence and improve the adjudication process at [YOUR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY].

Sign below to support the efforts of students here at [YOUR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY] and nationwide to protect and support survivors of sexual and dating violence.

Name	Phone #	Email	Grad Year	Do you want to get involved?

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CARRY THAT WEIGHT CAMPAIGN

WHEREAS, there is a crisis of sexual and dating violence on college campuses; and,

WHEREAS, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men will be sexually assaulted over the course of their lifetime,¹ and 19% of women will “experience attempted or completed sexual assault [during] college;”² and,

WHEREAS, (NAME OF UNIVERSITY), like most colleges, must urgently take action to end gender-based violence on its campus and has significant room for improvement in its policies regarding sexual and dating violence on campus; and,

WHEREAS, the current structure of the university adjudication process fails to deliver justice and allows for the harassment and mistreatment of survivors; and,

WHEREAS, in response to this tendency, the State University of New York system has passed a system-wide Survivors’ Bill of Rights to protect and affirm the rights of survivors of sexual violence; and,

WHEREAS, Carry That Weight, a national, grassroots organization of student survivors and activists working to improve the way our colleges and universities handle sexual and dating violence, has partnered with the United States Student Association, the country’s oldest and largest national student-led organization that works to amplify student voices at the local, state, and national levels by mobilizing grassroots power to win concrete victories on student issues; and,

WHEREAS, Carry That Weight and USSA have developed a Survivors’ Bill of Rights framework that improves upon existing campus sexual and dating violence policies, and seek to have campus student associations and student organizations pressure campus administrations to adopt the Survivors’ Bill of Rights; thus,

LET IT BE RESOLVED, (add your student government name here) formally endorses the Carry That Weight campaign’s Survivor’s Bill of Rights,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, (add your student government name here) shall join students from around the nation in demanding their campus adopt the Survivor’s Bill of Rights, by engaging in (but not limited to) petition collecting, class announcements, campus and national events, submission of opinion editorials to campus newspapers, call in days, social media blasts, and more.

1 Finkelhor, David, et al. “Sexual Abuse in a National Survey of Adult Men and Women: Prevalence, Characteristics and Risk Factors,” Child Abuse and Neglect, 1990.

2 “Sexual Violence: Facts at a Glance.” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2012. <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/SV-DataSheet-a.pdf>.

CARRY THAT WEIGHT LETTER TO ADMINISTRATORS TEMPLATE

[TITLE AND NAME OF TARGET ADMINISTRATOR]:

We are writing to call on you to adopt the Carry That Weight Survivors’ Bill of Rights (attached), and to work with [YOUR ORGANIZATION] to ensure that [YOUR COLLEGE’S] gender-based violence policy is reformed to be survivor-centric and ensure a fair, transparent, and prompt adjudication process.

Colleges across the country are under intense public scrutiny for mishandling sexual and dating violence. Our school is no exception: despite ongoing pressure from survivors and activists, your office has failed to take concrete action to make this campus safe for students. [GIVE EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF WHERE YOUR SCHOOL NEEDS IMPROVEMENT.] [Add if your school is under Title IX investigation: The Department of Education is currently investigating [YOUR COLLEGE] for violating Title IX by failing to protect students and sweeping cases of gender-based violence under the rug.]

Instead of working with students to address these urgent concerns, you have treated this as a public relations crisis. Along with [LIST KEY TARGET ADMINISTRATORS], you continue to make symbolic but meaningless changes and prioritize the reputation of our college over the wellbeing of students. [GIVE EXAMPLE OF LACKLUSTER ACTION TAKEN BY ADMINISTRATION/OR POINT TO ABSENCE OF ANY ACTION] These efforts are poorly executed and demonstrate a willful neglect of the input of student activists and survivors. They will not prevent sexual or dating violence.

In order for [YOUR COLLEGE] to live up to its values and effectively prevent gender-based violence on campus, it is imperative that you adopt the Carry That Weight Survivors’ Bill of Rights and commit to helping carry the weight of gender-based violence alongside student survivors in our community. The Survivors’ Bill of Rights is a powerful framework to guarantee the rights of survivors and serve as a framework to use to reform [YOUR COLLEGE’S] gender-based violence policy.

The Carry That Weight Survivors’ Bill of Rights includes protections for all survivors on campus to [LIST PARTS OF BILL OF RIGHTS THAT ARE MOST APPLICABLE TO THE PROBLEMS ON YOUR CAMPUS]. Adopting the Survivors’ Bill of Rights will be both a powerful symbol of your commitment to making our campus safe for all students and will enact meaningful change on our campus. Survivors need to be assured these rights to be afforded justice, have the opportunity to heal, and be supported within our community.

We do not feel safe on this campus, and we fear for the students that come after us. There are rapists in our dorms, our dining halls, our libraries. There are survivors dropping out of school because no one is there to support them. We call on you to take immediate action: adopt the Survivors’ Bill of Rights, meaningfully engage with survivors and student activists, and help carry this weight. We have collected [INSERT NUMBER] of signatures from members of the [YOUR COLLEGE] community demanding the adoption of the Survivors’ Bill of Rights and a comprehensive reform of our college’s gender-based violence policy, to be undertaken with the consultation of survivors and student activists.

When students on this campus are unsafe, we need a [TITLE OF ADMINISTRATOR] who will take action. When students demand to be heard, we need a [TITLE OF ADMINISTRATOR] who responds. When the community is in crisis, we need a [TITLE OF ADMINISTRATOR] who leads. It is time you listen to us and help us carry the weight of gender-based violence. Be courageous [ADMINISTRATOR NAME], your students need you.

Signed,
[NAME(S) OF ORGANIZATION(S)]
Carry That Weight
US Student Association

SAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE AND ADVISORY

MEDIA ADVISORY

March 2, 2015 [Put date here of when you are releasing advisory.]

Contact:

Name (Phone Number)

Email

[This should be the contact info for your Press Liaison.]

NATIONAL CARRY THAT WEIGHT DAY OF ACTION

Student survivors and activists call on college administrations to help carry that weight

What: Student activists and survivors at [YOUR COLLEGE] are joining forces with students across the country to pressure college administrations to take concrete action to end gender-based violence on college campuses. Inspired by the activism and art of Emma Sulkowicz, who is boldly carrying the mattress from her dorm room as long as her rapist continues to attend Columbia University, students will be staging demonstrations on their campuses that include collective mattress carries as part of the Carry That Weight campaign. The Carry That Weight campaign encourages students of colleges across the country to hold college administrations accountable to the safety and wellbeing of their students by adopting the Survivors' Bill of Rights. Through this powerful demonstration of student power and solidarity, students will tangibly express their commitment to lift the burden of sexual and dating violence from the shoulders of survivors alone and pressure their college administrations to help carry that weight.

Who: [YOUR GROUP] is a coalition of student activists and survivors working to end gender-based violence at [YOUR SCHOOL]. We are a part of the Carry That Weight campaign which is organized by [Carry That Weight](#) and the [United States Student Association](#).

Where: The rally will be held at [LOCATION] on [YOUR COLLEGE'S] campus. [LOCATION] is accessible via [CAMPUS ENTRANCE/STREET].

When: March 9, 2015 at 3pm

Follow the conversation on Twitter: #carrythatweight

###

Contact:

Name (Phone Number)

Email

[This should be the contact info for your Press Liaison.]

For immediate release

NATIONAL CARRY THAT WEIGHT DAY OF ACTION TO HOLD COLLEGE ADMINISTRATIONS ACCOUNTABLE

[LOCATION OF YOUR COLLEGE] [Date, put in brackets] Student activists and survivors at [YOUR COLLEGE] are joining forces with students across the country to pressure college administrations to take concrete action to end gender-based violence on college campuses. Students will [DESCRIBE ACTION] to call on administrators to [DESCRIBE GOALS].

[PUT IN A QUOTE FROM ONE OF YOUR ORGANIZERS HERE]

The Survivor's Bill of Rights will protect the rights of student survivors and ensure the fair, transparent, and prompt adjudication of cases of gender-based violence at colleges around the country. [INSERT SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF WHERE YOUR SCHOOL NEEDS IMPROVEMENT AND THAT THE BILL OF RIGHTS WOULD ADDRESS]

Inspired by the activism and art of Emma Sulkowicz, who is boldly carrying the mattress from her dorm room as long as her rapist continues to attend Columbia University, students will be staging demonstrations on their campuses as part of the Carry That Weight campaign that will include collective mattress carries. The Carry That Weight campaign encourages students of colleges across the country to hold college administrations accountable to the safety and wellbeing of their students by adopting the Survivors' Bill of Rights and helping carry the weight of gender-based violence. At [YOUR COLLEGE], [INSERT REASONS WHY YOUR ADMINISTRATION NEEDS TO ADOPT THE BILL OF RIGHTS]

[PUT IN A QUOTE FROM ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR ORGANIZERS HERE]

On March 9th, the student demonstration at [YOUR COLLEGE] will begin at [TIME]. The demonstration will consist of [DESCRIBE YOUR ACTION]. [LIST PROMINENT/MAIN SPEAKERS] will speak on the topic of sexual and domestic violence and the urgent need for [YOUR COLLEGE] to adopt the Survivors' Bill of Rights.

This action is organized by [YOUR GROUP] at [YOUR COLLEGE], as a part of the Carry That Weight campaign organized by Carry That Weight and the United States Student Association.

###

SAMPLE OP-ED

Mandatory sexual violence alerts work for all

By **No Red Tape**

Trigger warning: This article contains material about sexual assault policy.

Here is an example of an email you should have received this year. In it, the University of Iowa alerts its students to a recent report of sexual violence on campus. The email alert is direct and simple. It includes a warning about the nature of its sensitive content, gives a brief and anonymous summary of a student's report of sexual assault, defines consent, and points students toward resources they might need to address a similar situation.

In this way, the “timely warning” takes a three-pronged approach to communicating about sexual violence. First, it provides support to students who have experienced trauma. Second, it directly affirms the notion that students who have given anything less than affirmative, enthusiastic consent, or who are intoxicated, have not given consent at all. Finally, it provides advice to prevent future assaults—for example, by asking students to intervene as active bystanders. The warning does not offer identifying information or details of the assault so as not to discourage students from reporting for fear of being outed or of retaliation.

Of course, the Columbia community is well-acquainted with timely warnings (or “security alerts”) from Public Safety. Students get them several times per month—just not when the crime reported is sexual assault. In fact, the **Clery Act** specifically states that criminal acts such as a “string of larcenies” or a “snow closure” do not necessitate an “emergency response” alert from university administration. And yet, we receive emails detailing petty theft and are told when certain on-campus gates are closed during the snowy season. Schools including Swarthmore, Pomona, and University of Iowa, however, are sending out timely warnings for sexual violence. It is time Columbia joins them.

The Clery Act requires universities to circulate timely alerts when any crime occurs that represents an ongoing or repeated threat to students and employees (including sex offenses, dating violence, harassment, hate crimes, and stalking). It requires Columbia to issue the alert as soon as it is reported to Public Safety or the New York Police Department. While we do not look to the law as the sole legitimate source of authority, we do recognize the realities of institutional power. An institution like Columbia will respond to the demands of the state, though it may not respond to those of its students.

The Clery Act states plainly the terms upon which timely warnings should be issued: “Timely warnings are triggered by crimes that have already occurred but represent an ongoing threat.” A recent report by the White House Council on Women and Girls found that, of the 7 percent of college-age men who admit to sexual assault, 63 percent have committed multiple offenses, averaging six each. That evidence alone is sufficient to demonstrate an “ongoing threat” to students on campus.

But Columbia has more than just a legal obligation to send these warnings. Of the nine security alerts we

have received this year, every single one indicated men of color as the suspects, and most were nonviolent crimes. By providing timely warnings for these crimes and not for instances of sexual violence perpetrated by its own students, Columbia demonstrates the kind of crimes it takes seriously and whom it considers dangerous.

Columbia literally creates an image of a criminal through its security alerts: a man of color, a non-affiliate of the University, who is committing minor crimes. This image of a criminal is wholly unrepresentative of crime and violence in our community, including sexual assault. By failing to provide these timely warnings, Columbia perpetuates deeply troubling institutional racism and shows a disturbing disregard for sexual violence and student safety.

Issuing timely warnings for sexual violence will also help regularly remind students of the resources available to them on campus. As students are well aware, such resources are often listed on badly designed websites, are worded in clinical language, and can be confusing to identify and locate. Listing support services in the security alerts will make these resources more accessible and better-utilized.

As survivors and allies ourselves, we want to acknowledge that receiving regular timely warnings could make students who have experienced sexual or intimate partner violence feel unsafe. It is a concern we take seriously and hope that the administration will too. We also recognize that survivors experience sexual violence and seek healing and justice in very different ways, and we do not claim to speak for all survivors. While we can't offer a perfect solution to these issues and don't believe that ending violence in our community can be achieved through timely warnings alone, we urge Public Safety and the administration to engage directly with diverse student voices to determine the safest and most supportive way to implement these warnings, comply with federal law, and challenge both a global and campus culture that enables and excuses sexual violence.

Sexual violence happens at Columbia. Its pervasiveness must become common knowledge. Students need to know more about all of the counseling and mental health resources on campus. Students need to know where they can report their assaults if they so choose. Students need to challenge racist constructions of violence and crime in our community. Students need to push back on a culture and systemic response that silences survivors and covers up their experiences. Timely warnings can help us do all of this.

SAMPLE ADMISSIONS ACTION STATEMENT

EMAIL -- FACEBOOK -- TWITTER

Trigger warning: This letter contains material about sexual and dating violence.
(Page 1/3)

Dear prospective students and families,

Welcome to [YOUR COLLEGE]! Colleges across the country are under intense public scrutiny for mishandling sexual and dating violence on their campuses. Our school is no exception: despite ongoing pressure from survivors and activists, [YOUR COLLEGE] has failed to take concrete action to make this campus safe for students. Adjudication processes consistently retraumatize survivors, fail to hold perpetrators accountable, and do not deliver justice. The campus resources available for survivors are underfunded and difficult to navigate, and the prevention education programs that currently exist are completely insufficient. Students are left struggling to carry the weight of gender-based violence alone. [FEEL FREE TO INSERT SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF WHERE YOUR SCHOOL NEEDS IMPROVEMENT.]

We are calling on [SCHOOL and/or SPECIFIC ADMINS] to take concrete action now, and [DEMAND]. However, instead of passing [DEMAND] and working with students to address these urgent concerns, [YOUR SCHOOL] has treated this as a public relations crisis. [INSERT SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF HOW YOUR ADMINISTRATION HAS FAILED TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES.]

As prospective students, we know you care about attending a college which prioritizes your safety. We need your help to hold all colleges accountable, and urge you to demand information from [SCHOOL] and other schools you visit about what they are doing to keep students safe and carry the weight of gender-based violence on campus.

We urge you to seriously consider the impact of sexual and dating violence on the campus community you choose to join. As you continue to visit and evaluate college campuses this spring, ask questions about how universities handle sexual and dating violence on campus. Ask administrators and students alike what they are doing to help carry the weight of gender-based violence. Ask about what counseling and reporting options are available for survivors. Ask if they have adopted the Survivors' Bill of Rights. Ask about what punishments are given to students who commit sexual and dating violence. Ask about what education programs universities use to prevent sexual assault and address rape culture. Ask if you will be safe on their campus.

The way a university addresses sexual and dating violence reflects the values and culture of its campus community. Be a part of the solution: Speak up for your own safety and ask questions. Consider these issues as part of your college decision process. And wherever you end up, be an active part of ending violence by helping to carry the weight of gender-based violence and making your campus a safer place for all students.

EMAIL -- FACEBOOK -- TWITTER

Trigger warning: This letter contains material about sexual and dating violence.
(Page 2/3)

Here are some questions that concerned students and parents can ask campus representatives about student safety and sexual and dating violence on campus:

Most colleges fail to adequately hold perpetrators accountable, and frequently hand down egregiously weak sanctions for students found "responsible" for gender-based violence. What sanctions does this college give to perpetrators? Does this college release statistics about the sanctions it gives out?

At many colleges, the staff who oversee the investigation, hearing, and adjudication processes of sexual and dating violence complaints are completely untrained and have major conflicts of interest. For example, it is unacceptable for deans to oversee these processes as they are primarily concerned with maintaining the school's reputation and soliciting funds. At this college, which staff members participate in the investigation, hearing, and adjudication processes? What training do they receive?

Survivors are too often denied the accommodations, resources, and support they need to heal. What does this college do to actively and sustainably support survivors? Do survivors have access to free counseling and health care? Are academic and housing accommodations granted to survivors at no cost? Are survivors' financial aid packages protected if they need to take time off from school?

Many schools do not have the necessary resources to support students who are survivors of sexual and dating violence. At this college, are there 24/7, professionally-staffed rape crisis resources?

Research indicates that 6-10 interactive educational workshops are the minimum necessary to effectively teach students about healthy relationships and sexual and dating violence. Given this information, what prevention education does this college provide to students? Does it address the needs of queer students, students of color, international students, immigrant students, and students of other marginalized identities? Is it mandatory and ongoing throughout students' time at college?

***Important note:** While the perspectives of your student tour guide and other current students are valuable in this discussion, we encourage you to direct your questions on this issue to college administrators.

As you continue to research and visit colleges, we encourage you to ask college representatives about these issues. Ineffective prevention education programs, lack of resources, and opaque and unjust adjudication processes are not [YOUR SCHOOL'S] problems alone. Finding out what colleges are proactively doing to end sexual and dating violence on their campuses is an important part of figuring out which college is the best choice for your future. If you have any questions about [YOUR STUDENT GROUP], please email us at [GROUP EMAIL].

Signed,
[YOUR GROUP] & Carry That Weight

EMAIL -- FACEBOOK -- TWITTER

Trigger warning: This letter contains material about sexual and dating violence.

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National Resources for Survivors

If you would like to talk with trained supporters about any of these issues, please feel free to utilize any of the resources below. They are all free, confidential, and available 24/7.

National Sexual Assault Hotline

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Trevor Project (LGBTQ Suicide Hotline)

1-866-488-7383



CONCLUSION

4. WHAT NEXT?

Reading list

Resources

Sample materials

Petition Signature Form

SGA Resolution

Letter to Administrators

Media Release and Advisory

Op-eds

Sample Admissions Action Letter

Conclusion

FRIENDS,

For too long, gender violence in our schools has been swept under the rug, frustrating survivors' ability to access education.

We refuse to believe that that is inevitable. Title IX promises us better than this: it guarantees us the civil right to go to school safe and free from harassment. It challenges the idea that gender violence must always and inevitably be a fact of life in our school communities.

The reason that each of us can go home, flip on the television, and hear about the issue of sexual assault in school is because of student survivors. Survivors who stood up and demanded justice on their campuses. Survivors who drafted petitions and occupied buildings. Survivors who told their stories to the press and shamed resistant institutions into changing their ways. Survivors who stayed in school. Survivors who did not. Survivors who organized to survive, and survivors who simply survived, recognizing that continuing to exist in a world that has made our existence near impossible, is political and powerful and transformative in its own right.

We are going to end this.

With love, appreciation, and deep gratitude,
Know Your IX

