

The Evaluation of Campus-Based Gender Violence Prevention Programming: What We Know about Program Effectiveness and Implications for Practitioners

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With contributions from Julie Evans

“Campus-based prevention programs have taken various forms and may have multiple goals, but many provide a structured educational experience for students in the form of a lecture, theatre presentation, film and discussion, or skill building workshop. This approach is based on the argument that sexual assault is culturally constructed and supported and that rape is a learned behavior that can be unlearned. In other words, the programs address sexual violence as a choice made by perpetrators who are often supported or tolerated by their peers, their communities, and a culture where the sexualization and exploitation of women and girls is the norm.”

Applied Research papers synthesize and interpret current research on violence against women, offering a review of the literature and implications for policy and practice.

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In November 2009, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* ran a front page article describing campus-based sexual violence prevention programs. Despite the proliferation of such programs on campuses across the country, the article noted, very little was known about their effectiveness in reducing the incidence of sexual assault on campus (Fogg, 2009). This remains true despite the fact that nearly all published reports on the effectiveness of sexual violence prevention programs are based on those implemented on a college or university campus (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Lonsway, Banyard, Berkowitz, Gidycz, Katz, Koss, Schewe, & Ullman, 2009). Even though colleges and universities have been a key venue for the development and evaluation of sexual violence prevention programming, the results of research have not linked such programming with a reduction in sexual assaults. Indeed, there are no studies that have examined the link between campus-based sexual assault prevention programs and a subsequent campus-wide reduction in the incidence of sexual violence (Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear, Garcia, & Hegge, 2011; Teten Tharp, DeGue, Lang, Valle, viMasseti, Holt, & Matjasko, 2011).

The lack of studies connecting violence prevention programs to a reduction in violence, however, tells only half the story. There remain important reasons to pursue campus-based gender violence prevention programming. First, the relationship between violence prevention programs and the incidence of sexual violence on campus is quite complex. For example, although the reduction of incidents of sexual violence on campus is the ultimate goal of most violence prevention programs, many universities experience an *increase* in reports of sexual assault once they begin to engage their campus community in such programs (Gibbons, 2010). Prevention programming can create a safer climate where victims feel more comfortable reporting, thus raising the number of recorded incidences of assault.

Second, using a “decrease in the incidence of sexual assault” as the only measure of success for prevention programs ignores many other short- and intermediate-term goals that are conceptually linked to a reduction in the incidence of sexual assault. For example, many programs have been shown to increase students’ knowledge about rape and to change attitudes related to rape so that students are less likely to blame victims (Anderson & Whiston, 2005). Such outcomes have been considered important steps toward a reduction in the incidence of sexual violence (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Lonsway, et al., 2009). Evaluation research on short- and intermediate-term goals helps practitioners to clarify and build upon the connections between immediate and long range goals (e.g., between a change in attitudes about rape and the reduction of the likelihood of perpetrating a sexual assault).

The third reason to pursue violence prevention programming on college campuses is that a significant number of women are hurt by sexual violence while attending college. Two recent national studies funded by the National Institute of Justice have found that approximately 20 percent of females attending college had experienced sexual assault while in college (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007), and the 2010 *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey* reported that 80 percent of female sexual assault victims experienced their first rape before the age of 25 (Black et al., 2011). Rather than accept the harm and long-term negative impacts associated with sexual violence, universities must continue to pursue the most promising strategies to prevent it.

Gender Violence¹ Prevention Programs: An Overview

Campus-based prevention programs have taken various forms and may have multiple goals, but many provide a structured educational experience for students in the form of a lecture, theatre presentation, film and discussion, or skill building workshop.² This approach is based on the argument that sexual assault is culturally constructed and supported (Berkowitz, 2000; Brownmiller, 1975; Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997; Katz, 2006) and that rape is a learned behavior that can be unlearned. In other words, the programs address sexual violence as a choice made by perpetrators who are often supported or tolerated by their peers, their communities, and a culture where the sexualization and exploitation of women and girls is the norm. The objectives of such prevention programs can include reducing attitudes that support rape, increasing knowledge about sexual violence, building empathy for survivors of sexual assault (Anderson, 2005; Foubert, 2000, 2007; Heppner, Humphrey, Hillenbrand-Gunn, & DeBord, 1995; Lonsway, 1996), increasing resistance strategies and skills (Gidycz, Lynn, Rich, Marioni, Loh, & Blackwell, 2001; Gidycz, Laymen et al., 2001; Gidycz, Rich, Orchowski, King, Miller, 2006; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993) and, more recently, increasing the likelihood that participants will intervene in potentially abusive or violent situations (Coker et al., 2011; Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Banyard, Plante, Cohn, Moorhead, Ward, & Walsh, 2005; Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004). Most of the research to date is on sexual violence prevention because programming that addresses other types of gender violence are relatively new to college campuses.

1. Previous discussion has been related specifically to sexual violence prevention programs because such violence has been the focus of incidence studies and prevention programming for much of the past two decades. However, the future of campus programs seems to be evolving toward a more comprehensive approach that encompasses other forms of gender-based violence as well, such as dating violence and stalking.

2. Some universities have also engaged in other prevention efforts such as social norms campaigns, but this paper focuses on peer- and professional-led educational programming.

How Effectiveness is Measured

Many evaluations of campus-based sexual violence prevention programs have utilized measures and statistical analyses that gauge the change in participants' knowledge, attitudes, and expected future behavior. More recent research has attempted to measure the change in the level of confidence in one's ability to intervene in potentially dangerous or harmful situations, as well as one's expected or actual behavior in potentially dangerous situations.

Change is usually measured by administering a pre-test survey before students participate in a violence prevention program and then administering a post-test survey after the program has ended. It is usually the case that the larger the overall change between pre and post-tests, the more effective the program is in reaching its goals. Although some researchers have conducted longitudinal studies that include the administration of one or more follow-up post-tests (for example, at three months or six months after a program is completed), most research findings are based on studies that collected one round of post-test information shortly after the completion of the program.

In addition to following a fairly standard method for the collection of information on how much participants change as a result of the program, most researchers use the same measures or scales to gauge students' attitudes and behaviors. Probably the most widely used scales are the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale or RMAS (Burt, 1980) and its revised version, the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale or IRMAS (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). These scales are used to measure a participant's "rape supportive attitudes" or "rape myth acceptance." Burt (1980) defined rape myths as "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women" (p. 134). The use of these standardized scales has allowed researchers to compare the effectiveness (or success) of one program to another. Recent research on bystander behavior has also used standardized measurement

tools to assess bystander efficacy (confidence in ability to perform positive bystander behavior), intention to help (likelihood to engage in certain behaviors), and bystander behavior (self-reports of engaging in positive bystander behaviors within a given time period) (Banyard, 2008). "Positive bystander behavior" is a term that refers to a person using helpful words or actions that may prevent or interrupt harm (in this case, sexual violence). Table 1 (see Appendix A) identifies some commonly-used scales in evaluation research and provides a description and sample item(s) for each.

Are Campus-based Programs Successful?

There are several approaches to evaluating sexual violence prevention used on college campuses. Table 2 (see Appendix B) identifies the types of rape prevention programming and the major findings related to each.

Risk reduction/ Self-defense programs

For over fifteen years, Gidycz and colleagues (Gidycz et al. 2001; Gidycz & Laymen et al., 2001; Gidycz et al., 2006; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993; Orchowski, Gidycz, & Raffle, 2008) have developed and evaluated sexual violence risk reduction programming. The most important goal of such programming has been to reduce the incidence of sexual assault victimization experienced by women (Gidycz et al., 2001; Gidycz et al., 2006; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). Other goals that function to support the principal goal of decreased victimization include increased confidence in and willingness to use assertiveness to resist sexually threatening advances, increased clarity in sexual communication, decreased self-blame, and increased knowledge of sexual assault statistics and dynamics (Gidycz et al., 2006). These programs do not support the attitude that women are responsible to prevent their own rape; rather, they draw on the idea that women have the power to reduce their own risk in some situations. Gidycz and colleagues have rigorously measured both immediate and long-term changes in attitudes and behaviors.

Risk reduction evaluations have produced mixed results. An early evaluation of the first version of such a program found that while it had an effect on the incidence of sexual assault experienced by women who had not previously experienced sexual assault, there was not a similar positive effect for women who were previously assaulted (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). When the program was modified to specifically address survivors of sexual assault, no positive effects were found for either survivors or for women without histories of victimization (Breitenbecher & Gidycz, 1998). Gidycz and colleagues further modified the program, and although there continue to be positive findings with respect to the intermediate goals of the program (discussed earlier), there is no conclusive evidence that participation in the program decreases the rate of victimization (Gidycz et al., 2001; Gidycz et al., 2006; Orchowski et al., 2008). A review of several studies that evaluated the effectiveness of risk-avoidance programs found that in cases of attempted acquaintance rape, forceful resistance strategies (fighting back) can be effective in thwarting the assault (Ullman, 2007). Of course, any rape resistance education program requires careful labeling and implementation to make clear that vulnerability to rape is not the same as responsibility for stopping rape.

Empathy building programs

Empathy-based programs give participants the skills to understand sexual violence, provide compassionate responses to disclosures, and reduce the likelihood of sexual assault perpetration by males. In one study of The Men's Program, an empathy-based program targeted specifically at men, Foubert, Newberry and Tatum (2007) found that men who participated in the program and joined a fraternity reported less sexually coercive behavior than fraternity men who did not participate. A follow-up study found that participants reported lasting positive attitude and behavior change two years after participating (Foubert, Godin, and Tatum, 2010). Some researchers have criticized this program because it does not follow established principles of prevention, particularly with respect to its brevity.

They also question the rigor of the methods used to evaluate this program because, although it has been evaluated for over a decade, the methods of evaluation have not evolved. Specifically, the evaluation has not been based on scientific standards such as the use of a comparison group³ (Teten Tharp, DeGue, Lang, Valle, Massetti, Holt, and Matjasko, 2011).

Rape awareness/attitude change programming

Many rape awareness programs focus on increasing knowledge about sexual violence, reducing students' beliefs in myths about rape (such as "no means maybe" and "most rapes are committed by strangers"), and decreasing attitudes that support rape (such as "a lot of women lead a man on and they claim to be raped"). These goals are based on the assumption that changing beliefs and attitudes about sexual violence will eventually lead to a decrease in sexual assaults (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Lonsway, 1996). There have been many published reviews of the research on these awareness programs (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Breitenbecher, 2000; Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Lonsway, 1996; Lonsway et al., 2009). Anderson and Whiston (2005) conducted a meta-analysis⁴ of 69 evaluation studies involving 18,172 participants. Their comprehensive review examined seven possible goals of violence prevention programming and found that, as a group, such programs are "somewhat effective" in reaching two specific goals: (1) changing negative attitudes towards rape, and (2) increasing knowledge about rape (p. 381). They also found that professional presenters were more effective than peers, and that the discussion of gender roles and rape myths was more effective at changing attitudes than were attempts to increase empathy for victims.

3. A comparison group is a group of people that does not participate in the program, but is otherwise similar to program participants. If the program participants show change and the comparison group does not, researchers can attribute changes to the program itself.

4. A meta-analysis quantifies the overall results of a large number of studies with the same or similar research questions.

Vladutiu, Martin, and Macy (2011) also conducted a meta-analysis. They analyzed eight literature reviews of 102 total studies on sexual violence prevention programs. The authors found that the outcomes most examined in evaluations of campus-based sexual assault prevention programs were attitudes about rape and acceptance of rape myths. They also identified several common elements of effective prevention programming, including professional facilitation, targeting of single-gender groups, and multiple exposure throughout a student's tenure at college. In another review of rape prevention and risk reduction program evaluations, Lonsway et al. (2009) concur that "[p]erhaps the most robust conclusion in this area is that single-sex programs are more effective than mixed-gender ones" (p. 15). Single gender programs may reduce defensiveness in men and create an environment in which men can positively influence each other (Berkowitz, 2002), while also providing a positive climate for women wherein they do not need to expend energy challenging or protecting male participants (Lonsway et al., 2009). A final disappointing finding is that while these programs do result in some short-term increases in knowledge and decreases in attitudes that support rape, they do not result in long-term significant changes in knowledge and attitudes (Anderson et al., 1998; Sochting et al., 2004; Breitenbecher, 2000). Clearly, further refinements of these programs are needed to achieve longer-term results.

Bystander programs

Unlike sexual assault education, the main purpose of which is to raise awareness and change attitudes about rape, bystander programs engage men and women not (primarily) as potential perpetrators or victims, but rather as potential bystanders to situations involving sexual or intimate partner violence. Bystander prevention programs presume that all members of the community have a role in shifting norms to prevent violence. These programs draw from a common literature on why and how bystanders intervene. The bystander model includes tools and ideas for action and strongly encourages each person to make a difference. Certainly, not all prevention programs based on the bystander model

are the same, but many include the elements listed above (see Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004; Berkowitz, 2002; Coker et al., 2011; Katz, 1995; Schwartz & Dekeseredy, 1997; Ward, 2001, 2002).

There have been an increasing number of evaluations of bystander programs in the past decade, but the approach remains "under evaluated" (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009, p. 92). Some evaluations have used a quasi-experimental research design, which allows for a high degree of confidence in the findings and set a direction for future work. For example, in 2002 the U.S. Department of Justice commissioned a longitudinal study of a university-level bystander prevention program. The program curriculum (Bringing in the Bystander) was accompanied by a set of measures used to assess changes in bystander attitudes, bystander efficacy, sense of community, intended behavior, and actual behavior (Banyard, et al, 2007; Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2005). The study demonstrated the utility of the bystander approach in reducing rape myth acceptance and increasing bystander efficacy. Perhaps most significantly, the study directly connected changes in attitude with changes in bystander behavior. This finding addressed the common critique of earlier studies that measuring changes in attitude reveals little about future behavior.

The June 2011 issue of *Violence Against Women* featured six articles, each addressing the evaluation of a different bystander education program. Overall, the studies of these programs showed success of the program in male-only, female-only, and mixed gender groups. For example, Coker et al. (2011) evaluated the effectiveness of The Green Dot Project and found evidence that the program resulted in decreased acceptance of rape myths, increased positive bystander behaviors by participants, and increased reports of observing positive bystander behaviors in others. It was also found that although dosage did affect outcomes, the lower dose group showed significant improvements, thus making the case for cost effective and time-efficient programming.

Overall Summary of Findings

The following themes emerged when looking at the literature related to the evaluation of campus-based anti-gender violence programming:

- Programs have been effective in increasing knowledge and decreasing rape supportive attitudes, especially in the short term.
- Although mixed-gender audiences have shown improvements in desired outcomes, the effect of interventions is greater with single-gender audiences (with the exception of bystander programs where effectiveness seems unrelated to the gender composition of participants).
- The effectiveness of anti-violence programming is greatly reduced over time, but booster sessions can help to maintain positive changes.
- Dosage matters. Longer and more frequent exposures to interventions result in greater outcomes.
- Complex discussions of gender roles and myths that support a climate of silence and shame around sexual assault are important elements of programs that seek to change attitudes about rape.
- Effective programs require well-trained prevention practitioners.
- Risk reduction/resistance strategy models for women and empathy-based programs for men show promise, but more evaluation is necessary.
- Bystander models show clear promise as effective violence prevention programs (in both single and mixed-gender groups), but more evaluation is necessary.
- Bystander programs have demonstrated a link between change in attitudes and change in behavior.

Implications for Prevention Programming

There are many opportunities for prevention practitioners, campus advocates, and campus staff to address the issues listed above. This review of the research shows that many programs have been successful at reducing rape myth acceptance and rape supportive attitudes. Although no causal link has

been established between prevention programming and the reduction of sexual violence, a conceptual link exists that suggests a change in attitude can lead to a change in behavior, especially for certain lower-risk populations. Specific opportunities for colleges and universities to engage in evidence-based gender violence prevention are described below:

- Many approaches to sexual violence prevention show promise and universities should choose programs based on their ability to target audiences based on gender. It may be wise for universities to have programming for all-male groups (bystander or empathy-based programs), all female groups (resistance/risk reduction or bystander programs), and mixed gender groups (bystander programs). Care should be taken in the development and implementation of any resistance/ risk reduction program to avoid any impression of blaming the victim for her assault. Of course, a university's overall strategy should include not only prevention programming but initiatives across the university and at various levels of prevention including policy and organizational practices (see *Resources* below for a discussion of a comprehensive approach).
- Reducing sexual violence on campus will require integrity of program implementation and the investment of the whole campus in violence prevention. Pre-packaged violence prevention curricula will be successful to the extent that all program elements are well replicated, adjustments are made where necessary, and support for the program is strong across the university.
- Sexual violence prevention programming should follow an ecological model proposed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (see *Resources* below). As such, prevention education is one component of a package of efforts to reduce sexual violence on the college campus. Other parts of that package include: social norms campaigns (marketing campaigns that normalize positive behaviors), alcohol abuse education, clear and enforceable consent-based sexual assault policies, organizational practices

that deter sexual harassment, and student judicial affairs policies and protocols that are fair and victim-centered. Such an approach reflects an ecological model shown to be effective in other prevention efforts (see Casey and Lindhorst, 2009 for discussion).

- Colleges and universities should be prepared for *reports* of sexual violence to increase on their campuses as they commit to sexual violence prevention. An increase in reports does not necessarily signify an increase in the incidence of sexual violence, but it does signify an increase in the willingness of survivors to make a report. Campus advocates and prevention practitioners should be ready and willing to discuss the benefits of having a campus climate that is more open to the issue of sexual assault, and in which more survivors are likely to come forward.

Additional Considerations for Campus-based Programs

In addition to the above findings based on the evaluation of campus-based gender-violence prevention programming, there are other important considerations for the creation, implementation, and evaluation of campus-based gender violence prevention programs. The role of alcohol as a facilitative agent to sexual assault is complex (Abbey, 2008), but its presence in a high percentage of campus-based assaults (Abbey, Zawacki, Buck Clinton, & McAuslan, 2001) suggests that prevention programming should include a discussion of alcohol consumption and abuse as it relates to sexual violence perpetration and victimization. Second, although there is evidence of a link between an adolescent dating violence prevention program and a reduction of dating violence (Foshee, Bauman, Ennett, Linder, Benefield, & Suchindran, 2004), no such evidence exists for programming at the college or university level. There is a need for more focused programming related to interpersonal violence on the college campus, and a related need for more published research in this area. Third, Lonsway et al. (2009) as well as Fisher, Daigle and Cullen (2008) recommend moving beyond targeting by gender in

order to focus certain messages to specific groups, such as those with higher risks of perpetration or victimization. These suggestions are echoed by Knight and Sims-Knight (2009) who argue that targeting males with high risk traits for perpetration may lead to greater success for college-based programs. Finally, the overwhelming majority of sexual violence prevention programs examined in this review focus on men as perpetrators and women as victims, and do not include information specific to marginalized groups. As the field progresses, attention must be paid to variables (i.e. demographic, prior victimization, disability) that may be associated with increased risk or vulnerability.

Conclusion

Colleges and universities have both ethical and legal responsibilities to respond to and prevent gender violence. One key resource to move things in the right direction is a violence prevention program that has been shown to be effective. Given the needed resources, researchers can continue to refine what “effective” means, assess new ideas for programming, and strengthen the conceptual link between attitudes, bystander behavior, and a reduction in violence. This review has considered several types of gender violence prevention programs and identified both key findings related to their effectiveness and several promising practices. Practitioners can use the information in this review to base their programs on the growing body of evidence related to effective programming while tailoring efforts to fit the specific needs of their campuses. Gender violence prevention programming that is based on our best evidence will be the most likely to reduce violence against women on campus.

Resources

The CDC's Social-Ecological Model of Violence Prevention:

http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/SEM_Framework-a.pdf

Sexual violence prevention on campus clearinghouse:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/topic/svp/campuskit/index.cfm>

Comprehensive university response:

<http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/PublicCommunications/beyondtitleIXfinal.pdf>

Bystander programs:

- Green Dot <http://www.kdva.org/greendot/>
- Brining in the Bystander/ Prevention Innovations <http://www.unh.edu/preventioninnovations/>
- Mentors in Violence Prevention <http://www.jacksonkatz.com/mvp.html>

Evaluation of violence prevention programs:

- ICASA's Interpersonal Violence Prevention Information Center <http://tigger.uic.edu/~schewepa/web-content/newpages/evaluations.html>
- Arizona Department of Health's clearinghouse on measures of violence and prevention <http://azrapeprevention.org/node/372>

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Appendix A - Table 1: Descriptions of commonly-used scales in evaluation research

Measures/Scales	Description	Sample item
Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMAS)	Measures the level of support for/agreement with myths about rape	If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her
Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMAS)		Rape accusations are often a way of getting back at men
Bystander Efficacy Scale	Measures the confidence in performing positive bystander behavior	1. Ask a friend if they need to be walked home from a party 2. I can help prevent violence in my community
Intent to Help Scale	Measures the likelihood to engage in certain bystander behaviors	1. Think through the pros and cons of different ways I might help if I see an instance of sexual violence 2. If I heard a stranger insulting their partner, I would get help from others....
Bystander behavior	Measures the actual positive bystander behaviors that participant report within a given time period	1. When I hear a sexist comment, I indicate my displeasure 2. Talk to the friends of a drunk person to make sure they don't leave their drunk friend behind at a party

Appendix B - Table 2: Types of rape prevention programming and the major findings related to each

Type of Program	Short and Medium Term Goals	Long Term Goal	Noteable Findings
Risk Reduction/Self Defense Programs	Increase confidence in and willingness to use assertiveness to resist sexually threatening advances, Increase clarity in sexual communication, Decrease self-blame, and Increase knowledge of sexual assault statistics and dynamics	Decrease the incidence of sexual violence on campus	Short term reduction in the incidence of sexual assault of women who were not victims of a sexual assault prior to participating in the program
Empathy Building Programs	Increase empathy for victims when they disclose an experience of sexual assault Decrease the likelihood that males will perpetrate sexual assault		Men showed a short term improvement in attitudes and a decrease in likelihood to perpetrate sexual assault
Rape Awareness/Attitude Change Programs	Increase knowledge about sexual violence Increase awareness about sexual violence on campus Reduce acceptance of myths about rape Reduce attitudes that implicitly support rape		Short term improvement in attitudes about rape and an increase in knowledge about rape Single gender programs and longer/more frequent programs are most successful
Bystander Programs	Increase knowledge and awareness in order to decrease ambiguity about where and when sexual and intimate partner violence occur Increase likelihood that participants will intervene in situations that support or promote violence Increase the bystander/situation intervention skills of participants		Short term improvement in attitudes about rape Increased reports of likelihood to engage in and confidence in bystander behavior Increased reports of actual bystander behavior

In Brief: The Evaluation of Campus-based Gender Violence Prevention Programming

Roberta E. Gibbons in consultation with Julie Evans

Colleges and universities have been a key venue for the development and evaluation of sexual violence prevention programming. However, there are no studies demonstrating a link between campus-based sexual assault prevention programs and a subsequent campus-wide reduction in the incidence of sexual violence (Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear, Garcia, & Hegge, 2011; Teten Tharp, DeGue, Lang, Valle, Massetti, Holt, & Matjasko, 2011).

Nevertheless, there remain important reasons to pursue campus-based gender violence prevention programming:

- Prevention programming can create a safer climate where victims feel more comfortable reporting, actually raising the number of recorded incidences of assault.
- Using a “decrease in the incidence of sexual assault” as the only measure of success for prevention programs ignores many other short- and intermediate-term goals that are conceptually linked to a reduction in sexual assault, such as increasing students’ knowledge about rape and changing attitudes related to rape so that students are less likely to blame victims (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Lonsway, Banyard, Berkowitz, Gidycz, Katz, Koss, Schewe, & Ullman, 2009).
- Research shows that a significant number of woman experience sexual violence while in college (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007; Black et. al., 2011).

Gender Violence Prevention Programs: An Overview

- Campus programming has many variations, but generally offers a structured educational experience for students in the form of a lecture, theatre presentation, film and discussion, or skill building workshop.
- Programming based on the argument that sexual assault is culturally constructed and supported (Berkowitz, 2000; Brownmiller, 1975; Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997; Katz, 2006).
- Objectives include reducing attitudes that support rape, increasing knowledge about sexual violence, building empathy for survivors of sexual assault (Anderson, 2005; Foubert, 2000, 2007; Heppner, Humphrey, Hillenbrand-Gunn, & DeBord, 1995; Lonsway, 1996), increasing resistance strategies and skills (Gidycz, Lynn, Rich, Marioni, Loh, & Blackwell, 2001; Gidycz & Laymen et al., 2001; Gidycz, Rich, Orchowski, King, Miller, 2006; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993) and, increasing the likelihood that participants will intervene in potentially abusive or violent situations (Coker et al., 2011; Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Banyard, Plante, Cohn, Moorhead, Ward, & Walsh, 2005; Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004).

How Effectiveness Is Measured

- Researchers use evaluation measures and statistical analysis techniques to gauge the change in participants’ knowledge, attitudes, and expected future behavior.
- More recent research investigates change in the level of confidence in one’s ability to intervene in potentially dangerous or harmful situations, as well as one’s expected or actual behavior in potentially dangerous situations.
- Most research findings are based on studies that collected one pre-test and one post-test on subjects; there are a few longitudinal studies that take post-tests 3 or 6 months following intervention.
- The most widely used scales for attitude change are the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale or RMAS (Burt, 1980) and its revised version, the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale or IRMAS (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999).

Are Campus-based Programs Successful?

The following themes emerged when looking at the existing literature related to the evaluation of campus-based anti-gender violence programming:

- Programs have been effective at increasing knowledge and decreasing rape supportive attitudes, especially in the short term.
- Although mixed-gender audiences have shown improvements in desired outcomes, the effect of interventions is greater with single-gender audiences (with the exception of bystander programs where effectiveness seems unrelated to the gender composition of participants).
- The effectiveness of anti-violence programming is greatly reduced over time, but booster sessions can help to maintain positive changes.
- Dosage matters. Longer and more frequent exposures to interventions result in greater outcomes.
- Complex discussions of gender roles and myths that support a climate of silence and shame around sexual assault are important elements of programs that seek to change attitudes about rape.
- Effective programs require well-trained prevention practitioners.
- Risk reduction/resistance strategy models for women and empathy-based programs for men show promise, but more evaluation is necessary.
- Bystander models show clear promise as effective violence prevention programs (in both single and mixed-gender groups), but more evaluation is necessary.
- Bystander programs have demonstrated a link between change in attitudes and change in behavior.

Implications for the development and implementation of campus-based gender-violence prevention programming

Specific opportunities for colleges and universities to engage in evidence-based gender violence prevention are described below:

- Many approaches to sexual violence prevention show promise and universities should choose programs based on their ability to target audiences based on gender. Current research indicates that the bystander model shows significant promise for a single presentation to mixed gender groups. A university's overall strategy should include not only prevention programming but initiatives across the university and at various levels of prevention including policy and organizational practices.
- Reducing sexual violence on campus will require of program implementation and the investment of the whole campus in violence prevention.
- Sexual violence prevention programming should follow the ecological model, with prevention education is one component of a package of efforts to reduce sexual violence on the college campus.
- Colleges and universities should be prepared for reports of sexual violence to increase on their campuses as they commit to sexual violence prevention.

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