TRANSFORMING RELATIONSHIPS:
A VIOLENCE PREVENTION TOOLKIT FOR PEER EDUCATORS
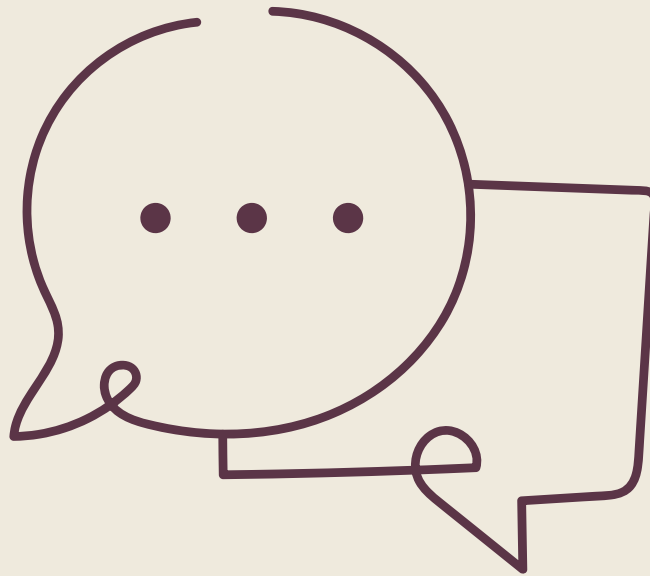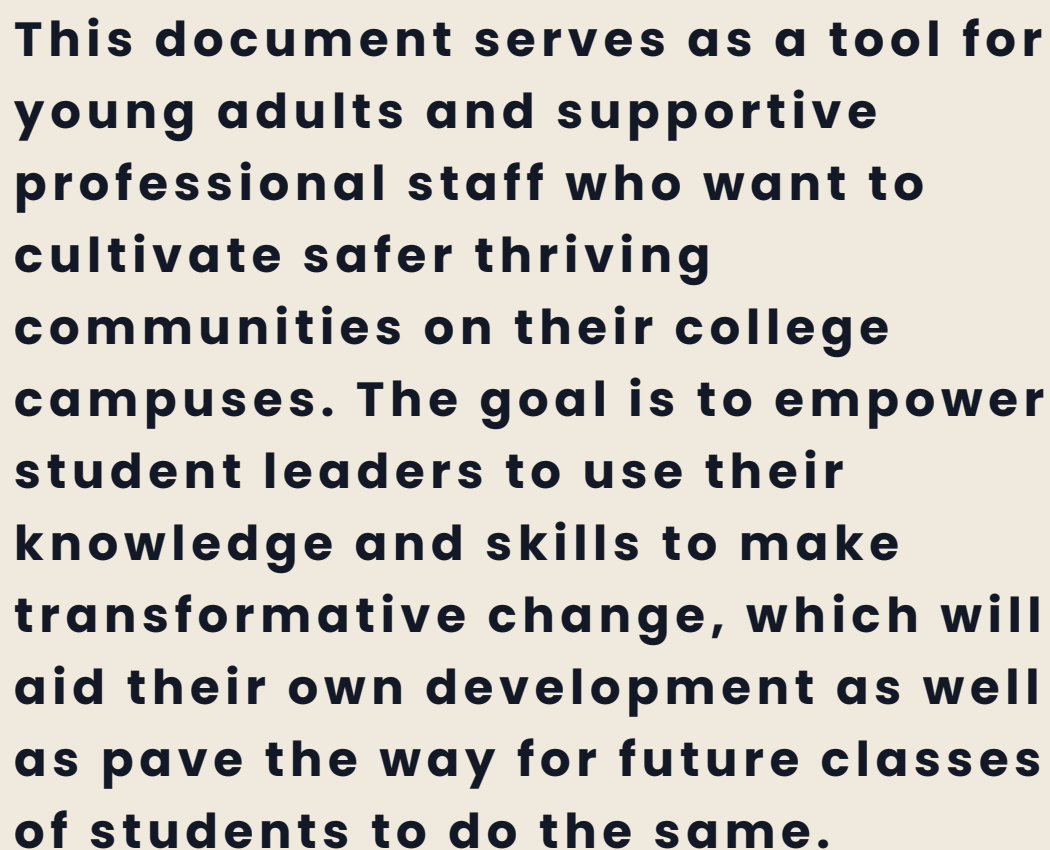
Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence
ACTIONALLIANCE

This document serves as a tool for young adults and supportive professional staff who want to cultivate safer thriving communities on their college campuses. The goal is to empower student leaders to use their knowledge and skills to make transformative change, which will aid their own development as well as pave the way for future classes of students to do the same.

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FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence is an umbrella term for a spectrum of nonconsensual behaviors where assertions of power, control, and/or intimidation are the primary motivators. These forms of violence include, rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, sexual coercion, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, domestic or intimate partner violence, **stalking**, and other harms such as hazing and other forms of hate-based violence.

In a relationship, these behaviors are often displayed in a pattern, rather than as an isolated incident. Someone who causes harm may enact many of these violent behaviors over and over, either making the person they are harming feel trapped in their cycle of **power and control**, or escalating the behaviors intentionally so that the person being harmed doesn't even notice until the violence is so severe that both staying in or leaving the relationship can be fatal.

Often when youth are educated about sexual assault or intimate partner violence, they are discussed as solely interpersonal matters, rather than recognizing that these forms of violence are products of our larger society's cultural norms and structures of power.

Anti-violence and violence prevention movements have existed for decades across the globe.

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Research both quantitative and qualitative finds that all people, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, or background are impacted by sexual violence.

Preventing sexual violence is a global issue and requires that we unlearn and change harmful attitudes and behaviors around sex, relationships, communication, identity, and power. It requires that we hold **those who cause harm** accountable for healing their communities, and that we take social and political action against those in positions of power who continue to cultivate spaces where harm persists.

TALKING ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

More than 1 in 3 women, 1 in 4 men[1], and almost 1 in 2 transgender people[2] have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetime, so it is likely that you know someone who is a **survivor**. It is always important to be **trauma-informed** when discussing sexual violence, which means considering how harm and trauma affect someone in a myriad of ways, validating their trauma responses, and cultivating healing environments that are least likely to lead to their re-traumatization.

When talking about sexual violence, we do not want to:

- **blame a survivor for what happened to them or suggest that they encouraged or deserved it.**
- **take their control away by forcing them to report the incident or to disclose information to someone else.**
- **deny that what happened to them was harmful or deny that it even happened.**
- **make jokes about their or anyone else's experience of sexual violence.**

Oftentimes in the media, these forms of violence are normalized or even glamorized, so we may be socialized to respond in an inaccurate or harmful way. Unlearning myths and being **survivor-centered**, intersectional, and trauma-informed takes practice; both practicing new language and training our brain to think beyond what we were socialized to believe.

1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Preventing sexual violence*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/fastfact

2 National Center for Transgender Equality. (2016). *The report of the 2015 U.S. transgender survey executive summary*. https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Executive-Summary-Dec17.pdf

PRIMARY PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Preventing sexual violence starts with understanding the reasons someone might harm another person, then creating strategies to disrupt those root causes to stop any harm before it happens.

Prevention: Primary prevention efforts change conditions (laws, norms, rules) so that perpetration is less likely to happen. Strategies are designed to shift attitudes, behaviors, and norms that support and perpetuate the root causes of violence and to promote healthy behavior and communities.[3]

Response: The ultimate goal is to get to a place where our prevention efforts are so strong that no one experiences harm. However, until we reach that goal, we want to make sure that we have comprehensive and effective services and resources in place that help individuals after they have been harmed.

These response services include counseling, healthcare, punitive or restorative justice options, sheltering, court services, and other community or institutional response measures.

On college campuses, this can look like confidential survivor **advocacy**, short-term mental health counseling, altered housing assignments or class schedules, or Title IX policy violations or interventions. Early intervention response can not only help mitigate the long-term effects of violence victimization, but it can also help prevent survivors from being revictimized in the future.

3 Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance. (n.d.). *What is prevention?* https://vsdvalliance.org/change-culture/prevention-in-virgnia/what-is-prevention/

Awareness / Education: Often on our campuses we seek to raise awareness about the issue of sexual violence for people who don't know how prevalent it is or have not been in communities where it is talked about. We also seek to educate people about what sexual violence looks like, what lies we've been told about it, how it impacts us, where survivors and perpetrators can get help, and what we can do to educate other people about it.

While awareness and education are not considered primary prevention because they do not aim to prevent someone from perpetrating violence, they are crucial to creating an environment where violence is talked about, understood, and deemed socially unacceptable, which are all important factors for primary prevention.

Risk Reduction: Risk reduction a common strategy used to combat violence by encouraging individuals, typically women, to change their behavior in order to avoid becoming a potential victim. These strategies are not considered primary prevention either, as they do not change a potential perpetrator's behavior. While individuals may feel safer and more empowered by engaging with risk reduction strategies, it is important to note that these strategies alone will not create safer communities.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AS A TOOL OF OPPRESSION

Humans have a long history of being violent toward people who are "different" or have identities that are not considered the "norm" in a community. Commonly, these differences have been linked to a person or persons' Race, Ethnicity, Nationality, Skin Color, Age, Disability, Faith, Gender Identity or Expression, Sexual and/or Romantic Orientation, Socioeconomic Status or Class, Tribal or Indigenous affiliation, First Language, immigration Status, or Body Size.

Each of these identity groups exist on a spectrum, and along those spectrums humans have created hierarchies that have shifted and grown roots throughout our history.

Think of a hierarchy in the shape of a pyramid. In a hierarchy, the identities on top of the pyramid are referred toas dominant identities, while those on the bottom are referred to as marginalized identities. Dominant identities are considered the norm, the standard, and are highly valued within a society. Marginalized identities are taught to be seen as abnormal, wrong, morally corrupt, inhuman, and generally an inconvenience to those in the dominant group.

As seen in the image on the next page, people who hold dominant identities are the ones in the inner circle. Because they are seen as normal and are highly valued, they hold more power and influence as they move through our society, individually, collectively, and institutionally.

Identities that are considered marginalized are identity groups that have been culturally, historically, systemically, and institutionally oppressed. Seen below, they are the groups on the outer circle of the image.
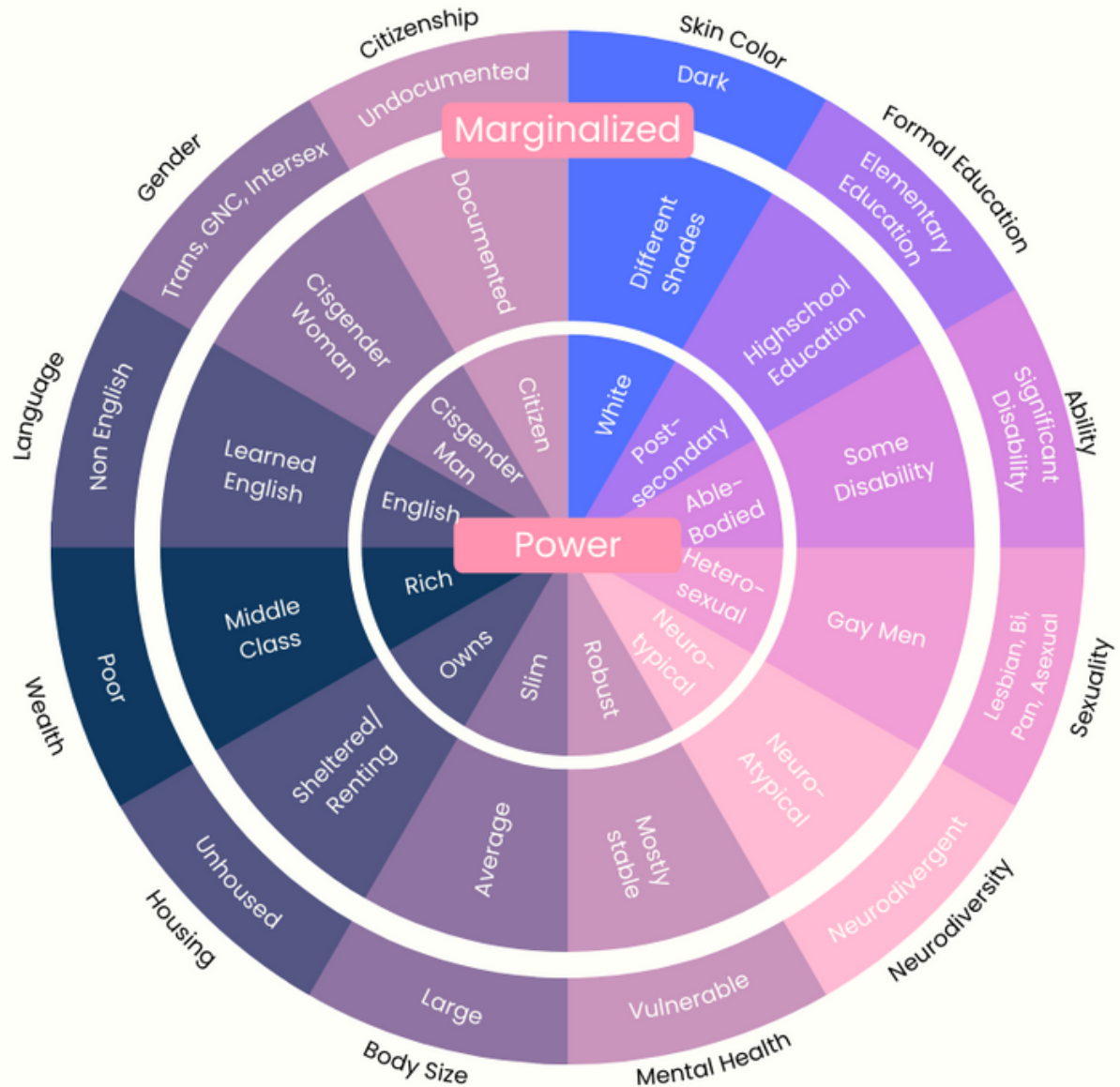
People who hold marginalized identities do not hold as much power moving through society and may face many barriers throughout life solely because of how their identities are viewed by others (both by people in the dominant groups as well as people in their own and other marginalized groups). Because they don't hold power, they also often get filtered through systems and situations that create further life disadvantages and increase their likelihood of experiencing violence, such as the foster care system, criminal justice system, gang affiliation, poverty, and homelessness.

People are not a monolith. No one group is the same because no one person holds just one identity. Kimberlé Crenshaw, a lawyer and professor at the UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School,

coined the term **Intersectionality** in 1989 to describe the intersection of identities and power. An example that Dr. Crenshaw was faced with was an organization that had discriminatory hiring practices; they claimed they were not sexist because they hired white women, and also claimed they were not racist because they hired Black men. However, they would not hire a Black woman. They were being discriminatory in a way that was easier for them to excuse because there wasn't a way to talk about those stacked layers of discrimination at the time.

That intersection of one's identities and the power associated with those identities impacts how they see the world, how the world sees them, how they are treated, and what they have access to.

While anyone of any identity can be victimized by sexual violence, folks who already hold one or more marginalized identities - and thus are deemed powerless by society - are at a higher risk of being targeted. In addition, those who hold dominant identities have more power and are therefore more likely to be taken seriously when they are victimized or may be more likely to evade punishment or accountability when they commit harm. This is a result of oppression, which operates via a system of power.

In oppressive societies, people who hold one or many dominant identities are given unearned power while those who hold one or more marginalized identities are rendered powerless. When it comes to sexual and domestic violence, power operates the same way. When someone is victimized by violence, their power is taken from them,

while the person who harmed them is seeking to gain power over them. Sexual violence is a power-based attack, just as racism, sexism, anti-LGBTQIA+ antagonism, anti-Trans antagonism, and ableism, etc. are forms of power-based violence. This violence is used to perpetuate oppression of the targeted group.

Historically and currently, sexual violence has been used as a tool to keep people controlled. For example, during colonization of what is now known as the United States of America, Indigenous peoples were raped and murdered by European settlers who wanted to take their land and resources. After the Atlantic slave trade, slave owners used sexual violence as a tool to abuse and intimidate African people in order to keep them subservient to white Americans, and as a tool to justify fear of and violence against African men.

The anti-rape movement, led by Black women and many others, predated and paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement and the fight for women's rights. We know that tools of oppression are used in the same ways for many groups. Latinx communities, Asian communities, LGBTQ+ people, women and children, people living in poverty, older adults, neurodiverse people and people with disabilities, and religious minorities have been disproportionately victimized by sexual violence either by their oppressors or within their communities. Knowing our history, it is clear that sexual violence is a result of oppression and therefore cannot be combated without combating these artificial hierarchies of identity as well.

This is why anti-oppression frameworks must be at the center of anti-violence work.

All sexual violence survivors could face barriers to the justice and healing that they deserve due to the inequities that exist in our criminal justice system as well as other punitive systems. However, survivors with marginalized identities may face additional barriers and consequential trauma solely because of their identities.

These survivors are up against negative cultural attitudes and beliefs about their identity that exist because of mainstream media, widespread misinformation, individual lack of awareness and understanding of their identity, as well as historical oppression of people who hold that identity.

In order to get at the root of sexual violence, we have to advocate for an equitable society where power is shared.

Part of that journey is eliminating our personal biases, advocating for **social justice**, listening to and following the leadership of people who are at the margins, expanding our personal and professional networks, improving access to our institutions for marginalized people, and enhancing equity within our spheres of influence.

KEY FRAMEWORKS IN SEXUAL VIOLENCE PRIMARY PREVENTION

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS: THE ROOT CAUSES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Why do people commit violence? And why are some people and communities more vulnerable to violence victimization than others? There are many factors that could impact whether someone commits or experiences sexual violence throughout their life. Risk factors are personal characteristics, life experiences, and sociocultural influences that are linked to violence. Protective factors are characteristics that positively contribute to one's development and thus lessen the likelihood that they will commit or be victimized by violence.[5] Many of these factors, both risk and protective, are out of an individual's control, so it is important to take a comprehensive approach to prevention in order to address the individual's attitudes and behavior as well as the influences from others around them.

5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *Risk and protective factors.* National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html

SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL

The Social Ecological Model (SEM) is a model used in **public health** to better understand violence and the various ways strategies can be implemented to prevent it. The traditional SEM includes four levels: individual, relationship, community and society, all nestled within one another.

- The individual level looks at the attitudes and beliefs as well as other factors in one's life based on their biological history and personal circumstances that could make them more or less vulnerable to becoming a victim of violence or someone who commits violence.
- The relationship level looks at the nature of individuals' close relationships.
- The community level looks at relationships and social norms within local institutions such as schools, workplaces, churches, and neighborhoods.
- The society level looks at social and cultural norms, structural inequities, and laws and policies that impact relationships within communities.

6 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *The social-ecological model: A framework for prevention.* National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention.
https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/social-ecologicalmodel.html
7 Prevent Connect. (n.d.). *Socio-ecological model.* http://wiki.preventconnect.org/socio-ecological-model/
8 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2004). *Sexual violence prevention: Beginning the dialogue.* National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/SVPrevention-a.pdf

When we understand the risk factors that occur at each level, we can develop prevention strategies that create protective factors at each level, and comprehensive strategies that work across multiple levels at the same time.[6,7,8]

The Social Ecological Model illustrates how factors influence each other at different levels:	Risk Factors are a set of behaviors or conditions that increase the risk for sexual violence perpetration:	Protective Factors are behaviors or conditions that reduce or buffer against the risk for sexual violence perpetration:
Societal (e.g., laws, systems, the media, and widespread social norms)	Societal norms that: ◦ support sexual violence ◦ support male superiority and sexual entitlement ◦ maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness • Weak health, economic, gender, educational, and social policies • High levels of crime and other forms of violence	At this time, there are no evidence-based findings on societal-level protective factors for sexual violence. Additional research can help fill this gap.
Community (e.g., neighborhoods, schools, faith communities, and local organizations)	• Poverty • Lack of employment opportunities • Lack of institutional support from police and judicial system • General tolerance of sexual violence within the community • Weak community sanctions against sexual violence perpetrators	• Community support/ Connectedness • Coordination of resources and services among community agencies • Access to mental health and substance abuse services
Individual (e.g., a person's attitudes, values, and beliefs) and Relationship (e.g., relationships with family, partners, friends, and peers)	• Family environment characterized by physical violence and conflict • Emotionally unsupportive family environment • Poor parent-child relationships • Association with sexually aggressive, hypermasculine, and delinquent peers • General aggressiveness and acceptance of violence • Adherence to traditional gender role norms • Hypermasculinity and lack of empathy	• Connection/commitment to school • Connection with a caring adult • Affiliation with pro-social peers • Emotional health and connectedness • Empathy and concern for how one's actions affect others

Adapted from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center [9]

9 National Sexual Violence Resource Center. (2019). *Risk & protective factors*.
https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/Risk%20%26%20Protective%20factors_Final508.pdf

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships exist on a spectrum from healthy to abusive, with unhealthy relationships somewhere in the middle.

Healthy

A healthy relationship means both you and your partner are:

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Honest
- Equal
- Enjoying personal time away from each other
- Making mutual choices
- Economic/ financial partners

Unhealthy

You may be in an unhealthy relationship if your partner is:

- Not communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not trusting
- Dishonest
- Trying to take control
- Only spending time together
- Pressured into activities
- Unequal economically

Abusive

Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner is:

- Communicating in a hurtful or threatening way
- Mistreating
- Accusing the other of cheating when it's untrue
- Denying their actions are abusive
- Controlling
- Isolating their partner from others

Adapted from Love is Respect[10]

10 love is respect. (n.d.) *Relationship spectrum.* https://www.loveisrespect.org/everyone-deserves-a-healthy-relationship/relationship-spectrum/

A healthy relationship means that both you and your partner are:

Communicative

You talk openly about problems and listen to one another. You respect each other's opinions.

Respectful

You value each other's opinions, feelings, and needs, and give each other the freedom to be yourself and be loved for who you are.

Trusting

You believe what your partner has to say and don't feel the need to "prove" each other's trustworthiness.

Honest

You're honest with each other but can still keep some things private.

Equal

You make decisions together and hold each other to the same standards. You and your partner have equal say with regard to major decisions within the relationship. All partners have access to the resources they need.

Setting Boundaries

You enjoy spending time apart, alone, or with others. You respect each other's need for time and space apart. You communicate with each other about what you are and aren't comfortable with.

Practicing Consent

You talk openly about sexual and reproductive choices together. All partners always willingly consent to sexual activity and can safely discuss what you are and aren't comfortable with.

Parent Supportively

All partners are able to parent in a way that they feel comfortable with. You communicate together about the needs of the child(ren), as well as the needs of the parents.

Adapted from the National Domestic Violence Hotline[11]

11 National Domestic Violence Hotline. (n.d.). *Healthy relationships*. https://www.thehotline.org/resources/healthy-relationships/

Communication is essential to forming, maintaining, and ending relationships in a healthy way. Whether they are romantic relationships, sexual relationships, friendships, family relationships, or professional partnerships, the same tools often apply. As you may have learned by taking Literature or Public Speaking classes in school, communication is an art form that can be difficult to master without practice.

Some healthy communication tools to practice include:
- Using nonviolent language.
- Verbalizing our likes, wants, and needs, as well as our dislikes and hard "No's."
- Establishing our boundaries and holding a firm line with those who try to cross them.
- Emotional literacy, or being able to read and appropriately respond to someone's emotions, body language, and nonverbal cues.
- Gracefully handling rejection and respecting the boundaries that others set.
- Checking in when a relational rift may have been formed.
- Apologizing and taking accountability for harm we cause others, regardless of our intent.

HEALTHY SEXUALITY – – –

Healthy sexuality can be defined as the capacity to understand, enjoy, and control one's own sexual and reproductive behavior in a voluntary and responsible manner that enriches individuals and their social lives. Sexuality is an integral part of the human experience with physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual dimensions. Creating opportunities in which people can explore their own sexuality in a positive and healthy manner is crucial to achieving a culture where sexuality is regarded as a force for well-being in each of our lives.

The above definition of healthy sexuality acknowledges that sexuality encompasses much more than the physical, and that it is critical to create opportunities for people to explore their sexuality in order to create culture change. A healthy sexuality paradigm promotes sexual health and seeks to challenge the social and cultural norms that perpetuate and uphold **rape culture**.

Social norms are group-level beliefs and expectations about how members of the group should behave and can serve to support or condone violent behavior in intimate relationships. Social norms that promote male superiority and sexual entitlement and those that maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness support sexual violence.[12] These norms play a role in sending messages that a person "deserves" sex on the basis of being a man or masculine, regardless of their partner's ability or willingness to **consent**. These norms also contribute

12 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Risk and protective factors*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html

to assumptions that women are "regulators" who must control access to their bodies and a lack of resistance must be consent.[13] At the individual-level, known risk factors for sexual violence perpetration include a lack of concern for others, coercive sexual fantasies, hostility toward women, adherence to traditional gender roles, and hyper-masculinity.[14] Strategies to promote healthy sexuality should address sexual communication, sexual respect, and consent, as well as work to undo harmful gender norms.[15,16] Promoting healthy sexuality is a key strategy to create a world free from sexual violence.

13 Hirsch, J.S., Khan, S.R., Wamboldt, A., and Mellins, C.A. (2018). Social dimensions of sexual consent among cisgender heterosexual college insights: Insights from ethnographic research. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 64*(2019), 26-35.

14 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Risk and protective factors*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention.
https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html

15 Basile, K.C., DeGue, S., Jones, K., Freire, K., Dills, J., Smith, S.G., and Raiford, J.L. (2016). *STOP SV: A technical package to prevent sexual violence*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention.
https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sv-prevention-technical-package.pdf

16 Gerber, A. and Kessler, K. (2018). Integrating sexual violence prevention into comprehensive sexual health education. In Monusky, K.I. (Ed.), *Partners in Social Change* (pp. 1-4). Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs.
https://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resources_publications/partners_social_change/PISC_2018.pdf

POWER DYNAMICS — — —

When we come together as a group or a team, we all have different roles that inform the way we show up, or how we act and behave towards others, in that space. The way we show up in community with others is not only informed by our assigned roles but also the social groups or identities that we hold.

Both assigned roles and social groups can imbue us with power, conscious or unconscious, in a group dynamic. When we think about power, we often think about power over, or the ability to get someone to do something against their will. This can be done by using incentives, punishments, and/or manipulation. It also refers to the places in our lives where we have acquired or inherited authority to withhold benefits. Power is not static;

it can change over time and in different situations, as we see in any group dynamic. However, this system of power and hierarchy undermines the autonomy of others, or people's own personal power to decide what they can and cannot do. As a group, the purpose of coming together is to work towards a common goal. Domination is antithetical to that purpose.

As a group, it is possible to move away from power over and move towards power with. Power with others is the ability to influence and take action based on uniting with others. This is the power that comes from community, solidarity, cooperation. Those with power, whether from positions of authority or from social groups, can try to share the benefits of that privilege with others.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION ‑ ‑

Conflict unveils systemic traumas and the ways oppressive systems and violent people have used power in an extractive way against us across time, space, and generations. When we avoid conflict or move through it carelessly, we end up acting out those structural patterns unconsciously, even if we are from an identity harmed by those systems. Whether or not we have formal power, we can enact subtle and gross forms of anti-Blackness, white supremacy, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, and other structural oppressions. This can end relationships, organizations, and movements.[17]

Navigating conflict can feel uneasy and uncomfortable whether it be with those who we are in community with or not. Whether it arises among friends, family, partners, or coworkers, conflict can be difficult, especially because the dominant culture we live in emphasizes shaming and blaming others rather than working together. Resolving conflict is a skill that many of us are not taught to develop throughout our lives, so we often bring up painful emotions with one another instead of working thoughtfully and healthily through disagreements or tension. Fortunately, conflict is normal and can even be healthy. The ways we handle conflict can be the building blocks of creating a culture of care amongst one another and within ourselves. Conflict can also be generative and a way to learn more about one another and the ways we can grow together.

Learning to resolve conflict in a group with shared values is often messy even if everyone is all working towards a shared purpose.

It is important to consider power when it comes to working through conflict.

If we work to handle conflict by understanding how we show up with our multiple identities and how others show up with their identities, we can bring the liberated futures we envision to all of our relationships.

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17 Ross, J. & Ghadbian, W. (2020). *Turning towards each other workbook.* https://96cd8e90-7f87-4399-af6b-c7156e91189a.filesusr.com/ugd/05f4b7_cec53ab03dcd4f32b1fecaf66ede2d80.pdf

Healthy conflict resolution and communication can strengthen relationships; it just requires some practice and space to do so. We can lean into conflict by acknowledging power, practicing our values, and appreciating your group's strengths.

Acknowledge Power	• Support individual freedom and autonomy within groups' purpose • Sit with our own discomfort with differing opinions, especially if we have more positional, social, or economic power • Cultivate a culture that values learning, frames mistakes as learning experiences, and practices taking responsibility for impact
Lead with Purpose, Practice Values	• Develop a long-term vision for the future • Define goals that speak to how the group wants to work together, not just what we want to achieve • Leave space in planning for reflection, breathing room, big picture thinking, and the likelihood of needing to adapt as conditions change
Appreciate our Diverse Strengths and Evolve Together	• Practice giving and receiving concrete feedback • Celebrate the diversity of the group's strengths and approaches • Actively express appreciation

Adapted from Turning Towards Each Other Workbook [18]

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BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

As students, it is not uncommon to encounter a spectrum of sexual violence and **dating violence** across campus spaces. This spectrum of violence can range from language to actions, such as name-calling and invalidating one's partner's feelings, to stalking and physical abuse. It can feel challenging and awkward to intervene when you see instances of violence happening to your friends and peers, and even if you do want to say something, it can be difficult to know exactly how to intervene.

The bystander approach seeks to encourage people to intervene when violence is already in progress or likely to occur. The 3 D's is a popular bystander intervention tool that teaches people different strategies for intervening:

- direct - confront the situation, point out threatening or inappropriate behavior in a safe, respectful manner,
- distract - draw away or divert attention, OR
- delegate - appoint someone else to help intervene.

As a bystander, it is important to consider your own safety and the safety and wellbeing of others, especially those most likely to be impacted by the violence.

Bystander intervention strategies can help people build skills to respond to harm against their loved ones or even strangers, and to build skills that will help them intervene in instances of any hate-based harm to protect community members and to cultivate a community of accountability, respect, and care.

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However, if we want to create a culture of consent and safety on campus, it is necessary to not only intervene when violence is in progress or likely to occur, but to also work to prevent violence from ever occurring. Our goal is to cultivate a community culture where violence is not the norm, therefore we already have a foundation of respect and care where there are no instances of harm to intervene in. By interrupting oppressive language and actions, we can work to address root causes of violence on our campuses.

Things to consider when making a decision about whether or how to interrupt/Intervene

Language and Culture
- Does the individual committing harm have a shared understanding of the type of harm they are perpetrating?
- When translating from one language to another, is there an equivalent word for terms and concepts?

Relationships and Longevity
- How well do I know the person and how will that affect my decision and approach?
- How could an interruption change our relationship and am I open to that change?
- How might NOT interrupting affect me, them, others, and our relationship?

Resilience and Safety
- Do I feel safe enough?
- Could interrupting risk harm to the oppressed person or group?

Adapted from Turning Towards Each Other Workbook[19]

19 Ibid.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT — — —

Youth engagement is centered on supporting young people so that they can thrive and step into their power. There are multiple strategies along the Youth Engagement Continuum[20] that work toward achieving this goal, whether that looks like working with young people as clients or following their lead in creating culture change. It is important to meet young people where they are and to consider their needs. All strategies should be informed by the young people you are in community with.

Youth development is based in the belief that young people deserve safety, structure, belonging, self-worth, meaningful relationships, and opportunities for independence. This can look like groups organized around career preparedness,

mentorship programs, or any variety of projects working alongside youth so that they are given the opportunity to grow.

Youth development for all its transformative power focuses mainly on building the skills of the individual with adults remaining the authority and custodians of that development and relationship. This is not to say it is without merit or importance, but it requires us to acknowledge the limits of this work, especially concerning youth leadership. Fortunately, youth engagement exists along a continuum and youth development can be used as the foundation to youth organizing.

The Funder's Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO) defines youth organizing as engaging "young people in building power for social change"

Youth Services Approach	Youth Development	Youth Leadership	Civic Engagement	Youth Organizing
• Defines young people as clients • Provides services to address individual problems and pathologies of young people • Programming defined around treatment and prevention	• Provides services and support, access to caring adults and safe spaces • Provides opportunities for the growth and development of young people • Meets young people where they are • Builds young people's individual competencies • Provides age appropriate support • Emphasizes positive self identity • Supports youth-adult partnerships	*Includes components of youth development approach plus:* • Builds in authentic youth leadership opportunities within programming and organization • Helps young people deepen historical and cultural understanding of their experiences and community issues • Builds skills and capacities of young people to be decision makers and problem solvers • Youth participate in community projects	*Includes components of youth development and youth leadership plus:* • Engages young people in political education and awareness • Builds skills and capacity for power analysis and action around issues young people identify • Begins to help young people build collective identity of young people as social change agents • Engages young people in advocacy and negotiation	*Includes components of youth development, youth leadership and civic engagement plus:* • Builds a membership base • Involves youth as part of core staff and governing body • Engages in direct action and political mobilizing • Engages in alliances and coalitions

and using "distinct sets of culturally and contextually resonant practices to develop youth leadership within a safe and supportive environment."[21] Youth organizing values youth-adult partnerships, respects youth voice, promotes holistic development, and creates a path where young people can continue meaningful community leadership. It is with the confidence and skills developed in youth development strategy that youth can springboard into spearheading larger community change.

Youth organizing increases young people's socio-political capacity and emphasizes connections between community problems and broader political and social issues. It is with this increased capacity and political analysis that young people can identify themselves as agents of change. Peer educators and peer education programs are uniquely positioned to engage meaningfully with young people who are interested in making change in their communities.

20 Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing.(n.d.). *An emerging model for working with youth.* https://fcyo.org/uploads/resources/8141_Papers_no1_v4.qxd.pdf

21 Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing. (n.d.). *Transforming young people and communities: New findings on the impact of youth organizing.* https://fcyo.org/resources/transforming-young-people-and-communities-new-findings-on-the-impacts-of-youth-organizing.
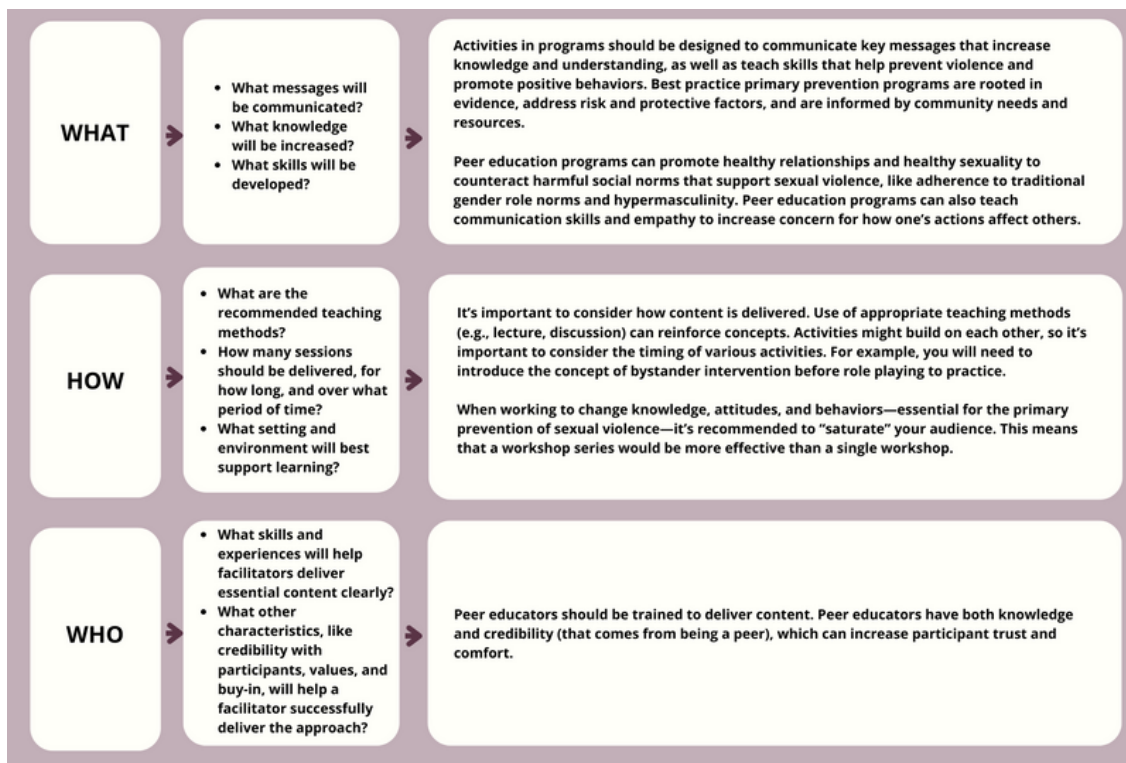
TOOLS
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

As peer educators, you will be in the role of developing programs and facilitating workshops intended to promote healthy relationships and healthy sexuality, build communication and bystander skills, and empower youth leadership.

Whether you're starting from scratch or have an existing peer education program, it can feel overwhelming to develop programming for your campus community. What topics should you cover? How will you deliver programming? How often should you deliver programming?

The following guiding questions may assist in identifying essential elements for program development:

WHAT	• What messages will be communicated? • What knowledge will be increased? • What skills will be developed?	Activities in programs should be designed to communicate key messages that increase knowledge and understanding, as well as teach skills that help prevent violence and promote positive behaviors. Best practice primary prevention programs are rooted in evidence, address risk and protective factors, and are informed by community needs and resources. Peer education programs can promote healthy relationships and healthy sexuality to counteract harmful social norms that support sexual violence, like adherence to traditional gender role norms and hypermasculinity. Peer education programs can also teach communication skills and empathy to increase concern for how one's actions affect others.
HOW	• What are the recommended teaching methods? • How many sessions should be delivered, for how long, and over what period of time? • What setting and environment will best support learning?	It's important to consider how content is delivered. Use of appropriate teaching methods (e.g., lecture, discussion) can reinforce concepts. Activities might build on each other, so it's important to consider the timing of various activities. For example, you will need to introduce the concept of bystander intervention before role playing to practice. When working to change knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors—essential for the primary prevention of sexual violence—it's recommended to "saturate" your audience. This means that a workshop series would be more effective than a single workshop.
WHO	• What skills and experiences will help facilitators deliver essential content clearly? • What other characteristics, like credibility with participants, values, and buy-in, will help a facilitator successfully deliver the approach?	Peer educators should be trained to deliver content. Peer educators have both knowledge and credibility (that comes from being a peer), which can increase participant trust and comfort.

Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [22]

22 Perkinson, L., Freire, K.E., Stocking, M. (2017). *Using essential elements to select, adapt, and evaluate violence prevention approaches*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/adaptationguidance.pdf

ACTIVITIES

The following activities can be used by themselves or in conjunction with other activities as components of your peer educator program. The activities can and should be modified for your audience. The activities as written are for in-person delivery but they can be adapted for use in online spaces using tools like Zoom, Jamboard, Mentimeter, etc.

Facts, Feelings, Values: Active Listening/ Storytelling

Objective: Participants will identify and practice active listening strategies and healthy communication

Time: 60 Minutes

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers, timer

Defining Active Listening and Forming Guidelines:

- Place a flipchart paper on the wall with the words "active listening" written at the top.
- (*Script*) Ask participants how they know or can tell someone is actively listening to them in a conversation. Responses can include words, phrases, actions, or feelings.
- Write their responses on the flipchart paper. These responses will act as participants' guidelines as they go through the storytelling activity.
- After coming to consensus with guidelines, participants form groups of four. Assign each person in a group a number one through four.
- (*Script*) Before going into the activity, ask the group to take a moment to reflect (they can write it down if helpful) on a moment where they experienced conflict with a friend and how they handled the conflict.

Storytelling Activity:

- (*Script*) Have person number one in the group tell their story first, have person number two listen for the facts of the story, person number three should listen for the feelings of the people involved in the story, and person number four will listen to the values that the storyteller and others involved hold.

30

- Storytellers will have 2 to 3 minutes to tell their story to their small group. Take 10 minutes for listeners to share what they identified after the story has been told. Listeners are encouraged not to interrupt the storyteller and follow the guidelines of active listening that the large group came up with at the start of the session.
- During the 10 minutes of reflection, the storyteller is welcome to ask probing questions such as: "What did I say that made you think that?" People are welcome to share their experience of playing their assigned role (e.g., challenges, difficulties, etc.)
- This activity will be repeated three more times until everyone in the small group has a chance to play every role (storyteller, facts, feelings, and values).
- After all members of the small group have been in each role, the entire group will come back together to discuss their experience of what it felt like to be actively listened to.

Identity Game

Objective: Participants will be able to explore various aspects of their identity. This activity will help participants to challenge lack of empathy and adherence to traditional gender role norms.

Time: 30 Minutes

Materials: List of identities, paper, marker, tape

Facilitator Note: For this activity, it's especially important to utilize group agreements or community guidelines for how to best show up in the space thoughtfully and respectfully.

Navigating our Different Identities:

- Tape identities (each on a separate sheet) around the room.
- As a group read off and review the following aspects of "identities." Welcome participants to ask any clarifying questions about the social groups:
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Education
  - Political Affiliation
  - Religious Affiliation
  - Gender Expression
  - Gender Identity
  - Socio-Economic Status
  - Immigration Status
  - Health Status
  - Appearance
  - Race
  - Ethnicity

- Age
  - Native Language
  - Physical Ability/Disability
- After reading and reviewing each identity, participants will be provided a prompt and then asked to move to an identity they feel most comfortable with.
- (*Script*) There is no "right" or "wrong" answer. Just because you choose one part of your identity does not mean that you are ashamed of the other parts of your identity. You are just choosing the identity you feel aligns with the prompt I am giving you.
- (*Script*) The first prompt it to move to the identity you feel the "safest" in. Safest can mean comfortable, safe, no worrying, familiar, however you define "safest."
- Once all participants have moved to their identities, invite participants to share why they moved to that identity. Remind participants of group agreements.
- (*Script*) The second and final prompt it to move to the identity you feel the least "safe" in. Least safe can mean uncomfortable, unsafe, annoying, unfamiliar, however you define "least safe." Again, choosing an identity does not mean that you are ashamed of it, it just means that this part of your identity does not provide you with the same kind of safety that other parts of your identity may provide you.
- Once all participants have moved to their identities, invite participants to share why they moved to that identity. Remind participants of group agreements.

Debrief

- After participants have shared, bring the group back together to process the
  - What was it like to participate in that activity?
  - What was it like to make choices around identity?
  - Were there any realizations or anything you learned about yourself or your identity?
  - What messages do you receive from others about your identities?
  - How have these messages impacted the way you express yourself or move through the world?

- (*Script*) Identity is complex. This means we are not just one thing. Our personalities and entire being is impacted and influenced by the world and how we show up in the world. Some of us may act one way with family and act a different kind of way with friends. This is ok. We did this activity to explain how one part of our identity informs/influences other parts of our identity and how external messages might change how we express the many parts of our identities.

Rape Culture Pyramid Activity

Objective: Participants will learn about the different ways that sexual violence is structurally and culturally created and sustained.

Time: 60 Minutes

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers, printed handouts

Defining Rape Culture:

- Draw a large triangle on your flipchart paper and ask the group what they think of when they hear the phrase "Rape Culture."
- Write down people's responses based on the structure (e.g., structural, cultural, invasion of space, etc.) of the Rape Culture Pyramid without telling the group the logic of where you are putting their answers.
- Ask clarifying questions if necessary and allow the group to explore and build their own definition of rape culture. Our definition: A rape culture is one that normalizes and rationalizes sexual violence as inevitable and a part of "natural" human behavior rather than understanding violence as structurally and culturally created and sustained.
- Pass out copies of the Rape Culture Pyramid handout.
- (*Script*) Ask the group how their responses were similar or different from the handout. Ask participants what they notice about the pyramid and its structure
  - Which of these items in the pyramid are visible/ invisible?
  - How do the words on the bottom relate to the words at the top or each other?
  - Are there particular groups of people and/or communities that are targeted by rape culture? How does rape culture impact society as a whole?

- In which level does your campus invest the most energy to interrupt these forces?
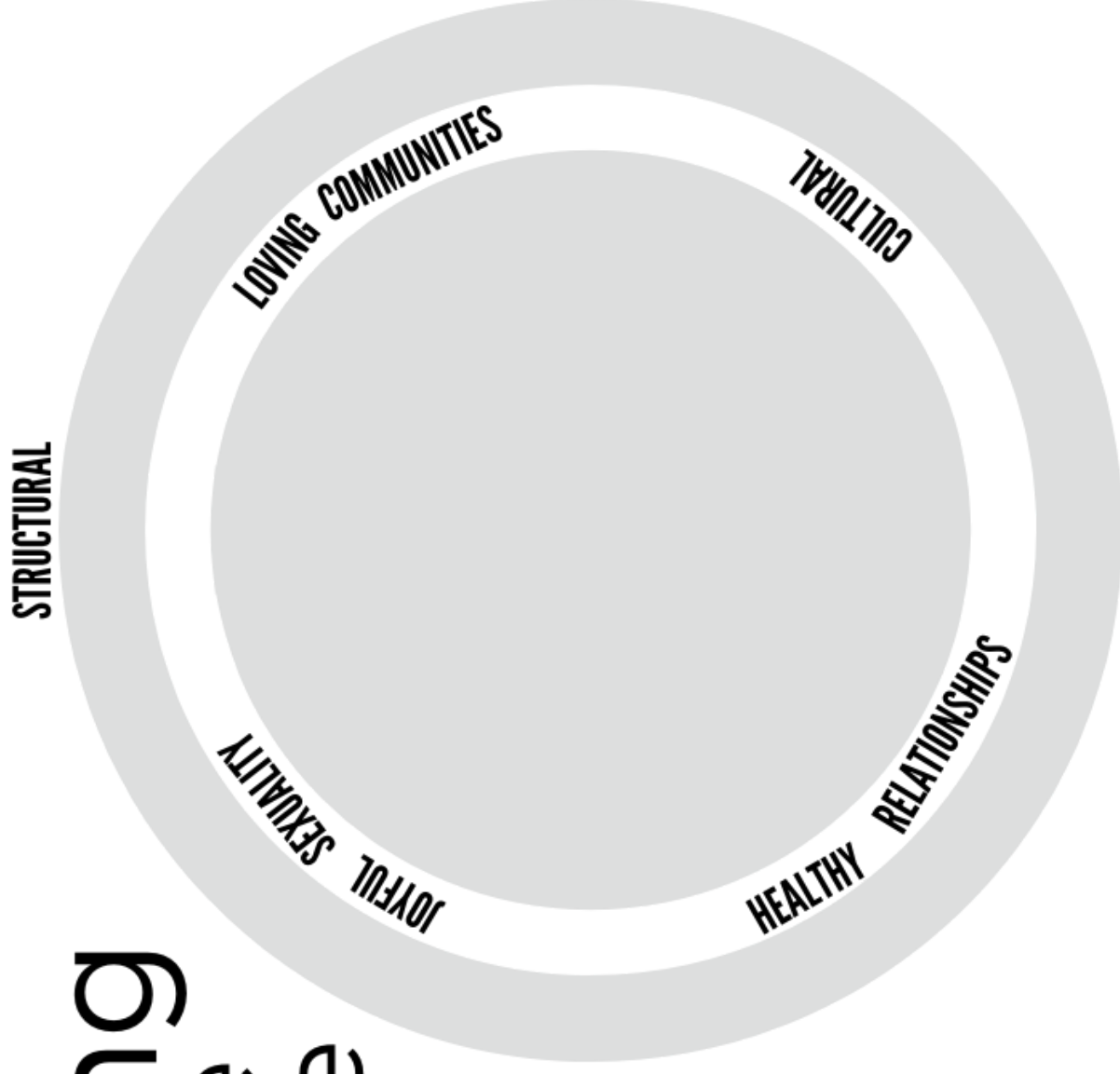
Ending Rape Culture:

- Pass out the Ending Rape Culture Activity handout.
- (*Script*) Now that we have a better understanding of how rape culture is a part of structures of power, cultural and community beliefs, relationships and individual behavior and biases, how can we build a better world?
- Have participants individually start with the outer circle, the structural changes that are necessary to end rape culture.
- Then they will move towards the inner circle to envision what it would be like to live in communities and have relationships that centered consent, healing, justice, and respect.
- Bring the group back together and using the flipchart paper again, mimic the new shape (circle with outer ring).
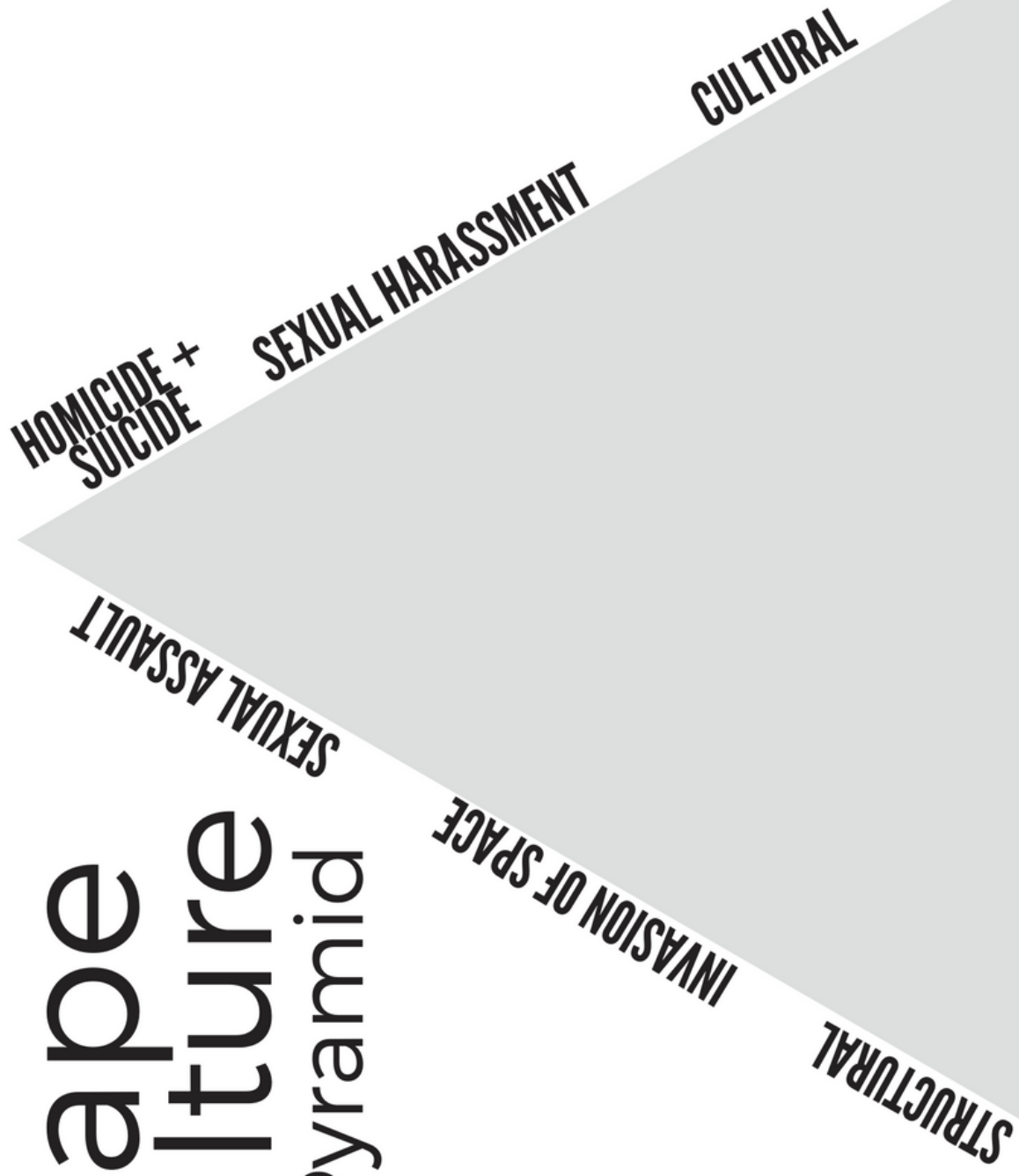- Using participants responses, create a collective vision for ending rape culture

Rape Culture Pyramid

HOMICIDE + SUICIDE

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

CULTURAL

SEXUAL ASSAULT

INVASION OF SPACE

STRUCTURAL

DEATH

RAPE
DRUGGING
COERCION
GROPING
SEXUAL COMMENTS
NON-CONSENSUAL SHARING OF SEXTS + NUDES

"ACCIDENTALLY" BRUSHING UP AGAINST SOMEONE
FLASHING VOYEURISM
CATCALLING
TALKING/FOLLOWING

PRIVILEGE + ENTITLEMENT RIGID GENDER ROLES
RAPE JOKES SLUT SHAMING OBJECTIFICATION
DRESS CODES VICTIM BLAMING "BOYS WILL BE BOYS"

HOMOPHOBIA TRANSPHOBIA XENOPHOBIA
RACISM SEXISM ABLEISM CLASSISM COLONIALISM

Ending Rape Culture

STRUCTURAL

LOVING COMMUNITIES

CULTURAL

JOYFUL SEXUALITY

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Rape Culture Pyramid

CULTURAL

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

HOMICIDE + SUICIDE

SEXUAL ASSAULT

INVASION OF SPACE

STRUCTURAL

Circles of Sexuality

💡 **Objective:** Participants will learn about components of human sexuality and make an illustration of how sexuality can be expressed and experienced in healthy, affirming ways

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⏱ **Time:** 60 Minutes

📋 **Materials:** Flipchart paper, markers, printed list of examples, tape

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Defining the Six Components of Human Sexuality:

- (*Script*) When most people see the words "sex" or "sexuality," they think of intercourse and other kinds of physical activity. Tell the group that sexuality is more than sexual feelings or the act of sex. It is an important part of who a person is and who they will become. Sexuality is important to talk about because it's part of all of us from the day we are born until the day we die— even those who identify on the asexual spectrum.
- Display the six circles of sexuality each on separate pieces of newsprint around the room.
- (*Script*) Explain that this way of looking at human sexuality breaks down into six different components: body awareness (sensuality), intimacy and relationships, sexual orientation and gender identity, sexual and reproductive health, sexual behaviors and practices, and power and agency.
- (*Script*) Using the listed definitions, explain each circle briefly to help participants understand the concepts underlying the circle:
  - Body awareness (sensuality): Awareness and feeling of one's own body and other people's bodies. Sensuality helps us feel good about how our bodies look and what they can do. Sensuality also allows us to enjoy the pleasure our bodies can give ourselves and others.

- Intimacy and relationships: The ability and need to be close to another human being and accept closeness in return. Aspects of intimacy can include sharing, caring, emotional risk-taking, and vulnerability. Intimacy is having a sense of belonging or a connection with another.
- Sexual orientation and gender identity: A person's understanding of who they are, including:
  - Gender identity: A person's internal sense of being a man, woman, non-binary, gender expansive, etc.
  - Gender expression: How a person presents their gender through actions, dress demeanor, and how those presentations are interpreted.
  - Sexual orientation: Who a person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to.
- Sexual health and reproduction: A person's capacity to reproduce and behaviors and attitudes that support sexual health and enjoyment. This includes information about anatomy, reproduction, contraception, sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention, and self-care.
- Sexual behaviors and practices: Who does what with which body parts, items and/or partners.
- Power and agency: Power within sexual relations, including:
  - Power within, derived from a sense of self-worth and understanding of one's preferences and values, which enable a person to realize sexual well-being and health.
  - Power to influence, consent, and/or decline.
  - Power with others to negotiate and decide.
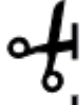 - Power over others; using sex to manipulate, control, or harm others.

Sorting Components of the Six Circles:

- Distribute the pre-cut examples evenly to group members (either individually or in teams).
- Tell group members they are to tape each example in the circle that corresponds to the correct term. After all the examples have been placed in the circles, review and make corrections as necessary. Participants might notice that some examples are in multiple circles (e.g., boundary-setting with partner and communicating with partner).

Brainstorming Healthy Expressions of Sexuality:

- In the large group, ask participants to brainstorm healthy expressions for each circle of sexuality. The facilitator should write these examples on the existing circles around the room.
- Debrief the activity:
  - Which of the six sexuality circles feel most familiar? Why do you think that is so?
  - Is there any part of these six circles that you never thought of as being part of sexuality before? Explain.
  - Which circle is most important for other college students to know about? Least important?
  - What did you learn about sexuality as you participated in this activity?

Body Awareness (Sensuality)

Touch

Being aware of and in touch with the pleasure our bodies can give us

Body image

How we feel about the body, how it looks, feels, and what it can do

Intimacy and Relationships

✂

Sharing

A basic human need to be emotionally close to another person or persons and to have that closeness returned.

Trust

Give us a sense of belonging, connection, and affection.

Liking, loving

Caring

Can be friendships, family relationships, or romantic relationships.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Understanding our sense of how male or female we feel

The ways in which we express our gender (being male or female, both or neither)

The direction of our romantic attractions (lesbian, gay, straight, bi, queer, etc.)

How we think about ourselves as it relates to male or female (gender identity)

How we act, dress, behave and interact to demonstrate our gender (gender expression)

Sexual Health and Reproduction

What many people focus on when they think of "sex education"

Health of the sex and reproductive organs

Self-care

Contraception

Pregnancy and birth

HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

Birth Control

Sexual Behaviors and Practices

Abstinence

Physical contact
(Kissing, touching, showing affection to partner)

Feeling/talking about desire

Boundary-setting with partner
(Telling partner up front what you want to do and don't want to do)

Masturbation
(Touching yourself)

Hugging

Communicating with partner
(Telling partner what you like and/or don't like)

Power and Agency

- Using sex or sexuality to manipulate or control other people

- The ability to negotiate and decide on sexual activity with a partner

- Rape

- Sexual harassment

- Consent

- Understanding one's own preferences and values, self-worth

- Sexual assault

- **Boundary-setting with partner**
  (Telling partner up front what you want to do and don't want to do)

- **Communicating with partner**
  (Telling partner what you like and/or don't like)

Youth Leadership Mind Mapping

Objective: By the end of the activity, participants will be able to define what youth leadership looks like and visualize the ways that they fit into that definition

Time: 30 Minutes

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers

Collaboratively Defining Youth Leadership:

- Place a flipchart paper on the wall with the word "leader" written at the top.
- *(Script)* Ask participants to name what comes to mind for them when they hear the words "leader" or "leadership"; this can include words/phrases, specific people, or positions/roles.
- *(Script)* Ask about youth leaders and youth leadership: Do they think young people, people their age, can be leaders based on the words, phrases, people, and positions they named previously?

Youth Leadership Mind Mapping:

- This question will be answered by a mapping activity. The facilitator will guide the participants in thinking about the different spaces in their community in which they can provide leadership, the different leadership roles youth take on in their communities, and what that leadership looks like in action.
- On a new sheet of flipchart paper (you may want to create an even larger drawing space with multiple sheets), write, "Youth Leadership" in the middle and circle it.

40

- *(Script)* Tell participants that they will be thinking about the multiple areas of their lives: school, jobs, home, religious groups, clubs, sports, and so on. Tell participants that it's good for them to name even the most "obvious" answers so you can get a full picture with your map (e.g., your campus).
- (*Script*) Start with the where: "Where are youth involved in community?" or "What spaces do you spend a lot of a time in?"
- Write down answers, circle them, and draw lines connecting them back to the center circle. Examples might include school, home, religious centers, sports fields/courts, community centers, clubs, neighborhood parks, and so on.
- (*Script*) Then think about the how: "How do you and other youth participate in your communities?" or "what are the different roles that you and other youth play in your communities?"
- Write down answers, circle them, and draw lines connecting them back to the center circle and the "where" responses. Examples might include student, older/younger sibling, peer advocate or educator, student government member, sports team member or captain, neighbor, friend, and so on.
- (*Script*) Finish up with what: "What activities, roles, or jobs do you take on when you are in these spaces?" or "What do you do in these spaces?"
- Write down answers, circle them, and draw lines connecting them back to the center circle and the "where" and "how" responses. Examples might include tutor peers or younger students, babysit for neighbors and siblings, do errands for elderly neighbors, help parents or other adults with gardening, teach friends new skills in sports or the arts.
- After all responses are documented and connected to corresponding "where," "how," and "what" responses, the poster should look like a giant web. Comment on any connections you immediately notice and ask participants if they notice any themes and connections.
- (*Script*) Once the activity is over, lead them through reflection questions, such as:
  - Do you feel like a leader in the roles, activities, and jobs illustrated in this map/web? Why or why not?
  - What are the barriers to you feeling like a leader?
  - When do you feel most empowered as a leader in your life?

GLOSSARY

Advocacy: Advocacy for survivors of sexual assault has many dimensions, but is rooted in assisting each survivor in their healing process. Self-determination and autonomy, feeling heard, and social support are important factors in healing that advocates can provide. Advocates might provide crisis intervention; information, options, and resources; as well as psychoeducation about sexual assault.

Consent: Consent is the enthusiastic agreement to sexual contact or sexual activities. Consent is and must be freely given, reversible, informed, enthusiastic, and specific. Someone cannot consent if they are legally underage, they are incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol, or are asleep or unconscious.

Dating Violence: Dating violence is defined as controlling, abusive, and aggressive behavior in a romantic relationship. It occurs among people who are heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, cisgender, transgender, and gender non-conforming, and can include verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, or a combination of these.

Intersectionality: Intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a lawyer and professor at the UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School, in 1989 to describe the intersection of identities and power. Dr. Crenshaw was faced with an organization that had discriminatory hiring practices; they claimed they were not sexist because they hired white women, and also claimed they were not racist because they hired Black men. However, they would not hire a Black woman. They were being discriminatory in a way that was easier for them to excuse because there wasn't a way to talk about those stacked layers of discrimination at the time.

GLOSSARY - - - - - - - - -

People who Cause Harm: Mainstream narratives often use the word "perpetrator" to refer to someone who has caused harm. This language can create a perpetrator-victim-dichotomy, which implies that an individual can only be one or the other. However, many people who cause harm have also been victimized by harm at some point in their life, and people who are victimized by harm can also be perpetrators of harm. Therefore, prevention must focus on the behavior, not the individual. Anyone can cause harm, and anyone can be harmed. Preventing harm prevents people from becoming both perpetrators and victims, respectfully.

Power and Control: An abusive relationship is often one in, which one person exerts power and control over the other person. Power and control are at the root of abusive behaviors including sexual assault, physical violence, and emotional manipulation.

Public Health: Public health is the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities. This work is accomplished by promoting healthy lifestyles and researching injury prevention.

Rape Culture: A rape culture is one that normalizes and rationalizes sexual violence as inevitable and a part of 'natural' human behavior rather than understanding violence as structurally and culturally created and sustained.

Social Justice: Social justice is a practice that builds equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities. Social justice advocates work toward dismantling beliefs, practices, policies, and norms that do not support this view.

GLOSSARY

Stalking: Stalking is any course of conduct directed at a specific person that involves repeated visual or physical proximity, non-consensual communication, verbal, written, or implied threats, or a combination thereof that would cause a reasonable person fear.

Survivor: An individual who has survived a sexual assault or sexual abuse may identify as a "survivor." They might also identify as a "victim", or as both or as neither. Every individual is different and can use whichever identifier they feel resonates the most.

Survivor-Centered: A survivor-centered approach seeks to empower the survivor by prioritizing their rights, needs, and wishes. This includes ensuring that survivors have access to appropriate, accessible, and quality services.

Trauma-Informed: A trauma-informed approach is guided by the assumption that trauma impacts people and groups and that we can recognize and respond to the signs of trauma while resisting re-traumatization. A trauma-informed approach has 6 components: safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment, voice, and choice; and cultural, historical, and gender issues.