ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CAMPUSES

Evaluation Framework

The Atwater Library and Computer Centre

ABSTRACT

This document provides an overview of our progress following a year of listening, engaging and researching with college and university communities. It presents some initial guidelines to help situate policy and the creation and implementation of strategies regarding preventing and responding to sexual violence. Additionally, it offers a blue print of our ongoing direction for the next two years and sets the tone for our engagement while extending an invitation to stakeholders for further collaboration.

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THE ATWATER LIBRARY'S PROJECT

The Atwater Library's *Addressing Gender-based Sexual Violence on Campuses* project began just before the announcement of Bill 151. Bill 151 mandated that higher education institutions must, adopt a policy to prevent and fight sexual violence. The Bill outlines the procedure for developing, disseminating and reviewing the sexual violence policy and requires institutions to report on its application. It also requires the implementation of prevention and awareness-raising measures to counter sexual violence, including, legal information and mandatory training activities for students, mandatory annual training activities for officers, personnel members, representatives of their respective associations and unions, and student association representatives. In an Intervention Strategy for Preventing and Countering Sexual Violence in Higher Education (2017-2022) prepared by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur further recommendations are made suggesting that the intention is to support the development of awareness-raising tools with the help of institutions of higher education and their partners. The Intervention Strategy advised that the effectiveness of the tools be measured. Additionally, the publication called for the support of research on sexual violence in institutions of higher education and to make tools and resources from public, parapublic, and community and research organizations available to victims of sexual violence in institutions of higher education, their families and friends, perpetrators and all other people on college and university campuses, and to encourage the use.

A goal of The Atwater Library's *Addressing Gender-based Sexual Violence on Campuses* is to support post-secondary institutions in developing and implementing strategies to uphold the requirements of   Bill 151. The Atwater Library has extensive experience in developing, organizing and facilitating arts-based strategies in collaboration with academic and community organizations. However, based upon our wide-ranging collaborations implementing a broad gamut of strategies designed to educate, mobilize knowledge, inspire culture shifts and even change behavior we realize that some strategies are more effective than others. With this understanding, a primary objective of our project is to

Create a network of institutions that are willing to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies they implement;
- share information about the strategies they implement so that other institutions can learn and benefit from their experience;
- build upon previous research about how to design effective strategies and add their own research to that body of knowledge;
- collaborate in developing a 'living tool-kit' to be shared and continuously expanded upon.

WHY EVALUATE STRATEGIES?

Despite best intentions and increased interventions, it sometimes seems that effecting genuine change around sexual violence on campus is a slow moving endeavor. A recent 2018 report issued by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine stated, "There is no evidence to suggest that current policies, procedures, and approaches have resulted in a significant reduction in sexual harassment." In a publication produced by The Secrétariat à la condition féminine, in collaboration with the government departments and bodies committed to the 2016-2021 Government Strategy to Prevent and Counteract Sexual Violence, it was acknowledged that "More than 20 years after the submission of the report titled Les agressions sexuelles: STOP1, the problem of sexual violence is still topical, despite efforts to combat it" (Secrétariat à la Condition Féminine, 2016). Additionally, according to a recent survey conducted by the Canadian Women's Foundation, only 28 per cent of Canadians fully understand what constitutes sexual consent. Given the increased focus on developing strategies for educating college and university students about consent, especially in the context of recent discussion around the #MeToo movement, it is concerning that that this percentage has actually decreased from a 2015 report in which the Canadian Women's Foundation reported that 33 per cent of Canadians fully understood consent. All of these combined observations highlight the need to better focus resources on understanding which strategies are effective in changing attitudes and behaviors around gender-based sexual violence and how to best allocate often-times limited resources.

The report issued by National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine concluded that while almost all academic institutions provide some form of sexual harassment training, seldom is the training evaluated for effectiveness or reviewed and revised based upon evaluative feedback. Too often the communicated success of strategies is based upon how many cases of harassment and sexual violence are formally reported to the institution rather than through wide-ranging, consistent evaluation measures that capture the authentic everyday experiences of the community.

Through our work on this project we often hear, "Sexual violence is not a problem on our campus because we've only had a couple of incidents reported." Depending upon statistics regarding reported sexual assault as a measure of whether sexual assault is occurring on campuses under-represents a pervasive problem because sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes (Benoit et al. 2015; Brennan and Taylor-Butts 2008; Kauffman 2008; Luce et al.2010). "Research has attributed this to a wide range of reasons, including the shame, guilt and stigma of sexual victimization (Johnson 2012; Sable et al. 2006), the normalization of inappropriate or unwanted sexual behaviour, and the perception that sexual violence does not warrant reporting Benoit et al 2015)" (Conroy and Cotter, 2017). In fact, sexual assault on campus is rarely reported. Less than 5% of college sexual assaults are reported to law enforcement officials (Perreault, 2015). Canada's most recent victimization survey (2014) showed that (1 in 20) sexual assaults are reported to police (Conroy and Cotter 2017), therefore police-reported sexual assault data clearly do not reflect the true extent of sexual assault and sexual violence in Canada. Additionally, "The number of police-reported sexual assaults occurring at a university or college is likely an underestimation of the number of sexual assaults reported to police that occur on university or college property, as these sexual

assaults may be coded as having occurred at a more specific location type such as a private residence, dwelling unit, bar or restaurant, or other location which is on a college or university campus" (Rotenberg & Cotter, 2018).

The under-reporting of sexual assault is an important aspect of the overall problem and a key objective of a potential strategy might be to look at how to create an environment on campus that would be more conducive to survivors coming forward. However, the current cultural landscape is such that the majority of survivors of sexual assault do not report. Therefore, we need to find more accurate measures of the effectiveness of the strategies we implement while simultaneously working to create a landscape where survivors feel willing to come forward.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC AWARENESS IN SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORTING

Initial research points to the potential of knowledge mobilization and awareness building to contribute to a landscape that makes reporting sexual violence more likely. For instance, there has been some indication that social movements like #MeToo may be valuable strategies in creating culture shifts. "Police-reported sexual assaults that occurred at a school, college, or university, as well as those involving a friend, roommate, or someone with whom the victim had a business relationship increased after #MeToo" (Rotenberg & Cotter, 2018). The increase in sexual assaults reported by police after #MeToo may be explained by a variety of reasons. According to Rotenberg & Cotter (2018), survivors may have perceived greater public support and encouragement to report as a result of the #MeToo movement. Additionally, survivors may have had an increased understanding of what constitutes sexual assault because of the increased conversations about sexual assault. Finally, police and front-line workers may have been more engaged with outreach and therefore seemingly more accessible during the #MeToo movement. It still remains to be determined as to whether the rise in reported sexual assaults is a result of people being more willing to report to police as a result of the awareness and knowledge mobilization that occurred around #MeToo. However, it does point to the need for further research about the potential for online social movements in creating positive culture shifts.

CREATING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS

A key deliverable of the *Addressing Gender-based Sexual Violence on Campus Project* is to collaborate with stakeholders to create a resource that will compile some of what is currently known about what makes a strategy effective, findings that emerge through implementing strategies and evaluation at our project field sites and, ideally a tool-kit to assist stakeholders in evaluating the strategies they implement.

According to a recent study conducted by DeGue (2014) on behalf of a White House task force for sexual violence prevention there is a need to be more cognisant and strategic regarding the appropriate choice of strategy in addressing sexual violence on college campuses.

> The shortage of effective strategies for sexual violence prevention reflects, in part, a lack of rigorous evaluation research examining sexual violence behaviors instead of only attitudes. However, the shortage of effective approaches may also reflect a poor fit between the types of strategies being developed, implemented and evaluated most often—including in college populations—and what we know about the characteristics of effective prevention. (DeGue, 2014, p-6)

DeGue's article *Preventing Sexual Violence on College Campuses: Lessons from Research and Practice* looked at 330 collected reports and 140 studies published between 1985 and 2012 and is based on the premise that identifying effective strategies for preventing sexual violence perpetration behaviors is the ultimate goal of sexual violence prevention efforts.

OBJECTIVE OF EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND TOOL-KIT

The purpose of the evaluation framework and tool-kit proposed for this project is fourfold.

First, to help stakeholders choose the most appropriate strategy to address the specific needs of their institution drawing upon evidence-based research.

Secondly to evaluate the effectiveness of the chosen strategies so that stakeholders can decide whether a particular strategy has been successful at changing the behavior or attitude that is being targeted. Evaluation can help decision-making about where to focus valuable resources. For instance, maybe a strategy has been somewhat effective and shows promise to deliver future results, but the institution might need to continue with that same strategy for a longer period of time to achieve the desired goal. Maybe the

strategy has been effective, and the targeted goal has been accomplished and therefore there is a need to target another issue or aspect of sexual violence or maybe it hasn't been effective, and a change of strategy is required.

Thirdly, the evaluation of strategies could be particularly useful when it's time to update policy in 5 years as required by Quebec's Bill 151. Evaluating strategies along the way enables an organization to see what they have already accomplished and where they need to focus resources going forward. For example, If the college community has achieved a very solid and comprehensive understanding of consent culture they might decide to devote less resources to consent culture (i.e. focus majority of consent training at incoming students, faculty and staff) and instead shift some of their resources towards issues around building relationship skills or working on developing bystander intervention awareness and skills.

Finally, throughout the process of evaluating strategies we will be collaborating with research experts and stakeholders to determine how to best develop evaluation measures for colleges to use when developing and evaluating strategies to prevent and respond to gender-based sexual violence on college campuses. In developing an evaluation framework and tool-kit we will be creating a sustainable resource that our college field sites can use on an ongoing basis and that can be shared with other institutions doing similar work.

METHODS

Synthesize the Research

We have started reviewing the existing research that evaluates the implementation of evidence-based policy and strategies. Research demonstrates that all strategies are not equal. While the research examining the effectiveness of prevention strategies for sexual violence perpetration is limited, there has been some rigorous research regarding the policies and strategies that result in preventing sexual violence perpetration behaviors.

A key deliverable emerging from the ongoing research review component of the project will be the development of a straightforward document that sorts through research and synthesizes it into a few key useful findings. For example, a key finding might be, that according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, preventing sexual violence perpetration before it occurs has the greatest population level impact. Therefore, they have shifted the focus of research and prevention efforts from victims to perpetrators ((DeGue, Simon, et al., 2012 in DeGue 2014). While it's clear from the research that resources should be focused on a range of strategies, it is also useful to note that focusing some resources on perpetrators and preventing sexual violence perpetration before it occurs might be an effective part of a comprehensive plan.

Evaluate Implemented Strategies

It's a very challenging, perhaps impossible, endeavor to design an evaluation framework that definitively proves an intervention's effectiveness in preventing sexual violence. There are a variety of factors that present complications. For instance, victims often don't report sexual violence to campus authorities or police resulting in statistics that are under-representative. Furthermore, perpetrators don't typically disclose that they have committed acts of sexual violence. As a result, it's challenging to draw upon existing data or statistics gathered by colleges to measure the effectiveness of strategies.

Due to the challenges in designing rigorous evaluations that can definitively link an intervention to data on sexual violence perpetration, there is a dearth of research that is rigorous enough to draw conclusions about how effective an intervention is in preventing sexually violent behavior. "After nearly 30 years of research, the field has produced very few evaluation studies using a research design that, if well-conducted, would permit conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention for preventing sexually violent behavior." (DeGue, S., Valle, L. A., Holt, M. K., Massetti, G. M., Matjasko, J. L., & Tharp, A. T. 2014).

While the research put forth by DeGue and colleagues advocates for research methodologies based upon large randomized controlled trials of prevention strategies that are generally extremely costly to implement the researchers admit that other evaluative frameworks are potentially useful for the purposes of program development, to revise and improve strategies and to establish empirical support for the implementation of a strategy. Because causality is an extremely high bar for social scientists (it requires extensive time and resources, and cannot often surmount the unpredictability of complicating, unforeseen and uncontrollable variables), most studies instead measure whether participants perceive the intervention to have been effective, whether attitudes have changed, whether participants can recommend ways in which the intervention can be improved to increase potential effectiveness or whether interventions have potential to change behaviors. This is the type of evaluation that will be most useful for the purposes of our stakeholders.

A key evaluation method for this project would be to ask stakeholders who are participating to provide feedback regarding the effectiveness, strengths and weaknesses and provide analysis and recommendations based upon that data. This will be an invaluable resource for academic institutions when choosing which strategies to implement and in improving strategies. For instance, if a strategy was implemented on one campus and evaluation found that it would have been more effective with a minor change it would be extremely useful for another campus to have access to that information. A recent report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2018) recommended that academic institutions should use wide-ranging assessments in addition to campus climate surveys to research sexual harassment on campus. Evaluation methods such as ethnography, photo-voice, focus groups, and exit interviews provide the more nuanced, contextual understandings of the experience and impact of implemented strategies in the everyday lives of students, staff and faculty. These are some of the evaluation methodologies that we can employ.

While large, costly evaluation projects may be necessary to conclude causality, for our purposes, we can draw upon previous research of that ilk to choose and implement strategy while using qualitative research tools to access and fine tune strategies for our stakeholders' goals and contexts.

Identifying Goals and Choosing Strategies to Support Policy

The Atwater Library's Addressing Gender-based Sexual Violence on Campuses project proposes to support colleges in choosing and implementing the most effective, survivor centered policies and strategies based upon their needs and goals. As policy is adopted, it is crucial to ensure that the policy is implemented as a living, relevant, transparent, accessible part of the college community and that it evolves to meet the changing objectives of the community.

As academic institutions implement stand-alone sexual violence policies in response to Quebec's Bill 151 it is key to establish precedents of choosing and employing effective strategies that actually achieve results. Too often academic institutions are incentivized by "legislation to create policies and training addressing sexual harassment that focus on symbolic compliance with current law and avoiding liability, and not on preventing sexual harassment" (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). If we do not choose to implement strategies that truly result in preventing and eliminating gender-based sexual violence on campus we miss a huge opportunity.

It's important to keep in mind that "Although attitudes and behaviors are related, attitudes typically account for a relatively small proportion of the variance in behavior (e.g., Glasman & Albarracín, 2006; Kraus, 1995), suggesting that achieving attitude change may not be enough to impact sexual violence behaviors" (DeGue, S., Valle, L. A., Holt, M. K., Massetti, G. M., Matjasko, J. L., & Tharp, A. T. 2014). It's important to be clear about goals and expectations when choosing which strategies to devote resources towards. Some strategies clearly target attitudes, some target behaviors and some target both while other strategies have been shown to be ineffective at impacting either attitudes or behavior.

Much of the research is based on the premise that identifying effective strategies for preventing sexual violence perpetration behaviors is the ultimate goal of sexual violence prevention efforts but The Atwater Library's *Addressing gender-based violence on campus* project argues that there can often be other important interrelated goals.

Colleges may have other secondary goals such as creating culture shifts, which might include strategies that comprehensively address social norms, attitudes and behaviors. Creating culture shift can encompass a range of objectives such as changing attitudes around gender-based sexual violence. This might occur through initiatives that provide education about gender-roles, toxic masculinity, increasing understandings about what constitutes sexual violence, how gender-based sexual violence is manifested from acquaintance rape to the role of gender-based sexual cyberviolence, increasing understandings regarding consent or building relationship skills. All of the above-mentioned strategies, amongst other educational programs, are all strategies that may contribute towards changing attitudes.

Other goals of sexual violence prevention efforts might include creating a safer campus environment through identifying and addressing risk factors such as unsafe campus spaces, increasing security and understanding possible risk factors, such as the role of alcohol consumption in sexual violence. Encouraging bystander interventions through peer-to-peer training and skills building is an example of a goal that aspires to change bystander behavior in hopes of preventing sexual violence before it occurs.

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING A TOOL-KIT

Research with Key Experts

We are very fortunate to be in a city with multiple CEGEP's, universities and research centers. We have contacted key researchers to provide their insights and expertise in developing strategies to measure effectiveness. Additionally, we are engaging in knowledge sharing with other projects doing similar work.

Roundtables

We are organizing round tables, based upon the needs and goals of partners at our CEGEP field sites, designed to discuss how to best develop evaluation frame works and tool-kits for preventing sexual violence strategies.

Strategies to address gender-based sexual violence on campus

We are supporting our CEGEP partners in developing and implementing strategies. Through our work, we are collecting a wide variety of strategies and approaches to addressing rape culture on college campuses. We are creating lists of these and noting outcomes they are designed to create. We are also collaborating with our pilot sites and other partners to develop strategies that are designed to fill the gaps identified by our stakeholders. Strategies can be grassroots activities such as forum theatre scripts designed to impact campus culture or can be actions created to impact institutional policy such as our Inter-CEGEP community of practice meetings. In some cases, we are acting as a reference source, a project manager and an evaluator for our partner's strategies.

Evaluating Strategies

We are collaborating with our CEGEP partners in identifying the goals and objectives their strategies are designed to meet and assisting in designing and implementing methods to measure effectiveness.

Manualization and Replicability

We are supporting our CEGEP partners in recording the process of developing and implementing strategies, creating manuals and compiling information to enable the strategy to be shared and replicated.

Institutionalization of Evaluation

We are supporting our CEGEP partners in advocating for evaluation of strategies to be an integral aspect of their institutions ongoing strategy.

Creating Networks

We are assisting our partners in creating networks that support their strategy implementation and evaluation on an ongoing basis. This includes supporting meetings, symposiums and knowledge exchange in various forms.

An Intersectional Approach

Our project adopts an intersectional approach to developing a framework and analysis to the issue of addressing gender-based sexual violence on college campuses. As our stakeholders develop, choose and implement policy and strategies it's important to remain mindful of the unique and wide-ranging experiences of survivors and the differences within communities, which result in individuals requiring a diverse range of resources and strategies to address this issue. Some individuals and communities may face additional systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination which require attention, such as seeking out their stories and perspectives about experiences of gender-based sexual violence so as to foster deeper understandings of how best to provide support and asking what policies, resources and strategies would best serve their needs.

What better space than college to foster understandings of the macro forces that generate systems reinforcing exclusion and violence such as social forces, economics, globalization, patriarchy, colonization, the immigration system, the legal system, to name a few. These understanding could potentially be integrated into course requirements across disciplines. Additionally, it's important to acknowledge the types of discrimination such as heterosexism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, racism, ethnocentrism, ableism, classism, amongst other forms of discrimination, that can be in key in influencing the ways in which individuals experience gender-based sexual violence on campus and influence the specific responses required. Finally, a person's unique circumstances and identity can influence the policies and resources that best serve their distinct needs. Aspects of identity such as, gender, sexuality, skin color, indigeneity, disability, social status, religion, level of education, occupation, age, etc. need to be considered. Therefore, an aspect of developing this resource includes speaking to a range of individuals, student groups and campus organizations about the ways in which their individual needs can be best served through strategy and policy.

Further still, we are making the 'how to' part of intersectionality an aspect of our work. We know that the true answer to making work authentically intersectional is to include as many different viewpoints as possible in its development. However, what do you do when your budget affords a single author or a smaller scale project? How do we include an intersectional perspective without asking too much time or emotional resources from specific individuals in our network, who are continuously called upon to provide an intersectional viewpoint? We aim to position this challenge as a point of query at each step of the project rather than glossing over intersectionality and not committing to the true intent in a substantial way. We plan to create a best-practices resource within the scope of this project as it is one of the most commonly expressed questions and concerns from our project partners.

Special Note on Including Survivors', Girls' and Young Women's Voices

Too often the voices of girls and young women are overlooked or shut down as adults and people in positions of power believe that they understand their needs and experiences and know what's best for them. This often leads to policies that don't reflect the lived experiences or meet the needs of the population they seek to 'protect'. It's crucial to create authentic opportunities for girls and young women to actively participate and provide guidance throughout the process of developing an evaluation framework because policy that is not based in real, lived experiences is doomed to fail.

CHOOSING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Drawing on DeGue's (2014) research for the White House task force on sexual violence prevention, *A systematic review of primary prevention strategies for sexual violence perpetration* (DeGue, S., Valle, L. A., Holt, M. K., Massetti, G. M., Matjasko, J. L., & Tharp, A. T. 2014), and supported by discussions with stakeholders from our college field-sites, we have developed a list of recommendations. The following are intended as a jumping off point in helping stakeholders develop and implement strategies to support policy and in evaluating appropriateness and effectiveness in strategy.

Strategies Should Be Comprehensive

To be effective strategies should "include multiple intervention components and affect multiple settings to address a range of risk and protective factors for sexual violence" (Nation et al., 2003 in DeGue, 2014). Many strategies target individual attitudes or knowledge about sexual violence. For example, a short one-time workshop or single event that focuses on increasing individual knowledge and behavior about a specific issue. A more effective approach would be to address a range of components including attitudes and knowledge about sexual violence combined with skills building. We need to look at

the issues at the individual level, but also at the collective level and systemic level – broadening our focus to encompass the role of the peer attitudes, social norms, the role of media, popular culture, digital culture, policies and legislation. We need to develop approaches that contextualize the issue within cultural and social environments. For example, rather than simply having a single workshop explaining what consent is, a more comprehensive strategy would be to incorporate ongoing consent content into activities about how consent is portrayed in popular culture, the role of consent in digital culture, critiquing and challenging social norms around consent and the legalities of consent, etc. Additionally, it's important to incorporate skills building education around issues to ensure a comprehensive approach, for instance, what is the role of consent in healthy relationships or toxic behaviors, perhaps using role-playing, or scenario-based trainings.

Varied Teaching Methods

Research indicates that preventative interventions are most successful when they include interactive instruction and opportunities for active, skills-based learning (Nation et al., 2003 in DeGue). This finding was reinforced by initial discussions with our college collaborators. The approach we took with the Atwater Library's previous, *Preventing and Eliminating Gender-based Cyberviolence Directed at Girls and Young Women*, project was to employ strategies that were relevant and engaging to students. This ensures participant buy-in; additionally employing a wide range of teaching methods increases the chances of engaging students as people learn in different ways. Many strategies involve didactic-only lectures and/or videos or presentations with opportunities for questions and discussion. A more effective method would be to add opportunities for students to engage and participate in their own learning through a variety of arts-based initiatives, including photo-voice, scenario-based discussion and problem solving or role playing, which all provide opportunities to employ and practice the skills they have learned.

Quantity is Key

The total exposure to program content or contact hours has significant effect on the behavior of participants. Most strategies are too brief and longer programs are likely to have more profound and lasting results. The number of hours of the strategy is often dependent on a range of factors including the target population; the behavior the program is addressing and the opportunities and resources of the institution. However, it is important to consider that no matter how brief or cost effective a strategy is - if it doesn't impact outcomes, or if it negatively impacts outcomes - it probably isn't an efficient or effective use of limited resources. The issue of gender-based sexual violence on college campuses is a profoundly, complex, nuanced and sensitive subject that requires time, care, attention and commitment to address. To create true change and culture shift requires sustained engagement.

Sociocultural Relevance

Programming that is sensitive to and reflective of community norms and cultural beliefs may be more successful in recruitment, retention, and achieving outcomes (Nation et al., 2003; Small et al., 2009 in DeGue 2014). Additionally, including members of the

community in designing, developing and implementing the strategy may further increase the success of the strategy. An intersectional approach is crucial in both strategy development and implementation and including marginalized or high-risk communities is key to success in sexual violence prevention. Choosing, developing and including both students and survivors in policy development and strategy implementation increases the chances of effectiveness and buy-in.

Theory-Driven

Strategies need to be based on a theoretical foundation that addresses root causes. According to research, many strategies and interventions comprise of education about the prevalence of rape, the legalities of what constitutes rape and statistics about rape. This is despite the fact that there is limited evidence to demonstrate that exposure to empirical knowledge prevents rape. While, one might argue that it's important from a social ethics perspective to further understandings of sexual violence and its consequences, it's also useful to acknowledge that to truly prevent sexual violence we need to go way beyond basic empirical education and that strategies need to be much more comprehensive. It has been demonstrated that "cognitive factors, including hostility toward women, traditional gender role adherence, and hypermasculinity, have shown consistent links to sexual violence perpetration (Tharp et al., 2013) but are rarely addressed directly in prevention programs (DeGue, S., Valle, L. A., Holt, M. K., Massetti, G. M., Matjasko, J. L., & Tharp, A. T. 2014). We need to ensure that strategies actually address and challenge the complex cultural, social and psychological factors that are at the root of gender-based sexual violence.

Well-Trained Facilitators

Through the Atwater Library's Digital Literacy Project we understand that it is absolutely crucial to have highly knowledgeable and qualified facilitators. Because we often work with youth and individuals from at risk or marginalized communities we always attempt, to the extent possible, to include individuals from the communities we are working with as facilitators. That being said, the facilitators always work hand-in-hand with experienced front-line workers and/or subject specialists who have in-depth comprehensive knowledge of the issues we are working on. "Effective programs tend to have staff or implementers that are stable, committed, competent, and can connect effectively with participants (Mihalic, Irwin, Fagan, Ballard, & Elliott, 2004). Facilitators with sufficient "buy-in" to the program model is also important to credibly deliver and reinforce program messages (Nation et al., 2003)." (DeGue, S., Valle, L. A., Holt, M. K., Massetti, G. M., Matjasko, J. L., & Tharp, A. T. 2014). Additionally, when evaluating strategies, it's important to include information about who facilitated the program (i.e. external expert, internal experts, professors, peer to peer, etc.) and what qualifications and training were provided. A strategy that is effective when implemented peer-to-peer might be less effective when implemented professor-to student and the reverse might also be true. Collecting detailed data about facilitators can provide useful insights into effectiveness of strategies.

Research and Evaluation

It's crucial to engage in consistent research and evaluation throughout the process of choosing and implementing strategy so that we can expand upon knowledge about what works in preventing gender-based sexual violence on college campuses. Our project will provide a contribution in sharing our findings both with stakeholders and with the larger academic community.

CONCLUSION

It's abundantly evident that choosing, developing and implementing strategies to support policy is a complex but critically important part of addressing sexual violence on campuses. Evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies in addressing the targeted attitudes and behaviors is complex and requires commitment. Due to the fact that the current body of research evaluating strategies has some limitations it is an opportune time, given the fact that so many policies and strategies are coming into effect, to evaluate the strategies that are being implemented and share that knowledge amongst stakeholders. Currently, we have an unprecedented opportunity to not only implement policy and strategies but also to develop new innovative and relevant ways to measure the effectiveness of the strategies we have chosen.

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