



UNH Receives CDC Grant For Sexual Violence Prevention Program

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DURHAM, N.H. - Researchers from the University of New Hampshire have received a grant for nearly \$900,000 from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention to support a sexual violence prevention program aimed at college students.

"Adjusting to college life can be a challenge for many young adults, and it is important to provide them with the information and skills they need to deal effectively with situations they may encounter. This grant allows the university to move forward with the Bringing in the Bystander Project and continue our important work ensuring that college campuses are safe places for our students," UNH President Mark Huddleston said.

The grant for \$898,262 supports the Bringing in the Bystander Project, a collaborative project of UNH Prevention Innovations and led by researchers Victoria Banyard, professor of psychology; Sharyn Potter, associate professor of sociology; Mary Moynihan, research associate professor of women's studies; and Jane Stapleton, research instructor of women's studies and family studies.

The award enables researchers to administer and examine the effectiveness of the Bringing in the Bystander Project on two campuses - UNH and UMass Lowell -- during a three-year research period. The Bringing in the Bystander Project has two components, an in-person prevention program and the "Know Your Power" social marketing campaign.

"The Bringing in the Bystander Project helps prevent sexual violence by instructing community members to take an active part in preventing violence. Community members are encouraged to interrupt situations that could lead to assault or during an incident, speak out against social norms that support sexual violence, and have skills to be an effective and supportive ally to survivors after an assault," said Banyard, co-director of Prevention Innovations.

Recognized nationally and internationally, the Bringing in the Bystander Project is based on studies that show the role of community norms as a significant cause of sexual violence, particularly in communities such as college campuses. It is one of the few projects of its kind featuring both the in-person program and a social marketing campaign that have been scientifically evaluated and found to be effective.

Student involvement has been an important part of the development of the Bringing in the Bystander Project. In fall 2008, first-year students were recruited to evaluate the in-person prevention program. From Feb. 16 to March 30, 2009, UNH kicks off the "Know Your Power" (www.Know-Your-Power.org) social marketing campaign. The social marketing campaign includes displaying eight 11"x17" posters across campus. Six UNH buses will have a full side wrap of the posters. All first-year students will receive products with the "Know Your Power" logo, bookmarks will be distributed in all the campus libraries, dining hall table tents will feature the campaign posters and other innovative marketing efforts will be carried out across the campus.

"We used feedback from about 500 students to develop the eight scenarios featured in the 'Know Your Power' campaign, which model safe ways to intervene in situations where sexual violence has the potential to occur. The scenarios portray typical college scenes that explicitly model safe and appropriate bystander behaviors in the prevention and intervention of intimate partner and sexual violence and stalking," said Potter, co-director of Prevention Innovations.

Development of the eight campaign images was supported by a grant to the UNH Police Department from the Office on Violence Against Women, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, and a grant from the UNH Parents Association.

The social marketing campaign is being administered with the cooperation of many UNH campus constituencies, including the Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP), Office of Student and Academic Services, Residential Life, First Year Programs, Computer & Information Services (CIS), Parents Association, Dining Services, Housing Services, Athletics, Library Services, Police Department, and Transportation Services.

"Sexual assault and attempted sexual assault of women is a problem being addressed by many colleges and universities around the country, and first-year women students are especially vulnerable," Stapleton said.

A study of unwanted sexual experiences conducted at UNH during the 2005-2006 academic year found that 30 percent of first-year women at UNH experienced unwanted sexual contact and 7 percent experienced sexual assault or attempted sexual assault, according to Moynihan. Almost half of the cases of sexual assaults of undergraduate women students involved force or threat of force.

"In addition, results of the first ever New Hampshire Violence Against Women Survey indicate that one in four women in the state has been the victim of a sexual assault at some point in their life," she said.

"I am proud of the University of New Hampshire for leading the fight to prevent sexual violence on our college campuses. The Bringing in the Bystander Project serves as a model for other colleges and universities around the nation, and I thank UNH for its leadership on this serious problem," said Rep. Carol Shea-Porter of New Hampshire.

Prevention Innovations is a fee-for-service consulting, training, and research unit that develops, implements and evaluates cutting-edge programs, policies and practices that will end violence against women on campus. For more information, visit <http://www.unh.edu/preventioninnovations/>.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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