

REPORT: STUDENT INITIATIVE FOR SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJCASA) created the Student Initiative for Sexual Violence Prevention (the Student Initiative), a statewide project that brought together college and university students to help identify how New Jersey can improve efforts to prevent sexual violence in K – 12 settings and on campus. To support and inform future prevention training and education, the selected students hosted listening sessions on their respective college and university campuses.

An NJCASA staff member attended each campus listening session, which took place over a three-month period, at Drew University, Rutgers University – New Brunswick, Rutgers University – Newark, and Stockton University. A Student Initiative member facilitated each listening session, which were attended by an average of 10-20 students and consisted of an hour-long discussion on a set of pre-determined questions. The list of discussion questions and a sample facilitator’s guide are included in appendices *A* and *B*, respectively.

We are thankful to the following students who helped lead this initiative:

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DISCUSSION SUMMARY

DEFINING AND UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

At the beginning of each session, students were asked to define “sexual violence” and “consent.” Students from four of the five groups defined sexual violence as either unwanted sexual acts or sexual acts occurring without consent. Students in three of the five groups noted that sexual violence can also be verbal, while some students included “lack of respect,” “emotional abuse and jokes,” and “unwanted advancement” in their definitions. Students in three of the five groups included “enthusiastic,” “eager,” and “excited” in their definitions of consent and noted that consent must be on-going/continuous and “can be taken away at any time.” Students in two groups emphasized that consent must be freely given, while one student stated that “you have to be fully sober to give consent.”

When asked when and where they first heard about sexual violence, students across cohorts cited health classes in middle and high school; conversations with friends; and books, TV shows—particularly crime shows like *Law & Order*—and the news. Two students first heard about sexual violence after they or their friends experienced sexual assault. Several students across cohorts mentioned that their parents avoided the conversation entirely, while two students in one group noted that their parents only referenced sexual violence when warning them about predators and inappropriate touching.

To gain a better understanding of the conversations about and information on sexual violence that the cohort participants had received in the past, the facilitator next asked whether participants were ever formally educated about sexual violence. Across cohorts, the most common responses from students were that they first received formal education during high school or while in college, typically during freshman orientation. Of those students, three stated that they received formal education during high school sex-ed classes that were only taught to seniors. Another student shared that at their high school, seniors would educate freshmen on topics not covered in sex-ed, including domestic violence and sexual harassment. The student also noted that the education still failed to teach the full spectrum of sexual violence. A student in a different cohort shared that their formal education in high school focused only on rape, rather than the full spectrum of sexual violence. Another participant in the same cohort echoed these characterizations of high school sexual violence education, sharing that “this [listening session] feels more like a formal education than what I got in high school.” A participant from a different cohort indicated that the information presented during freshman orientation about sexual violence was the only formal education they received during their entire college career, and suggested follow-up education for all students throughout the rest of their campus experience.

Other responses from students included receiving formal education on sexual violence through conversations with parents, individual research, and training on Title IX when entering the workforce.

Students were then asked to describe who experiences sexual violence and who commits sexual violence. At least one student in each group responded that “anyone” can experience sexual violence. In one group, responses from students included the following: “[I] only thought women could be victims”; “Society teaches that it only happens to certain people (because they dressed a certain way, they were drinking, etc.)”; and “Males can be survivors but often experience unique [barriers] as men.”

In response to the second question, students in three cohorts said that “anyone” can commit sexual violence. A student in one cohort noted that there are “lots of male perpetrators,” while a student in a different cohort pointed out that sexual violence does not always consist of male perpetrators and female victims, but that

many believe that to be the case. Students in two different cohorts specified “people who don’t understand consent” or “aren’t informed about consent,” while a student in a third cohort simply responded “rapists.”

CAMPUS RESOURCES & TITLE IX

Following this discussion of perpetration and victimization, students were asked to share how they would respond to a friend disclosing an experience of sexual violence. Across cohorts, the most common responses from students included offering support and guidance; helping their friend explore their options and encouraging them to seek relevant resources; and respecting their friend’s decisions. “[It’s] not okay to go to the police without their consent,” one student said. “It happened to them, not you.” Two students in different groups stated that they would “let [their friend] know they’re not alone,” while two other students said they would let their friend know that they are not at fault.

Q: If a friend opened up to you about experiencing sexual violence, how would you respond?

A: Offer support and guidance; suggest relevant resources; respect the friend’s decisions

When the facilitator asked where someone on the participants’ campus could access confidential reporting or resources, responses varied in specificity and accuracy across and within cohorts. Students in one cohort suggested the campus counseling center, the Title IX office, and close friends; a student in another cohort stated that people often turn to the internet or Google. A student in a different cohort echoed the response of going online, while others in that cohort suggested a wide range of resources, including resident assistants, 24-hour hotlines, and the campus counseling, health, and Women and Gender Services centers. In another cohort, one student shared that they were “not really aware,” while another stated that they only realized they could go to Title IX after going to the counseling center, and wouldn’t have known otherwise.

The facilitator next asked two questions aimed at gaining an understanding of how well students comprehend Title IX. In response to the question “What kinds of issues does Title IX deal with?”, a few students across cohorts stated that they were unsure or had not received education on the topic. Students in three cohorts responded with sexual violence and sexual harassment, specified as “assault in the workplace” in one instance. Students in two of those cohorts identified discrimination based on gender and race as Title IX issues, while a student in a third cohort responded with a more general definition of discrimination.

When asked, “How would you go about making a Title IX complaint?” students in one of the cohorts said that a complaint could be made by emailing the Title IX coordinator or contacting a mandatory reporter. 10 of the 22 students in another cohort were familiar with the process of making a Title IX complaint on their campus, while students in the remaining cohorts reported being unsure about the process.

COMMUNITY CONSIDERATIONS

Students were next asked to share their thoughts on why sexual violence occurs. Across cohorts, many participants responded with some variation on the following: power and control; harmful social norms and structures, including rape culture, toxic masculinity, and rigid gender roles; and lack of education on sex and consent. “Some people just don’t know it’s sexual assault,” one participant said. Another added that “people don’t know you can revoke consent.” A student in one cohort stated that alcohol can play a role in the occurrence of sexual violence, while another pointed to lack of empathy. In two different groups, students stated that there was not one specific cause of sexual violence but rather a multitude of reasons coming into play.

When asked if sexual violence affects communities at large, as well as having effects at the individual level, most students agreed that it does. “Individuals make up a community; [sexual violence] should be a community-wide issue,” a student in one group said. Students in another cohort stated that if individuals believe that sexual violence is permissible, those beliefs can permeate communities and perpetuate silence.

In two different cohorts, students pointed out that sexual violence can affect those close to survivors, including friends and family. “[Sexual violence] can affect friendships—if the assault happened in a friend group, people take sides,” one student said. One of the two groups focused on the statistically large number of people who experience sexual violence, and agreed that given “the amount of people [sexual violence is] affecting, it ends up hurting everyone in the community.”

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Students were then asked a series of questions related to prevention and intervention. When asked to share what sexual violence prevention looks like, students across cohorts had similar responses. Most students pointed to awareness and education on consent, sexual violence, and respect starting at a young age, including education at home, in schools, and for the general public. Students in one group stated that prevention looks like cultural changes in how children are raised and what norms are reinforced. For a student in another group, prevention entails “making the consequences clear for people who commit sexual violence.” Two students in different cohorts also pointed to forms of bystander intervention like checking in with friends and using the “angel shot”¹ at bars.

When asked whether they would feel comfortable intervening in a potentially harmful situation, individual responses from participants varied. Students in two cohorts pointed out that men often feel more comfortable intervening directly or in a physically harmful situation. Several students said that it depended on the situation, with some commenting that they would not want to put their own safety at risk. Students in two groups shared that intervention “can be difficult if it’s within an existing relationship,” and one student

Q: *Why does sexual violence occur?*

A: *Power dynamics and need for control; harmful social norms and structures; lack of education on sex and consent.*

¹ The “angel shot” originated from a poster at a restaurant in St. Petersburg, Florida. The poster was included inside the stalls of women’s bathrooms and indicated that the person could order an “angel shot” at the bar to alert the bartender that they felt unsafe. The bartender would then escort them to their car, call an Uber or taxi (if ordered with ice), or call the police (if ordered with lime).

pointed to the potential “social repercussions” resulting from intervention. As a follow-up question, students were asked to share how they would intervene if they felt comfortable doing so. Of the three groups that had responses recorded for this question, students in each cohort said that they would either directly intervene by pulling someone away from a harmful situation or intervene in more subtle ways, such as providing a distraction or calling for help.

The next set of questions framed a broader discussion on conflict resolution and general violence prevention. Students were first asked if they “were educated on or had discussions about conflict resolution and/or building empathy.” Across cohorts, most students said that they had not received such education. Students in one cohort stated that they had received education on de-escalation and violence prevention during college. Students in another cohort noted having participated in different forms of empathy-building while in elementary and middle school, with one student pointing to lessons on cultural humility and “international learning.”

Similarly, when asked whether they had been taught how to identify emotions and healthy ways of handling them, most students across cohorts responded that they had not. “Some families suppress emotions and don’t talk about them,” a student in one cohort said. Conversely, a student in a different group had been taught “by parents, but in school.” In that same group, male students shared that they had been told not to cry or show emotions because of their gender.

Students were also asked whether they had received education on general violence prevention. Responses varied, with several students across cohorts sharing that they had received some form of K-12 education on the topic, including assemblies and guest speakers on bullying, cyberbullying, domestic violence, and abuse by parents or guardians. A student in one cohort shared that in 3rd grade, they had participated in a “peacemaker” group designed to “help resolve fights and conflict in a practical way.” Some students noted that the prevention education they received focused solely on reducing risk for potential victims. Other students had received violence prevention education from their parents, while one student had learned about violence prevention through YouTube videos on risk reduction.

Finally, students were asked if they believe sexual violence can be prevented. In one group, all participants agreed that it is preventable, but several students went on to say that prevention must be taught from a young age. A student in another cohort stated that sexual violence can be minimized but not eradicated completely. Two other cohorts echoed this response, with students in one stating that “there are always bad people, but [sexual violence] can definitely be lessened,” and students in the other group noting sexual violence “can be prevented a whole lot more than it is now.” Students in another cohort were divided, with some saying that sexual violence cannot be fully eliminated and others stating that sexual violence prevention is possible through improved education, empathy-building, and accountability for perpetrators.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

At the end of the discussions, facilitators asked each group to share any additional comments. Three cohorts had additional insights, which resulted in detailed conversations on a variety of related topics. In one cohort, students emphasized the need for early and comprehensive education on sexual violence, consent, rape culture, boundaries, and healthy behaviors. “These things should be taught and talked about,” one student said. Another added, “I wish we all had education about rape culture before coming to college.” Students

in the cohort also remarked that while schools should lead this education, parents must support and reinforce it.

In another cohort, students focused on the need for more candid conversations on feelings and how to identify, express, and regulate emotions. “The way we’re [taught to] bottle our feelings up only sets us up for failure, like violence against each other,” one student said. Some students pointed out that knowing how to talk about feelings can make it easier to hold conversations about consent. Students in the cohort also expressed a need for early media literacy lessons and sex and consent education, and noted that students participating in such education should not be separated by gender.

In the last cohort that shared additional comments, students discussed prevention and education efforts. Similar to the previous two cohorts, students identified the need for more comprehensive, pre-college consent education. Students also shared suggestions for future prevention, including shifting cultural and social norms, providing education on sexual violence and emotion regulation, and holding perpetrators accountable for harmful actions.

SUMMARY

Overwhelmingly, students indicated that they did not learn about sexual violence until later in high school or during college orientation. Participants also revealed that they received little to no sexual violence prevention education during or before high school but did receive bullying and domestic violence prevention education in the form of assemblies and guest speakers. Participants identified the need to shift social norms and change the overall culture in order to prevent sexual violence. Additionally, the majority of participants indicated little to no understanding of Title IX, the Title IX office, and how to file a Title IX report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

During the listening sessions, participants included suggestions to remedy some identified gaps in knowledge and education, many of which align with NJCASA’s approach to primary prevention through the public health model.

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL VIOLENCE PRIMARY PREVENTION PROGRAMMING

Listening session participants indicated their low comfort levels with intervening in a potentially harmful situation. While bystander intervention strategies are popular as sexual violence prevention programming on campuses, NJCASA and the Student Initiative recognizes the importance of including more comprehensive prevention practices. Some forms of bystander intervention fall under the category of “secondary prevention” and do not necessarily have a primary prevention focus. Listening session participants also stated the need to shift sociocultural norms as part of sexual violence prevention. This highlights the need to compliment bystander intervention strategies with programming that addresses harmful sociocultural norms that allow sexual violence to occur.

Additionally, the Rutgers University 2014 Campus Climate Survey² revealed that 24% of female students experienced sexual violence *before* getting to campus. Nationally, 57.3% of LGBTQ students report having been sexually harassed in high school, and 13% of students who were out as transgender in high school report having been sexual assaulted in high school because of their gender identity.^{3 4} In addition to student desire and recommendations for earlier education, this reinforces the need for comprehensive and culturally-inclusive prevention programming to be implemented prior to college and university.

Comprehensive sexual violence primary prevention programming should address the root causes of sexual violence. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) public health model can help guide prevention initiatives to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Increase readiness

Prevention of an issue requires the population to understand the issue and be comfortable in having discussions about the issue. Increasing the readiness of communities will properly prepare them to receive comprehensive sexual violence primary prevention education.

To increase readiness, K – 12 schools must receive information on the *spectrum* of sexual violence (rather than solely sexual assault), its impact on individuals and communities, and the definition of consent. This information can be delivered through formal educational presentations and workshops for educators and K – 12 staff who will be engaging with students. The students should also receive the same information in age-appropriate ways to ensure consistent messaging throughout staff, faculty, and students. This education should be delivered by experts in sexual violence primary prevention. Delivery of this content by educators who are not versed in primary prevention of sexual violence through the public health model could be detrimental and reduce the effectiveness of the programming.⁵

Increase protective factors

Protective factors, as defined by the CDC, are characteristics that may lessen the likelihood that someone will commit a sexually violent act. The CDC has identified four protective factors for sexual violence perpetration:

²<https://socialwork.rutgers.edu/centers/center-violence-against-women-and-children/research-and-evaluation/understanding-and>

³ Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Zongrone, A. D., Clark, C. M., & Truong, N. L. (2018). *The 2017 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation's schools*. New York: GLSEN.

⁴ James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality.

⁵ On July 19, 2019, Governor Philip D. Murphy signed "Erin's Law", requiring "school districts to incorporate age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in grades preschool through 12" and directing the Commissioner of Education to work with NJCASA to provide districts with "age appropriate sample learning activities and resources" on sexual assault awareness and prevention. NJCASA will work with allied stakeholders to ensure that the content is expansive, responsive, and facilitated by appropriately-trained professionals.

- Parental use of reasoning to resolve family conflict
- Emotional health and connectedness
- Academic achievement
- Empathy and concern for how one's actions affect others.

NJCASA and the Student Initiative recommend comprehensive sexual violence prevention programming that increases these protective factors. Starting education early can help build these characteristics to buffer against potential development of harmful behaviors later in life.

Early childhood education can increase empathy capacity through interactive learning, such as role playing or reading fiction stories. Encouraging children to take others' perspectives can build their ability to engage in cognitive empathy. Education can also focus on identifying emotions and appropriate ways to manage emotions. These activities can include peaceful conflict resolution to support respect and kindness for others. These practices can build protective factors and decrease the likelihood that a child will develop harmful risk factors in adolescence and beyond.

Supporting emotional health and wellness in early life can prepare students to identify emotions and handle them in appropriate, nonviolent ways later in life. Listening session participants also cited emotional health as a factor to include in comprehensive prevention practices. Emotional health and connectedness as a protective factor can help buffer against a variety of risk factors for sexual violence perpetration, including adherence to rigid gender norms. Traditional gender norms encourage boys and men to suppress emotions, except for anger. Fostering emotional awareness and health can counter this risk factor.

Decrease risk factors

Risk factors are characteristics that may increase a person's likelihood to commit a sexually violent act. One risk factor alone does not guarantee that someone will commit sexual violence; rather, a combination of these characteristics increases the chance that someone will perpetrate sexual violence. Risk factors for perpetration exist at all levels of the socioecological model. Individual-, relationship-, and community-level risk factors can be addressed in K – 12 schools through comprehensive sexual violence prevention programming.

Individual Risk Factors

- Alcohol and drug use
- Delinquency
- Lack of empathy
- General aggressiveness and acceptance of violence
- Early sexual initiation
- Coercive sexual fantasies
- Preference for impersonal sex and sexual-risk taking
- Exposure to sexually explicit media
- Hostility towards women
- Adherence to traditional gender role norms
- Hyper-masculinity
- Suicidal behavior

- Prior sexual victimization or perpetration

Relationship Factors

- Family environment characterized by physical violence and conflict
- Childhood history of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- Emotionally unsupportive family environment
- Poor parent-child relationships, particularly with fathers
- Association with sexually aggressive, hypermasculine, and delinquent peers
- Involvement in a violent or abusive intimate relationship

Community Factors

- 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

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

The following strategies can be implemented in K – 12 schools through college and university. Some strategies may be adapted to be age-appropriate.

Media Literacy

GENDER AND VIOLENCE: How Media Shape Our Culture was created by NJCASA in 2010. The curriculum was created to address sexual violence prevention through a media literacy lens by empowering participants to identify harmful norms reflected in the media they consume so they can make informed decisions about the messages presented by the media maker, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

NJCASA's member programs have been implementing this prevention strategy in local communities since 2010 with young adults (8th or 9th grade) through college-aged adults. The strategy has successfully made it into Phase 2 of a CDC-funded evaluability study looking to identify promising prevention strategies.

The curriculum affects change at the individual, relational, and societal levels by:

- Increasing participants' ability to critically consume media;
- Increasing participants' ability to identify harmful social norms that contribute to sexual violence, including hypermasculinity and traditional gender roles (CDC-identified risk factors for sexual violence perpetration);
- Provides alternatives to harmful norms;
- Supporting participants' creation of new media that promote gender equity and provide alternatives to hypermasculinity and dominant gender roles, all of which enhance protective factors.

This prevention strategy has been implemented across K – 12 schools, colleges and universities, and community groups through our member agencies. Strengthening this initiative can increase effectiveness.

Coaching Boys Into Men

Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) is a comprehensive violence prevention curriculum and program that inspires athletic coaches to teach their young athletes that violence never equals strength and violence against women and girls is wrong. The program comes with strategies, scenarios, and resources needed to talk to boys, specifically, about healthy and respectful relationships, dating violence, sexual assault, and harassment.

Athletic coaches play an extremely influential and unique role in the lives of young men. Because of these relationships, coaches are poised to positively influence how young men think and behave, both on and off the field. CBIM is the only evidence-based prevention program that trains and motivates high school coaches to teach their young male athletes healthy relationship skills and that violence never equals strength.

In 2012, CBIM underwent a rigorous three-year evaluation in Sacramento, California funded by the CDC. The study found that athletes who participated in the program experienced:

- Increase in knowledge of what constitutes abusive or disrespectful behavior;
- Increase in attitudes that promote greater gender equity;
- Greater intentions to intervene when witnessing disrespectful or abusive behavior;
- Actual positive interventions when witnessing abuse among peers (i.e., saying or doing something to stop the behavior) and less negative bystander behaviors (i.e., laughing, going along with it, or not saying anything);
- Decrease in dating abuse perpetration.

Coaches can influence change across the individual, relational, and community levels of the socioecological model. Athletic leaders can be role models and address harmful behaviors individually and between athletes. Additionally, because coaches are leaders and decision-makers, this population can support community-level change through influencing and implementing policies that reflect equity and push back against risk factors.

CLOSING

The Student Initiative for Sexual Violence Prevention helped provide important insights into the education and experience of college and university students on the topic of sexual violence and prevention. The information gathered helped identify the need for prevention education in K – 12 schools as well as continued, consistent messaging on college and university campuses. As recommended, this education should be provided by experts in sexual violence response and prevention to ensure accurate dissemination of information.

As the first cohort of the Student Initiative comes to a close, NJCASA is exploring ways to continue engaging students on college and university campuses. Continued engagement can help strengthen existing prevention initiatives on college campuses while keeping the door open for future listening sessions to reassess education levels of students in subsequent years. These future listening sessions can help

determine and measure outcomes of K – 12 education and identify where existing efforts can be strengthened.

APPENDIX A: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS:

1. What is sexual violence? How would you define it?
2. What is consent? How would you define it?
3. Where and when did you first hear about sexual violence?
4. Were you formally educated about sexual violence? If so, when? (Middle school, high school, college, etc.)
5. Who experiences sexual violence?
6. Who commits sexual violence?
7. If a friend opened up to you about experiencing sexual violence, how would you respond?
8. Where would someone on your campus go to access confidential reporting/resources?
9. What kinds of issues does Title IX deal with?
10. How would you go about making a Title IX complaint?
11. Why do you think sexual violence happens?
12. Aside from the individual impact, do you believe sexual violence affects communities at large? Why or why not?
13. What do you believe sexual violence prevention looks like?
14. Would you feel comfortable intervening in a potentially harmful situation? Why or why not?
15. If you do feel comfortable intervening, how would you do so?

16. Were you educated on or had discussions about conflict resolution and/or building empathy?
17. Were you taught how to identify emotions and ways to handle them in a healthy way?
18. Did you receive education on general violence prevention?
19. Do you believe sexual violence can be prevented? Why or why not?
20. Open floor (remind participants of confidentiality limits).

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Listening Session Guidelines & Questions

Before the event:

- Ensure the entrance is clearly visible. It may be helpful to post a sign on the door, so folks know they're in the right place.
- Have all necessary materials on hand: note-taking sheet, pen/pencil, recording device (if applicable), resource information for potential survivors
 - *Optional: Food and drinks – be sure to place this in a spot that is not too close to where the conversation will be taking place, i.e. the back of the room, side of the room, etc.*
- Room setup: It may be helpful to set the chairs in a circle or a U to encourage conversation. This is not mandatory, but suggested.

During the event:

1. Greet participants.
2. Introduce yourself and explain NJCASA and the Student Initiative.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: My name is ____ and I'm part of _____ (*organization*). I was selected by the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJCASA) to be part of their statewide Student Initiative for Sexual Violence Prevention. NJCASA is a statewide advocacy and capacity-building organization that supports the 21 county-based rape crisis centers across the state. NJCASA elevates the voice of sexual violence survivors and service providers by advocating for survivor-centered legislation, training allied professionals, and

supporting statewide prevention strategies that work to address and defy the socio-cultural norms that permit and promote rape culture.

3. Explain purpose of the event.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: NJCASA is pulling together a report about the state of sexual violence prevention in New Jersey. In 2017, NJCASA was part of the New Jersey Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault which brought together professionals from across the state to discuss prevention needs. The report NJCASA is working on will be a follow up to that 2017 report, however this one will only include student feedback, which is why we're hosting this event today. We want to hear from all of you about what is working and what's not!

4. Explain how the event will run.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: _____ (*facilitator*) will be asking a series of open-ended questions. There is no wrong answer! We want to gauge the existing knowledge levels to determine what more needs to be done in NJ schools. Once we ask a question, you are welcome to respond with your own insight and experience. Your quote may even make it into the report! (Anonymously.)

5. Review ground rules.

- a. Confidentiality limits for organizers and participants.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: Please know that none of us in this room have confidentiality privileges, and some people in the room may be mandatory reporters. If you're looking for support and want to talk to someone confidential, we encourage you to reach out to _____ (*school resource*) or the local county organization _____ (*name of county-based program*). **Side note: It may be helpful to have some hotline numbers and resources publicly displayed for participants, such as a PowerPoint slide or writing on a white board.**

- b. Respect other participants.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: Allow everyone a chance to speak and don't speak over each other. If someone shares something personal, we ask that it stays in this room, **however we cannot guarantee confidentiality** as mentioned before.

- c. Take care of yourself!

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE: This can be a difficult topic for folks! Please take breaks as necessary, even if it's just to get some water or use the bathroom.

6. Ask if there are any questions before moving forward.

7. Ask each question and allow some time for folks to respond. While our aim is to record the session, we ask that someone take notes in case of tech problems or inability to record. Some questions may spark more discussion than others. We ask that you gauge time accordingly to stay on track so that all the questions have a chance to be answered.

SUGGESTION: Have someone keep track of time and spend no longer than 10 minutes on each question.

8. After asking every question, allow participants to speak freely and contribute any information they feel was not discussed.
9. At conclusion of the event, thank participants for coming, remind them of confidential resources, and let them know that an online form is also available in case anyone would like to anonymously submit more information.