

The Bobcats REACH Project

A University-Wide Initiative Committed to Ending Dating and Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking (DVSAS) at Texas State University

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College Campus Domestic and Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking (DVSAS): Stats and Prevalence

- Female victims most commonly first experience IPV between the ages of 18 to 24, making the college years a critical time to intervene, educate, and support students. Sexual assault and dating violence is a pervasive problem on university and college campuses in the United States.
- 21% of college students report having experienced dating violence by a current partner, and 32% of college students report experiencing dating violence by a previous partner.
- 22% of college students report having experienced completed or attempted sexual assault while in college
- 20-35% of college students report having been stalked and over half of those incidents are perpetrated by a current or former dating partner.
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual students, deaf and hard of hearing students, racial/ethnic minorities, and women are all more likely to experience rape (Porter and McQuiller-Williams, 2011, p. 85)
- 60% of acquaintance rapes on college campuses occurred in casual or steady dating relations.
- 70% of young victims don't realize they're being abused by their partner.
- Campus sexual assault reports increased from 3,600 to 9,300 from 2005 to 2015 (U.S. Department of Education).
- 80-90% of sexual assaults and incidents of IPV go unreported.
- Students resist reporting abuse because the closed, intersecting social networks of a college campus make victims feel trapped by their circumstances.

Effects of Dating and Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking

Psychological Effects

- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety and depression, suicidality, low self-esteem, inability to trust others, substance abuse, and emotional detachment (Black et al., 2011).

Physical Health Effects

- Asthma, cardiovascular disease, reproductive issues, fibromyalgia, gastrointestinal disease, sleep disturbances, and migraines (e.g., CDC, 2017).

Educational & Career Attainment

- Significant physical and mental health problems that stunt educational and career attainment (Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018).

Societal Effects

- The result is a loss of human capital, in addition to negative affects at a societal and economical level (Potter et al., 2018).



- Creation of strategic plan
- Campus and community entities collaborate around DVSAS issues
- Formalized protocols and policies for communication and referrals
- Regular meetings
- Referral sources



- Confidential entry point and centralized location for survivors to connect with resources and CCRT
- CCRT members refer survivors here
- Confidential trauma-informed counseling, victim services, resources

- Campus police and all members of the disciplinary process participate in trauma-informed trainings
- Trainings offered to the campus community

- Bystander intervention initiatives and trainings
- Awareness campaigns
- Prevention efforts

The Need for Campus Response and Intervention

- Greater comprehensiveness across university policy elements is linked to lower Campus Sexual Assault prevalence among women (DeLong et al., 2018).
- Comprehensive sexual assault prevention programs are related to a decrease in assault prevalence.
- Universities with wider variety of services were found to have the lowest prevalence of sexual assault (DeLong et al., 2018).
- Counseling and psychotherapeutic techniques produce beneficial outcomes for victims of IPV and sexual assault, resulting in symptom reduction that often persists over time (Taylor & Harvey, 2009).
- Keeping a variety of treatment options available to survivors is an important part of campus response to sexual assault.
- Of the many interventions found to be most helpful, supportive counseling, trauma-focused interventions, and group therapy are merely a few of the evidence-based treatments known to help this population (Artime & Buchholz, 2016).
- Encompassing services that address prevention, education, trauma-informed intervention, and additional recourses (e.g., legal, health, mental, community, financial).

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Challenges around DVSAS on Campus

- Mandated reporting & Title IX: If they share experiences with college staff, the incident will be mandatorily reported to Title IX coordinator.
- Campuses do not have the appropriate support to handle matters of reporting in a way that provides confidential resources, advocacy, and support.
- Faculty and staff are not aware of campus resources and thus do not know where to refer students.
- Students are not aware of campus resources
- Being away from home and from previous support networks can make victims feel particularly alone and unable to access help.
- Students may resist reporting their experiences because they are afraid that their parents will find out, their abuser will stalk them, or their administrators will not understand the issue.
- Students may believe that dating violence is a private matter that does not warrant university assistance.
- Victims are afraid of getting in trouble with their abuser, their parents, their friend group, and their school.
- Belief that peer groups understand the social context of violence in dating relationship and thus are better sources of support and assistance.

REACH PROJECT PARTNERS

University Partners: Texas State Professional Counseling Program, University Police Department, Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX, Health Promotion, Clery Act Compliance, College of Education, Counseling Center, Student Affairs, Dean of Students, Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life, Student Conduct and Community Standards, Student Emergency Services, Attorney for Students, Student Health Center, Housing and Residential Life

Community Partners: San Marcos Police Department, Hays-Caldwell Women's Center, Hays County District Attorney's Office

2021 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report (ASFSR) for all TXST campuses (2018-2020)

On-campus reported crimes:

- 82 sex offenses
- 54 dating and domestic violence offenses
- 56 stalking offenses

2017 TXST Campus Climate Survey

- 26.8% reported experiencing a negative sexual behavior without consent
- Female and transgender/other students observed and experienced negative sexual behaviors more often than male students (37.5% of females, 34.9% of transgender/other, 13.1% of males)

Additional Project Funding Needs

- Additional opportunities for research throughout the project (current OVW funds do not support research)
- Additional staff positions to support students and various elements of the project
- Marketing and resource material
- Relationship building with CCR and key community stakeholders
- Conference travel and networking
- Additional training opportunities
- Additional technology

The REACH Project is Funded by the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW), United States Department of Justice (DOJ)

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