

Effectively Channeling Student Activism: 8 Strategies for a Successful Week of Action



Students and campuses across the country are mobilizing against sexual assault. In preparation for the 'It's On Us' Week of Action (November 17-21), it's important that campus administrators work collaboratively with student activists to align efforts to prevent violence and abuse. Here are some strategies to ensure that the Week of Action is productive and effective at your institution.

1

CONNECT WITH LEADERS

Reach out to activists, opinion leaders, and other influential students on campus. Determine who is engaged with different activities and events, and what their efforts entail. As necessary, introduce student leaders to the It's On Us campaign and supporting materials.

2

SUPPORT STUDENT LEADERS AND EVENT ORGANIZERS

Play a hand in organizing events. Provide ways for students to partner with your office, share resources, and promote services. Consider hosting, sponsoring, or contributing to events—students will appreciate it. In turn, demonstrate your appreciation of student efforts. Positive recognition goes a long way!

3

EDUCATE STUDENT LEADERS AND SUPPORT EVENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Train students on strategies for hosting a successful event, and best practices for prevention. Support students in considering educational outcomes and key messages for events, beyond simply raising awareness. Enlist students to create materials to support intended outcomes.

4

CONTRIBUTE (AND GATHER) INFORMATION

Offer talking points and statistics for students to utilize. Ensure students know of resources to share with others, and strategies for supporting survivors or overcoming resistance. Create a feedback loop to incorporate new ideas and improve future efforts - we can learn a lot from students.

5

FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE AND CORRECT MISPERCEPTIONS

Emphasize the promotion of healthy behaviors rather than focusing solely on preventing unhealthy ones. Misperceptions of social norms often overestimate negative attitudes and behaviors and underestimate the positive. Show students that they are part of a healthy majority on campus, and empower them to create the safe campus community they want to live in.

6

COMMUNICATE

Demonstrate how events during the Week of Action fit into the bigger picture of campus prevention. Find ways to connect these events with other prevention work happening on campus. Use communication channels to build support for upcoming events among students, employees, and community members. Encourage other stakeholders to get involved..

7

BE PRESENT

Attend events being hosted by student groups. Bring materials and maintain visibility for your office at these events. Simply being there is an important demonstration of your accessibility and commitment.

8

PROVIDE FOLLOW-UP AND ONGOING SUPPORT

Be aware that this can be a challenging and emotionally charged issue for students to take on, particularly if they have a personal connection to sexual assault. Provide opportunities for students to discuss their thoughts about the events, especially if efforts failed to meet their expectations. Remind students that their involvement alone is valued and meaningful.