

# President Obama Launches the "It's On Us" Campaign to End Sexual Assault on Campus

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## Summary:

Today at the White House, President Obama joined Vice President Biden and Americans across the country to launch the It's On Us initiative.

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Today at the White House, President Obama joined Vice President Biden and Americans across the country to launch the ["It's On Us" initiative](#) -- an awareness campaign to help put an end to sexual assault on college campuses.

It's On Us asks everyone -- men and women across America -- to make a personal commitment to step off the sidelines and be part of the solution to campus sexual assault.

"An estimated one in five women has been sexually assaulted during her college years -- one in five," the President noted. "Of those assaults, only 12 percent are reported, and of those reported assaults, only a fraction of the offenders are punished."

For anybody whose once-normal, everyday life was suddenly shattered by an act of sexual violence, the trauma, the terror can shadow you long after one horrible attack. It lingers when you don't know where to go or who to turn to. It's there when you're forced to sit in the same class or stay in the same dorm with the person who raped you; when people are more suspicious of what you were wearing or what you were drinking, as if it's your fault, not the fault of the person who assaulted you. It's a haunting presence when the very people entrusted with your welfare fail to protect you.

To work so hard to make it through the college gates only to be assaulted is "an affront to our basic humanity," the President said.

It insults our most basic values as individuals and families, and as a nation. We are a nation that values liberty and equality and justice. And we're a people who believe every child deserves an education that allows them to fulfill their God-given potential, free from fear of intimidation or violence. And we owe it to our children to live up to those values.

*"It is on all of us to reject the quiet tolerance of sexual assault and to refuse to accept what's unacceptable."*

The Obama administration has taken steps to help bring an end to campus sexual assault by:

- Sending guidance to every school district, college, and university that receives federal funding on their legal obligations to prevent and respond to sexual assault
- Creating the [White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault](#) to work with colleges and universities on developing best practices on how to respond and prevent sexual assault
- Reviewing existing laws to make sure they adequately protect victims of sexual assault



President Barack Obama, with Vice President Joe Biden, delivers remarks at an event to launch the "It's On Us" campaign, a new public awareness and action campaign designed to prevent sexual assault at colleges and universities, in the East Room of the White House, Sept. 19, 2014. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

But "as far as we've come, the fact is that from sports leagues to pop culture to politics, our society still does not sufficiently value women," he said. "We still don't condemn sexual assault as loudly as we should. We make excuses. We look the other way. The message that sends can have a chilling effect" on young men and women.

It's on us -- all of us -- to stop sexual assault. Here are [a few tips](#) on what you can do to be part of the solution:

1. Talk to your friends honestly and openly about sexual assault.
2. Don't just be a bystander -- if you see something, intervene in any way you can.
3. Trust your gut. If something looks like it might be a bad situation, it probably is.
4. Be direct. Ask someone who looks like they may need help if they're ok.
5. Get someone to help you if you see something -- enlist a friend, RA, bartender, or host to help step in.
6. Keep an eye on someone who has had too much to drink.
7. If you see someone who is too intoxicated to consent, enlist their friends to help them leave safely.
8. Recognize the potential danger of someone who talks about planning to target another person at a party.
9. Be aware if someone is deliberately trying to intoxicate, isolate, or corner someone else.
10. Get in the way by creating a distraction, drawing attention to the situation, or separating them.
11. Understand that if someone does not or cannot consent to sex, it's rape.
12. Never blame the victim.

**If you are a victim or survivor, or helping someone in that situation, go to [notalone.gov](http://notalone.gov) to get the resources and information you need. You can also call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE.**

The NCAA, Big Ten conferences, MTV, VH1, and a few others you might recognize have already made a personal commitment to help stop sexual assault. [See why](#) -- then join them in taking the pledge at [ItsOnUs.org](http://ItsOnUs.org).

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