

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 434 301

CG 029 512

AUTHOR Baker, Tamara; Boyd, Cynthia  
TITLE A Program on Preventing Sexual Assault Directed toward Greek Leaders.  
PUB DATE 1999-10-00  
NOTE 8p.  
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)  
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.  
DESCRIPTORS Administrators; College Programs; \*Fraternities; Higher Education; \*Leaders; \*Prevention; Program Development; \*Rape; \*Sexual Abuse; \*Sororities; Student Attitudes; Values  
IDENTIFIERS \*Assaults

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses a program that uses the leadership and status of Greek system officers to prevent sexual assault at a large university. This program aims to prevent future assaults by altering the conditions of a rape-prone culture. The presentation comprises a definition and two examples of acquaintance rape situations, a discussion of conditions that foster a rape-prone culture, examination of personal attitudes and values about sexual assault, and specific suggestions for changing the conditions in Greek organizations and on campus that foster such a rape-prone culture. Greek leaders and college administrators in attendance provide positive feedback. The prevention program is now being offered by the student group that deals with sexual assault issues and education, in addition to its usual safety-oriented programs. (Contains 11 references.) (MKA)

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made \*  
\* from the original document. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

A Program on Preventing Sexual  
Assault Directed Toward Greek Leaders

Tamara Baker, Ph.D.

Hood College

Cynthia Boyd, Ph.D.

University of Illinois at Chicago

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS  
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

T. Baker

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES  
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Running head: PREVENTING SEXUAL ASSAULT

### Abstract

The goal of this program was to utilize the leadership and status of Greek system officers to prevent sexual assault at a large university. What makes this program different is the emphasis on prevention of future assaults by altering the conditions of a rape-prone culture. The components of the presentation were: 1) a definition and two examples of acquaintance rape situations; 2) a discussion of conditions that foster a rape-prone culture; 3) examination of personal attitudes and values about sexual assault; and 4) presentation of specific suggestions for catalyzing change in their organizations and on campus with respect to the conditions that foster such a rape-prone culture.

## A Program on Preventing Sexual Assault

### Directed Toward Greek Leaders

#### The Problem

Awareness of the high incidence of sexual assault on campus has increased dramatically since the publication of Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewki's (1987) article about the problem. A large number of sexual assaults are associated with the Greek system (Sanday, 1990), and this happened to be the case on our campus. Rather than address the issue through traditional safety-oriented programs for potential victims (DiLapi & Wells, 1988), we decided to approach it in a prevention-oriented manner that tapped into the leadership potential of Greek officers. Our goal was to find a way to utilize their leadership and status as role models, as peer intervention has often been cited as an effective approach to impacting students' attitudes (Zimelis, 1998). What makes this program different is the emphasis on prevention of future assaults *by altering the conditions of a rape-prone campus culture*. The components of the presentation were: 1) a definition and two examples of acquaintance rape situations; 2) a discussion of conditions that foster a rape-prone culture; 3) examination of personal attitudes and values about sexual assault; and 4) presentation of specific suggestions for catalyzing change in their organizations and on campus with respect to the conditions that foster such a rape-prone culture.

#### The Program

We began by illustrating that issues of sexual assault and acquaintance rape are complex and confusing. To do so, we shared the true stories of two individuals- a man who later realized

he had perpetrated acquaintance rape and a woman who later realized she had experienced it. For clarification, these were followed by specific definitions of acquaintance rape and sexual assault.

We then moved into the main emphasis of the presentation which focused on precipitants to sexual assault, emphasizing the sociocultural components of sexual assault (see Brownmiller, 1975; Burt, 1980). We challenged the cultural norms on campuses of utilizing objectifying language, equating dating success with sexual conquest, and the devaluation of much needed self-reflective activities (Heider, 1985). On a more personal level, we encouraged the participants to explore their values and behaviors through the administration of a brief values assessment survey followed by discussion. Specifically, they were urged to note inconsistencies between cultural norms and their values, as well as between their values and behavior.

We concluded the presentation with suggestions for catalyzing change. The first suggestion was to display consistency between words and actions in order to be seen as an effective, trustworthy leader (Heider, 1985). We illustrated the tendency to verbally endorse respectful behavior coupled with nonverbal acceptance of assault conducive language or actions. The second was to adopt a grassroots approach in finding one or two others who believed as they did and to count on them to support the leader when s/he confronted others who used objectifying language or behaved in a sexually hostile or threatening manner. The third suggestion was to encourage discussion by setting up a specific time during their weekly meeting to talk about the issues we presented and to then have a joint discussion with a Greek organization of the other gender. Finally, gender specific suggestions were presented. For women, these included being assertive about boundaries, keeping in mind that nonverbal actions can be misinterpreted,

knowing that drug and alcohol use are often related to acquaintance rape (Wilenchek, 1998; Wechsler, Davenport, Dowdall, Moeykens, & Castillo, 1994), trusting their "gut" feelings, and learning to take care of themselves rather than assuming others will have their best interests in mind. For men, the suggestions were that they never assume anything and clarify mixed messages, listen to and respect their partner, recognize that intoxication is no excuse, not confuse "scoring" with having a successful social encounter, and communicate with many different women and men because it is harder to objectify another if you recognize and empathize with the person's inner self (Deutsch & Madle, 1975). The presentation was concluded with referrals to campus resources to help them deal with issues around sexual assault.

Programs of this type have been found through meta-analysis to be effective in reducing rape-supportive beliefs (Flores & Hartlaub, 1998). While we did not do a formal assessment of the impact on participants' attitudes, positive feedback was given verbally by the Greek leaders and college administrators in attendance. We were also invited to repeat the presentation to several Greek organizations, indicating that the Greek leaders valued our message. This prevention program is now being offered by the student group which deals with sexual assault issues and education, in addition to their usual safety-oriented programs.

## References

- Brownmiller, S. (1975). *Against our will: Men, women, and rape*. NY: Simon and Schuster.
- Burt, M. R. (1980). Cultural myths and supports for rape. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *38*, 217-230.
- DiLapi, E. M., & Wells, R. S. (1988). Responding to rape: the Penn experience. Presented at The Second National Conference on Campus Violence. Towson, MD.
- Deutsch, F., & Madle, R. A. (1975). Empathy: Historic and current conceptualizations, measurement, and a cognitive theoretical perspective. *Human Development*, *18*, 267-287.
- Flores, S. A., & Hartlaub, M. G. (1998). Reducing rape-myth acceptance in male college students: A meta-analysis of intervention studies. *Journal of College Student Development*, *39(5)*, 438-439.
- Heider, J. (1985). *The tao of leadership: Leadership strategies for a new age*. NY: Bantam Books.
- Koss, M.P., Gidycz, C.A., & Wisniewski, N. (1987). The scope of rape: Incidence and prevalence of sexual aggression and victimization in a national sample of higher education students. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *35(2)*, 162-170.
- Sanday, P. R. (1990). *Fraternity gang rape: Sex, brotherhood, and privilege on campus*. NY: New York University Press.
- Wechsler, H., Davenport, A., Dowdall, G., Moeykens, B., & Castillo, S. (1994). Health and behavioral consequences of binge drinking in college. *Journal of the American Medical*

Association, 272(21), 1672-1677.

Wilenczek, S. (1998). Sexual assault: Creating effective programs. The Peer Educator, 21, 4, 13.

Zimelis, A. (1998). Prevention programs: Student involvement is fundamental. The Peer Educator, 20(9), 3, 10-11.





**U.S. Department of Education**  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)  
National Library of Education (NLE)  
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



# REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

## I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: <i>a Program on Preventing Sexual Assault Directed Toward Greek Leaders</i>	
Author(s): <i>Tamara L. Baker, Ph.D., &amp; Cynthia Boyd, Ph.D.</i>	
Corporate Source: <i>Hood College &amp; Unw. of Illinois at Chicago</i>	Publication Date:

## II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

<p>The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY</p> <p align="center"><i>Sample</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)</p> </div> <p align="center">1</p> <p align="center">Level 1</p> <p align="center"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.</p>	<p>The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY</p> <p align="center"><i>Sample</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)</p> </div> <p align="center">2A</p> <p align="center">Level 2A</p> <p align="center"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only</p>	<p>The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY</p> <p align="center"><i>Sample</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)</p> </div> <p align="center">2B</p> <p align="center">Level 2B</p> <p align="center"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only</p>
--	--	---

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.  
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

*I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.*

Signature: <i>T Baker, Ph.D.</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title: <i>Tamara L. Baker, Ph.D., Dir. of Counseling</i>	
Organization/Address: <i>Hood College, 401 Rosemont Avenue, Frederick, MD 21701-8575</i>	Telephone: <i>301-696-3440</i>	FAX: <i>301-696-3442</i>
	E-Mail Address: <i>tbaker@hood.edu</i>	Date: <i>10/7/99</i>

**Sign here, → please**



PRIOR '98

(over)