



Better Brotherhood

A Campus Mentoring Program Case Study: Engaging Male Students in Violence Prevention

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Background

- Sexual assault rates remain high despite decades of campus prevention programming
- Traditional online training shows limited efficacy in shifting attitudes
- Masculine norms emphasizing dominance predict sexually aggressive behavior
- 2022-2023 CSU Title IX assessment identified gaps in educational programming
- Need for innovative prevention strategies targeting male students

Objectives

Research Question:

- What are barriers and facilitators to implementing men's violence prevention programming?

Aims:

- Assess male students' readiness to engage with violence prevention topics
- Identify motivations for participating in masculinity-focused programming
- Evaluate implementation challenges and structural barriers
- Develop recommendations for effective program design

Results

Key Finding: 100% of participants comfortable discussing sensitive topics (sexual assault, domestic violence)

Four Participation Motivations:

1. Understanding healthy masculinity (most common) *"I know what 'toxic masculinity' is... but can't easily define what healthy masculinity looks like"*
2. Processing personal experiences *"I have personal stories where I was taken advantage of"*
3. Seeking peer connection *"Interested in hearing other men's perspectives on issues I only discuss with women"*
4. Building advocacy skills

Implementation Barriers:

- Traditional recruitment methods ineffective
- Evening scheduling problematic
- Inconsistent attendance (most attended 1-2 sessions)
- Students preferred drop-in format over commitment

Success Factors:

- Personal endorsements from trusted campus figures
- Male facilitation essential for vulnerability
- Safe discussion space more valuable than curriculum

Conclusion

- **Barriers are structural, not attitudinal** - male students ready to engage when environment supports it
- **Traditional programming formats ineffective** for college student needs
- **Trusted endorsements crucial** for recruitment success
- **Flexible participation** better serves students

Methodology

Program Design:

- 3-session pilot (originally planned as 8 sessions)
- 90 minutes each, weekly evening meetings
- Male-facilitated, single-gender format
- Topics: Gender socialization, healthy masculinity, brotherhood

Participants:

- 9 male students recruited campus-wide

Data Collection:

- Registration survey (demographics, comfort level, motivations)
- Pre-test survey (attitudes, behaviors, intervention confidence)
- No post-test due to attendance issues

Future Work

Programming Recommendations:

- Midday scheduling instead of evening
- Ambassador-based recruitment via trusted figures
- Drop-in participation format
- Market as personal development, not violence prevention

Research Directions:

- Longitudinal impact studies
- Recruitment strategy effectiveness
- Optimal formats for diverse populations