DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS
Health Campaign | Purple Heals
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Introduction

Did you know...

One in four college students have been involved in a physically abusive dating relationship (Miller, 2011).

College students involved in abusive dating relationships are more likely than those not in abusive dating relationships to be in a relationship of a longer duration, to have been in a previous abusive dating relationship, and to be more accepting, in general, of physical abuse as a means of conflict resolution (Miller 2011).

Defining Domestic Violence
Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone. (The United States Department of Justice, 2013)
Current Situation

In 2003, Lederman & Stewart conducted focus groups regarding the execution of a domestic violence health campaign targeting college students. Before distributing any campaign messages, Lederman and Stewart (2003) were interested in accessing students' perceptions about domestic violence on campus and provide researchers with their perceptions on the credibility of particular messages as sources of information for them. Lederman and Stewart (2003) addressed: students' understanding of the term “domestic violence”, understanding of four statements describing domestic violence, and reactions to varying slogans used in domestic violence campaigns.

Results of Study

Participants strongly agreed the term “domestic violence” does not apply to college students. Participants agreed the term “abusive relationship” was a better description amongst college age students. Respondents viewed college aged boyfriend/girlfriend as not “domestic” due to often not living together. Other opinions expressed concerned media portrayal of abusive relationships as “almost always a husband and wife situation”. The term violence also suggested students almost always thinking of physical abuse and not mental. One participant stated “Somehow, I just can’t put college and domestic violence together. I’m not saying it’s not happening. I mean I always think of it happening in a household,” (Lederman & Stewart, 2003).

Overall, students in Lederman and Stewart’s (2003) focus group associated the term “domestic violence” with an image of older, married couples in which the husband hits the wife. This caused the audience to disregard the message as domestic violence was not relevant to them.
Overall Goal of Campaign

One in four college students experience at least two acts of violent behavior during a relationship, with more than 85% failing to self-identify as being a victim of an abusive relationship (Miller, 2011). If students fail to identify abusive behaviors in their relationships as actually abusive, they will be unable to stop the abuse. Prior research shows only 2-4% of college students self-identify with being a victim of physical violence within a relationship.

The goal of this the campaign seeks to change the perception of domestic violence within college age relationships. Because college students do not often affiliate the term “domestic violence” within their relationship, this campaign will alter their perception on not only the term, but what constitutes abuse. By altering the message, college students will increase awareness and knowledge of abusive relationships. The campaign will run beginning Fall semester of 2014 and end at semester’s end in December 2014. The campaign duration will be 3 months and will be reviewed after completion, thus allowing changes or improvements for the following school year.
Analyzing

Few studies of abusive relationships focus on college-aged women to better understand the reasons to stay within a negative relationship. Researcher Edwards, Murphy, Tansil, Myrick, Probst, Corsa and Gidycz (2012), researched 123 college aged students who identified themselves in an abusive relationship. Prior research demonstrates that 31% to 85% of college women remain in abusive relationships for some time following initial incident of abuse. Following this study researchers concluded: 86% of women stayed with no uncertainty of the relationship, 5% stayed in the relationship despite being having doubt and 4% left the relationship for reasons unrelated to abuse; only 5% left due to abuse. The results indicate that despite having conflict within a relationship, most college women will stay with their significant other even though indicated relationship was abusive. The reasons to why the participants stayed included: positive boyfriend qualities, relational qualities, partner is best friend, length of relationship, vision future together, or negative emotion (ex: can’t image life without) (Edwards, Murphy, Tansil, Myrick, Probst, Corsa & Gidycz, 2012).

Health Effects of Abusive Relationships

- Development of depression
- Anxiety
- Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD),
- Personality Disorders
- Substance Abuse
- High rates of suicide attempts
- Eating disorders
- Self-destructive behavior
Segmentation

Overall, the campaign against abusive relationships will cover the following target audiences:

- College aged women who currently are involved within an abusive relationship.
- College aged women who have previously been involved within an abusive relationship.
- Friends or those aware of violence occurring within a relationship.

Target of Campaign

- Female college students ages 18-25, as women ages 20-24 are the greatest risk for being involved within an abusive relationship.

Geographic Focus: University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Students
Goals of Campaign

The goals of the proposed campaign will contain: primary prevention, early intervention and intervention strategies. Purple | Heals will engage with students through the use of campus events, social media channels and direct flyers. By using these strategies, college students will increase awareness and the problems associated regarding abusive relationships.

The primary goal of the proposed campaign is “prevention”. By focusing on prevention, the strategy will seek to prevent violence before it occurs. The proposed objectives seek to address the concern of lack of awareness of the prevalence of violence occurring within college relationships, change the behavior and perceptions of students and promote what constitutes a healthy relationship.

In 2004, 401 Whitewater Students were surveyed regarding abusive relationships...

- Involved in an emotionally abusive relationship: 11% of men, 16% of women
- Involved in a physically abusive relationship: 1% of men, 2% of women
Objectives

✓ Increase awareness of abusive relationships on campus
✓ Change college students’ perception of abuse in relationships
✓ Encourage women to report acts of violence from partner

Social Media

Facebook is a social media network that has a broad variety target audience. Many organizations use Facebook to update their statuses regarding special events, news, and engagement with followers. By using this channel, Purple | Heals will engage with college students with the ability to reply to postings, answer questions, and post photos of campus events. By continuously keeping the Facebook page up to date, it will not only increase connections within the UW-Whitewater campus, but also within the community.

Twitter is another social media channel that will be used within this health campaign. By tweeting, followers will be able to interact throughout the campaign. Not only can followers receive updates, but can also use the hash-tag #PurpleHeals to mention the campaign. Twitter can also be connected with the Facebook fan page as well—allowing increased integration of the two social media sites.

Through the use of Instagram, students can post photos or videos and share the content with other users and hash-tag #PurpleHeals to tag the health campaign. This application would be helpful in showcasing events held throughout the campaign such as the fashion show or 5K race. By using this social media channel, students not currently aware of the campaign will have a better understanding of the events that occur. This will not only increase the organization’s awareness, but also student involvement towards future events.
Channels of Communication

- Facebook

- Twitter
Campaign Messages

Prevention
- Speaker will talk on campus to students what constitutes a healthy, respected relationship.
- Messages will advocate respectful relationships.
- Students can sign up for a workshop partnering with the University Health Center for a 6 week program on health relationships. This would include advice, tips on “red flags” to avoid and conflict strategies.

Early Intervention
- Survivors of domestic violence will speak on campus. Message will focus on the right for a healthy, respectful relationship and survivals stories.

Intervention
- Messages will urge women who are victims of abuse to contact local police or other on campus services.
- A support group will be established for college students currently involved/recently involved in an abusive relationship.

Branding
In order to differentiate the proposed health campaign from other groups, messages will include the branding “Purple | Heals”. This branding tactic focuses on the female college student and incorporates the color purple which is associated with domestic violence awareness.
Tactics

Special Events:
- Fashion Show
- 5K Purple Ribbon Run

Purple Ribbon Run
September
The 5K will kick off the campaign's special event on Saturday, September 13, 2014. A 5K race (3.1 miles) is chosen as both beginning runners and experienced runners will be able to participate in the event. This event is not only open to UW-Whitewater students, but also other community members and those in the surrounding area. The event will increase community and student involvement, as well as increase awareness of domestic violence/relationship abuse prior to October.

Fashion Show
October
Because October is “Domestic Violence Awareness Month”, the campaign will feature narratives from previous abusive relationships of college students. Survivors of abusive relationships will share testimonials and stories through video followed by walking down the runway in purple themed fashion. The event will celebrate the survivors of domestic violence and celebrate walking away from abusive relationships.

Tagline: Purple Heals: High Heels for High Hopes of Ending Abuse
Celebrate the survival of college students walking away from abusive relationships at UW-Whitewater.

FASHION SHOW
Saturday  October 11, 2014
7:00 pm  |  Young Auditorium
Free Admission.

Purple | Heals
High Heels for High Hopes of Ending Abuse
5K Purple Ribbon Run

September 13, 2014
$20 Pre-Registration until September 15 | $25 Day Of
8:00 a.m.
Starin Park

Run Away From Abusive Relationships.

Purple | Heals
Tactics

- Purple | Heals will create a website under the extension of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with the following address:
  - http://www.uww.edu/purpleheals
- Purple | Heals will partner with the University Health and Counseling Services to provide services to students affected by abuse.
- The University Health and Counseling Services will promote a safe, supportive, environment for students to seek counseling for domestic violence/abuse. The message will focus on confidentiality and being 100% free to students of UW-Whitewater.
- Flyers will be placed around campus, in the UC, dorms and other areas to promote this service offered to students. Purple | Heals and UHCS will also utilize media channels to promote messages to students.
- The campaign will also use the Royal Purple Newspaper to advertise future campus events, services and the health campaign.

Social media will embed button in links to make appointments.
Measurement of Campaign

- Review and track followers of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and website traffic.
- Review police records from beginning of campaign to end to report changes of reporting of violence within college relationships. Note if increase in cases of abuse within college students is being reported to law enforcement.
- Compare on campus health services for domestic violence prevention or counseling, prior to campaign and end of campaign. Document if number of services requested increases.
- Students will answers a pre-test and post-test through the UW-Whitewater email system regarding the issues and prevalence of domestic violence/abuse within college aged relationships.
References

Domestic Violence/Abuse Statistics
http://www.statisticbrain.com/domestic-violence-abuse-stats/
U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (2013)

Domestic Violence
http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/domviolence.htm
The United States Department of Justice

