Charting the Path Forward

National Data Highlights on Promising Trends and Continuing Challenges in Campus Sexual Assault Prevention

CAMPUS PREVENTION NETWORK

IT'S ON US

Executive Summary

In the six years since the release of the Dear Colleague Letter, and the four years since the passage of the VAWA amendments to the Clery Act, colleges and universities across the country have devoted unprecedented attention, time, and resources to preventing sexual assault on campus. EverFi's Campus Prevention Network, in collaboration with It's On Us, has examined the current state of sexual assault prevention to identify positive national trends in higher education and spotlight areas that schools need to continue to focus their attention. Among the findings, this report highlights:

+ Nearly 50% of college presidents have spoken publicly about sexual assault three or more times in the past year; only a quarter of college presidents did not speak about sexual assault publicly in the past year;

+ While fewer than a third of campuses (27.9%) reported stable, consistent funding for evaluation efforts of their prevention programming, nearly all campuses are engaging in at least one evaluation effort of their prevention programming despite funding challenges;

+ Peer educators are playing an increasingly prominent role in delivering sexual assault prevention programming on campus; schools and colleges need to ensure peer educators receive appropriate supervision and training to fulfill their responsibilities successfully;

+ Significant differences in funding and staffing levels for prevention exist across institutions, particularly in relation to school size; increased investment in prevention is necessary for ongoing impact and progress.

Much of the current dialogue regarding sexual assault on college campuses focuses around the topics of compliance with federal legislation, regulations, and guidance, as well as new state legislation—and with good reason. After all, schools who fail to meet the minimum requirements set out by guidance or law risk significant negative exposure, loss of funding, litigation, and intense intervention from federal oversight agencies. It is important to bear in mind that expanded federal mandates, while representing a step forward in raising the bar of expectations for college campuses, constitute the minimum standards for campus efforts to address sexual assault. In order to go beyond these baseline requirements—and the "check-the-box" mentality that mandates tend to foster—campuses can and should strive to do the very best work possible to protect and support students.

This report highlights significant success and progress for colleges and universities nationally. From college presidents speaking publicly about this issue on their campuses, to schools increasing staffing and prevention budgets, to students fostering prevention impact through peer education, there are many encouraging insights to share across the national landscape on sexual violence prevention. There are also clear guideposts that mark the road schools and colleges will need to take to continue to strengthen their prevention efforts on campus.
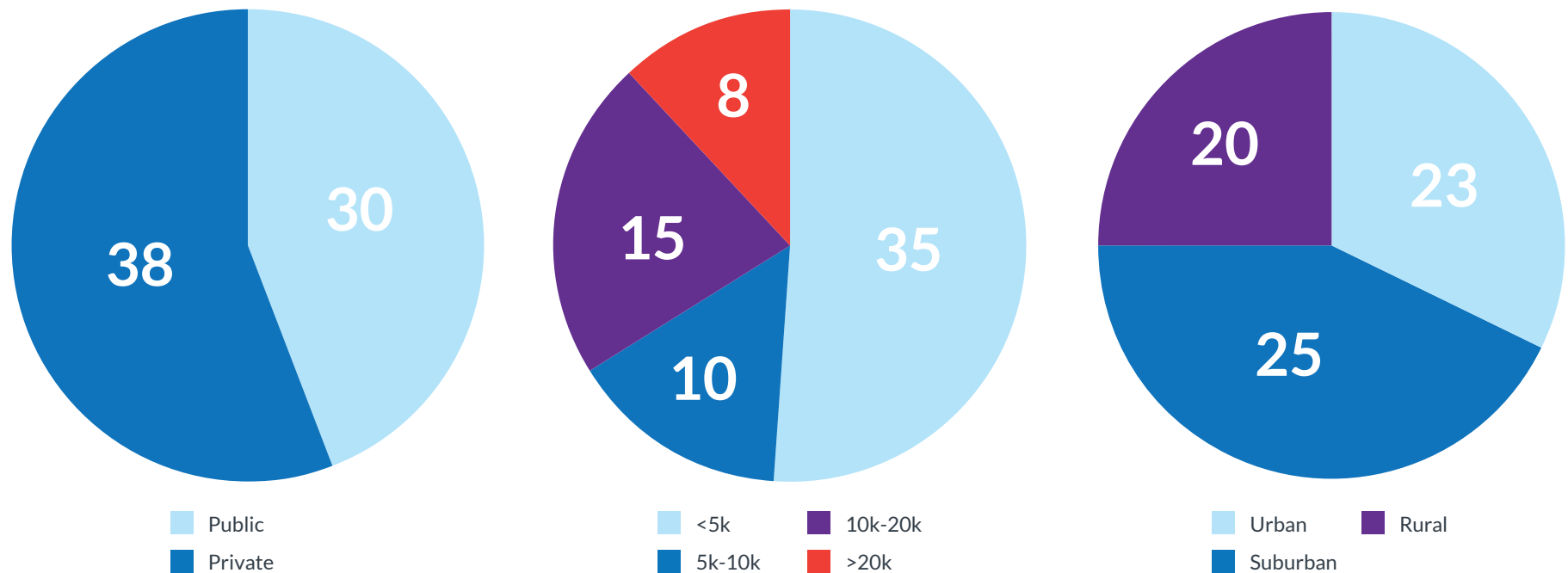
Our Method

To be successful, prevention programs must be built upon a foundation of institutional commitment to wellness and prevention, as well as a set of critical processes for effectively doing prevention work. In creating the Sexual Assault Diagnostic Inventory (SADI), EverFi researchers conducted an extensive analysis of prevention guidelines, recommendations, standards, and best practices based on dozens of publications. From this research, EverFi identified 115 distinct recommendations across 22 different categories related to prevention. These categories and recommendations fell into three core domains: programming, critical processes, and institutionalization. These three pillars (with the addition of policy)are the core components of the **Campus Prevention Network** framework for prevention best practice. In collaboration with leading researchers and nationwide prevention professionals, the recommendations in each pillar were translated into a comprehensive assessment of an institution's prevention efforts - the Sexual Assault Diagnostic Inventory (SADI).

As of April 1, 2017, 68 campuses have completed the SADI, including participants in the It's On Us Campus Innovation Program. The aggregated data from these schools comprise the comparative basis for the findings outlined in this report as measured against the best practices gleaned from the literature review[1]. These institutions are diverse in their student composition, size, institutional type, and geographic location.

Sexual Assault Diagnostic Inventory - Participating Institutions (n=68)

Pie chart 1:
- 38
- 30

Legend:
- Public
- Private

Pie chart 2:
- 8
- 15
- 35
- 10

Legend:
- <5k
- 10k-20k
- 5k-10k
- >20k

Pie chart 3:
- 20
- 23
- 25

Legend:
- Urban
- Rural
- Suburban

1 A few data insights have been drawn from a slightly smaller n size in instances where outlier institutional data was excluded.

The responses from participating institutions were analyzed based on the weighted importance of each item with regards to alignment with best practice. This allowed institutions to be categorized as Emerging, Developing, Proficient, or Advanced in each of the three pillars covered in the SADI. Schools were also given an aggregate designation that reflects the average of their efforts across each pillar. The categorical distribution of schools within each pillar and in aggregate can be seen below.

This report examines each prevention pillar in detail, identifies notable findings from the data, and considers the significance of these findings for schools and colleges. It is our hope that institutions of higher education will use these findings to examine their current sexual assault prevention efforts and develop research-informed, evidence-driven strategies for strengthening their campus prevention plans.

Tier Distributions Across Institutionalization, Critical Processes, Programming, and Aggregate
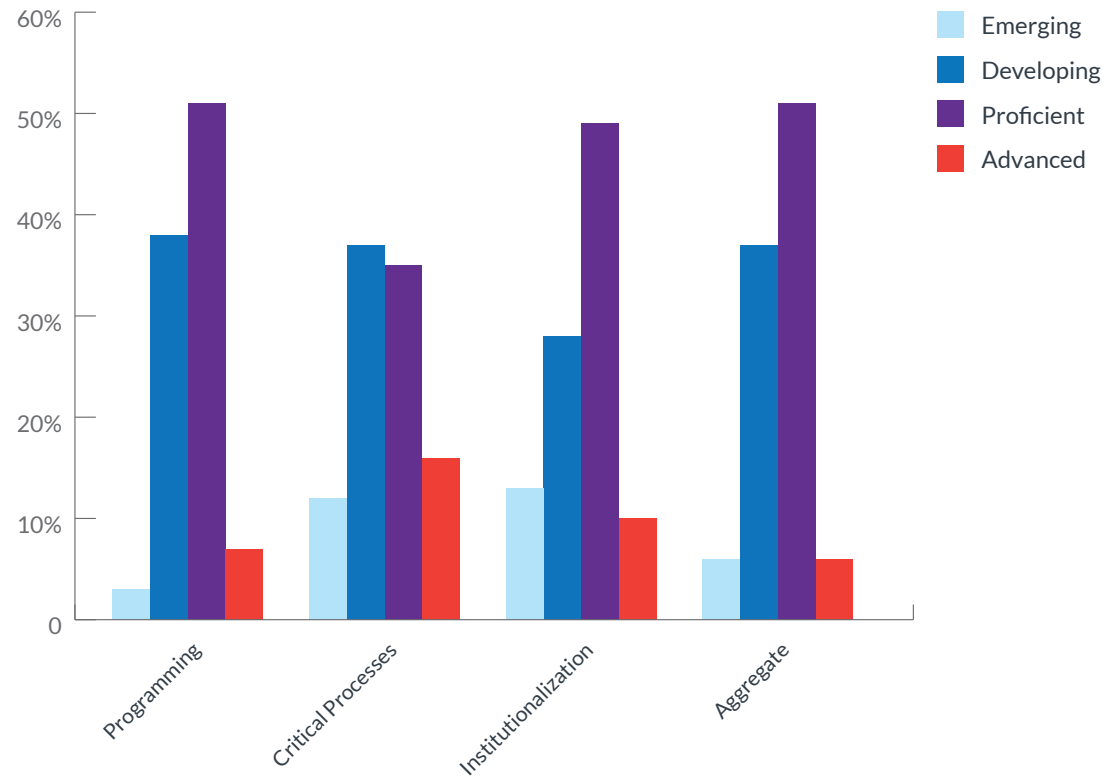
In completing the SADI, participating campuses were asked to gather information from a wide array of campus stakeholders who would have specific knowledge of their campus's efforts related to sexual violence prevention. Like most self-study inventories, the SADI relies on institutional self-reported data to determine its findings; the information included in this report is accurate to the degree that schools and colleges have entered information that is true for their campus. Additionally, it is important to note that this report does not include SADI insights related to programming efforts directed at graduate or professional students. We recognize the importance of developing and delivering sexual assault prevention programming that is designed to meet the needs and concerns of these students, and have identified this topic as an area for further investigation. Similarly, while this report focuses specifically on sexual assault prevention, we recognize that sexual assault is often committed along with other forms of gender-based violence, including sexual or gender-based harassment, intimate partner violence, and stalking. The recommendations included in this report are also relevant for institutions to consider in developing comprehensive prevention programs that address the spectrum of harmful behaviors that students commit or experience on campus.
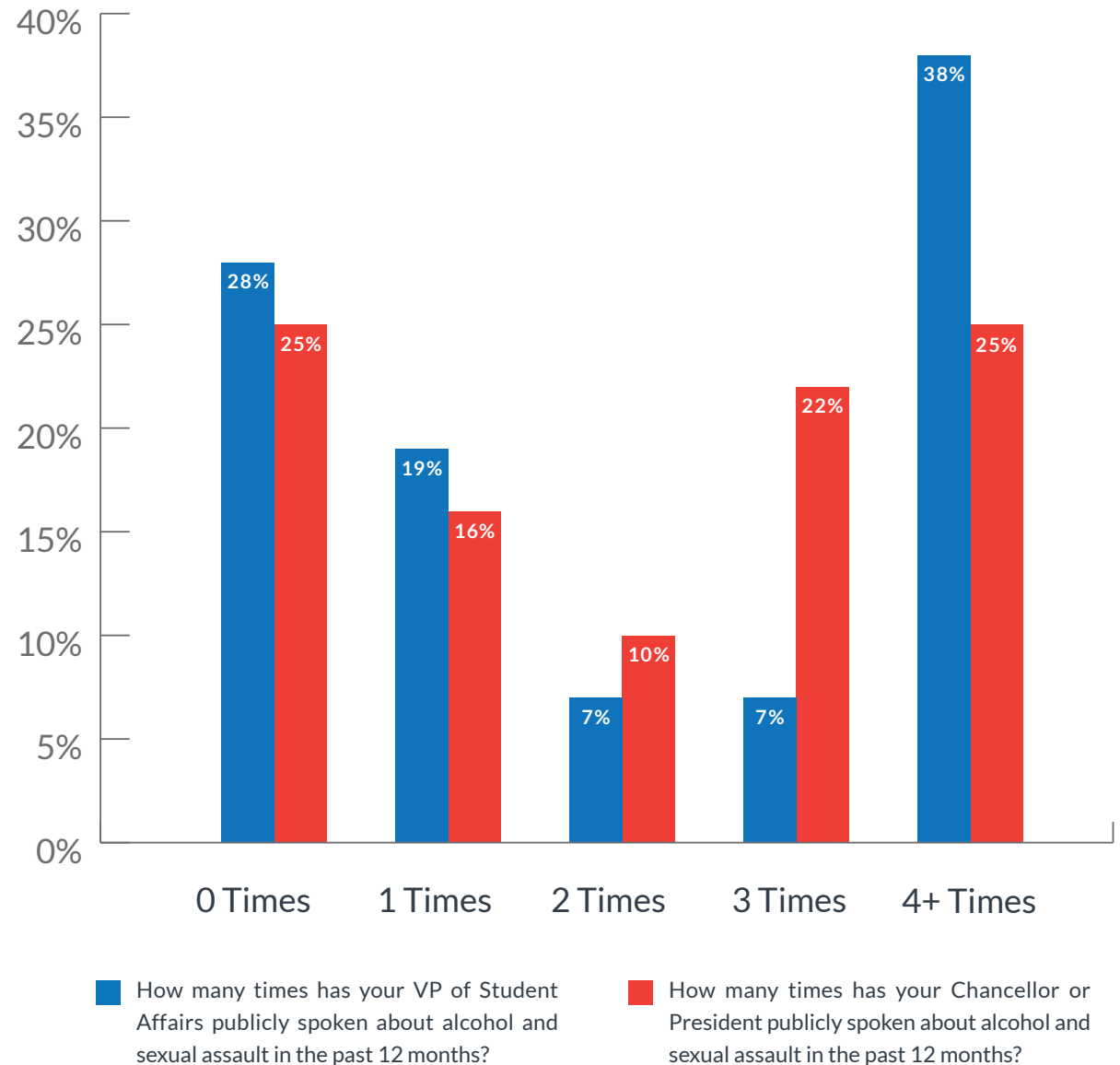
Institutionalization

This domain explores the commitment of senior leadership to an institution's prevention efforts. Institutionalization focuses on resource allocation and staffing, accountability, and visible prioritization of prevention across the greater campus community.

Institutions of higher education have seen unprecedented activism, legislative oversight, and enforcement around their sexual assault prevention and response efforts. In keeping with these growing expectations, it is critical that those in leadership positions on campus take a proactive and vocal stance and publicly address the issue on a regular basis across the school year and to a wide variety of audiences.

When asked about the frequency of college presidents publicly addressing the issue of sexual assault, institutions are reporting a wide variety of practices. An encouraging finding from these data reveals that fewer than a third of college presidents (25.3%) did not speak to the issue at all in the course of an academic year. Coincidentally, the same percentage of college presidents (25.3%) are also speaking publicly about the issue four or more times per academic year. Among advanced institutions, the percentage of college presidents who speak to the issue four or more times per academic year rises to 42.9%. The chart here compares the frequency of public statements related to sexual assault across college presidents and vice presidents of student affairs.

Visible Leadership on the Issues

Bar chart "Visible Leadership on the Issues" comparing two series across 0 Times, 1 Times, 2 Times, 3 Times, 4+ Times.

	0 Times	1 Times	2 Times	3 Times	4+ Times
How many times has your VP of Student Affairs publicly spoken about alcohol and sexual assault in the past 12 months?	28%	19%	7%	7%	38%
How many times has your Chancellor or President publicly spoken about alcohol and sexual assault in the past 12 months?	25%	16%	10%	22%	25%

College presidents who most successfully speak about sexual assault share these traits: they discuss their current campus climate with transparency; balance compassion for those who have experienced harm with the importance of strong due process protections for all students; and provide specific, accurate information about the institution's efforts to prevent sexual assault and support impacted students

It is not only the frequency with which senior administrators speak to the issue, but also the content of their messaging that makes an impact. EverFi prevention experts note that college presidents who most successfully speak about sexual assault share these traits: they discuss their current campus climate with transparency; balance compassion for those who have experienced harm with the importance of strong due process protections for all students; and provide specific, accurate information about the institution's efforts to prevent sexual assault and support impacted students. More detailed guidance for college presidents on speaking about sexual assault can be found in **Communicating Publicly About Sexual Assault On College Campuses: Tips for Senior Administrators.**

It is important for presidents to not only speak regularly about sexual assault, but to also commit institutional resources to sexual assault prevention, be informed of ongoing campus prevention efforts, and be apprised of institutional progress towards identified goals. Ideally, college and university presidents will, in the words of University of Michigan President Mark Schlissel, "feel personally responsible for the safety and well-being of all students" and translate that personal and institutional commitment into stable, ongoing funding and personnel support[2]. In these areas, we see campuses making progress towards these hallmarks of institutionalization that form the foundation of strong comprehensive sexual assault prevention efforts. In our sample, over a third of presidents (39.7%) have specifically charged a campus working group or committee that is focused on sexual assault prevention efforts and over half of college presidents (53.4%) are involved in a prevention committee or taskforce in some way.

In addition to presidential visibility, budget and personnel allocation are the clearest indicators of institutional commitment to vigorously addressing campus sexual assault. Of those institutions that achieved "advanced" recognition, on average across institution size, campuses reported 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) devoted to prevention for every 1,298 students. Across all institutions that participated in the SADI, this ratio plummets to 1 FTE devoted to prevention for every 9,452 students. Perhaps unsurprisingly, institutional dollars earmarked for prevention (exclusive of personnel costs) follow a similar trajectory: campuses that excel in Institutionalization provide on average nearly two and a half times greater funding than institutions overall at $9.35/student for advanced institutions versus $3.82/student for others.

2 http://ns.umich.edu/new/releases/22978-u-m-releases-results-of-campus-climate-survey-regarding-sexual-misconduct

When it comes to institutionalization of prevention, it appears that size matters. Currently no institutions that enroll over 15,000 students achieve advanced status. For large institutions otherwise reporting strong prevention efforts, the critical gap is clearest in the area of dedicated FTE and allocation of prevention budget dollars. In contrast, small institutions (undergraduate enrollment below five thousand students) spend significantly more per student on sexual assault prevention. Small institutions were also more likely to have more robust staffing in place than either medium or large institutions.

Encouragingly, of the campuses who have completed the SADI, over half (55.2%) reported that student health and safety issues are included in their institutional strategic plans and over two thirds of campuses reported that student health and safety were included in the missions or vision statements for their student life/student affairs divisions.

When we analyze the aggregate results of schools' institutionalization scores with their aggregate programming scores, we find that there is a 12% positive difference in programming scores for those school with strengths in institutionalization. This finding suggests a relationship between strengths in programming and strengths in institutionalization and supports a focus on increasing institutional support as a part of a campus's overall strategy to improve their comprehensive prevention efforts.

Prevention Staffing

What is the total FTE (full-time equivalent) whose primary responsibility is devoted to prevention on your campus - including your time, other staff, and paid student help?

Aggregate	Small (<5K)	Medium (5K-15K)	Large (>15K)
1.6 FTE	**1.2 FTE**	**1.4 FTE**	**2.8 FTE**
1 FTE per 9,452 students	1 FTE per 4.016 students	1 FTE per 19,199 students	1 FTE per 10,576 students

Prevention Budget

For this year, how much recurring funding has been allocated from your institution's budget to prevention efforts, not counting grant-supported work and excluding personnel costs?

Aggregate	Small (<5K)	Medium (5K-15K)	Large (>15K)
$19,033	**$12,000**	**$19,663**	**$33,367**
$3.82/student	$5.57/student	$2.44/student	$1.55/student

Critical Processes

This pillar focuses on the processes that are in place to translate an institution's resources and commitment into an effective prevention strategy. Critical processes include data collection and evaluation, goal-setting and strategic planning, and capacity-building and collaboration.

A persistent challenge that most campuses face in evaluating their prevention programs is securing on-going financial support for this work, despite federal regulations that reinforce the need for campus evaluation and assessment. Indeed, fewer than a third of campuses (27.9%) reported stable, consistent funding for evaluation efforts of their campuses' prevention programming. In contrast, 82% of those campuses that are advanced in Critical Processes reported receiving funding for this important critical process. Despite the lack of financial support for prevention programming evaluation and assessment, nearly all institutions identified at least one evaluation effort related to their prevention programming; only 12% of campuses identified that their campus engaged in no evaluation efforts.

Logic models are valuable tools for campuses to use in developing as well as evaluating their campus prevention efforts. Logic models are also useful in fostering a shared understanding of an institution's comprehensive prevention plan among various stakeholders, clearly and succinctly describing how

the various programs and activities work together, and creating accountability to achieve goals. When we look at the use of logic models across all campuses within the sample, those that have achieved advanced status report using logic models over two times more often (73%) than campuses who have not earned this designation (33.8%). This finding represents an opportunity for schools and colleges that have not yet developed a logic model for their prevention efforts to engage the evaluation expertise of faculty and institutional research staff members for support in this important area.

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Advanced institutions are also overwhelmingly more likely than the broader sample of schools and colleges who have completed the SADI to have identified institutional goals for their sexual violence prevention efforts; 91% of advanced institutions reported having developed specific and measurable prevention goals versus only 32.8% of all campuses reported that they have identified goals. This critical process is particularly important because goal-identification proves to be a good predictor of whether institutions have also engaged in a strategic planning process. Of those campuses that identified goals, 77% reported that they revisit those goals annually, and 67% report having developed a strategic plan specifically related to their comprehensive sexual assault prevention programs.

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91%

32.8%

Programming

This pillar refers to the prevention programs and strategies that are currently being implemented on a campus. Programming consists of the focus and frequency of primary prevention programs, what community groups they have been adapted for, and to what extent they are theory-driven and evidence-informed.

Analysis of the data from the programming domain showed that over two-thirds of institutions (69%) are reaching undergraduate students at least once a semester with prevention programming; nearly half (44%) report that they are delivering prevention programming to their undergraduate students at least 1-2 times a month. Almost 20% of institutions (including 100% of institutions who have been identified as achieving "advanced" development in Programming) offer their undergraduate students opportunities to participate in prevention education programming 1-2 times per week.

Aggregate Programming Frequency

	Undergraduate Students	Campus Faculty	Campus Staff
1-2/wk	19.1%	0.0%	0.0%
1-2/mo	25.0%	3.0%	7.4%
1-2/sem	25.0%	29.9%	29.4%
1-2/yr	23.5%	37.3%	41.2%
<1/yr	7.4%	29.9%	22.1%

Advanced Programming Frequency

|	Undergraduate Students	Campus Faculty	Campus Staff
1-2/wk	100%	--	--
1-2/mo	--	--	20%
1-2/sem	--	80%	80%
1-2/yr	--	20%	--
<1/yr	--	--	--

Campuses are also collaborating with critical community partners to deliver in-person programming: over 60% of campuses are partnering with community-based organizations to deliver in-person programming. This finding is particularly encouraging because it signals that campuses are reaching beyond their borders to develop meaningful connections with stakeholders in their communities. These connections typically foster greater awareness among students of off-campus and on-campus, and increases the likelihood that students will have choice in seeking support services if they do experience violence. These partnerships are also wins for campuses with limited resources that may benefit from harnessing the prevention and training expertise community partners can provide. Lastly, community stakeholders often gain deeper understanding of the complex challenges campuses face in addressing sexual assault and are better poised to support campuses in meeting those challenges and in forging solutions to challenges as they arise.

A majority of campuses (80.9%) also identified that their prevention programming is informed by at least one theoretical model; 100% of advanced institutions reported basing their programs in theory. Most frequently-cited theories include: the socio-ecological model; a public health approach to violence prevention; feminist theory; and student development theories. Additionally, a majority of campuses are also engaging in peer education for their in-person prevention programs. Over half (54%) of campuses are using peer educators to deliver in-person programming while 47% of campuses reported using student staff to deliver programming. Importantly, 87% of campuses are also delivering in-person programming using institutional staff with prevention expertise.

Peer educators can be a powerfully effective asset in an institution's comprehensive prevention plan but, like all staff, they must be appropriately trained and supervised to be effective in their roles. While we see the involvement of peers in sexual violence prevention as a positive in this report, we offer a caution as it relates to training and supervision. While over 80% of participating schools provide professional supervision to their peer educators, this picture changes when it comes to peer educator training. Over fifty percent of campuses reported that they require ten or fewer training hours, with fifteen percent requiring no training. Among the advanced schools, however, all require a minimum of eleven hours of training for their peer educators, and 40% require over forty hours of training of their peer educators.

Peer Educator Use

7.4% Yes, for all prevention programs

25% No

67.6% Yes, for some prevention programs
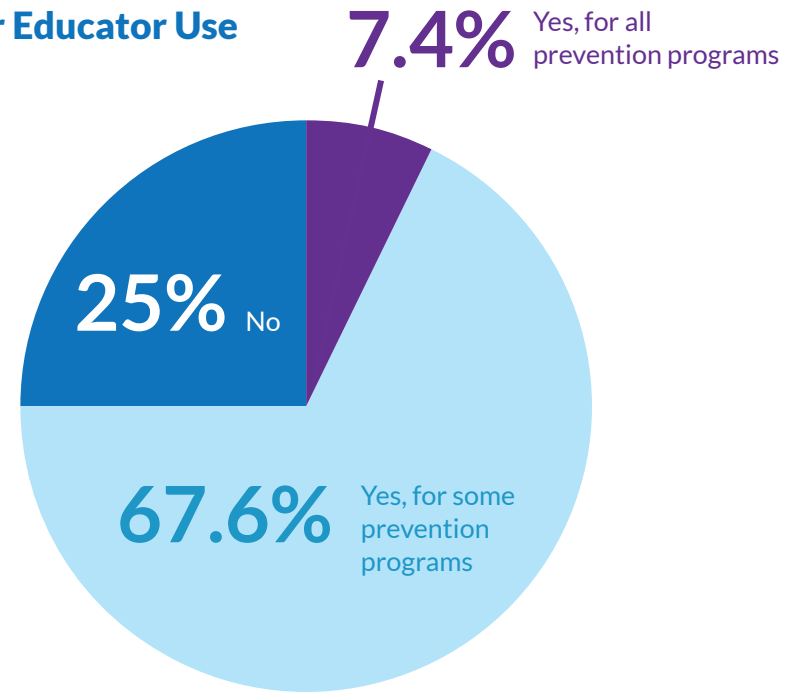
Required Training for Peer Educators (In Hours)
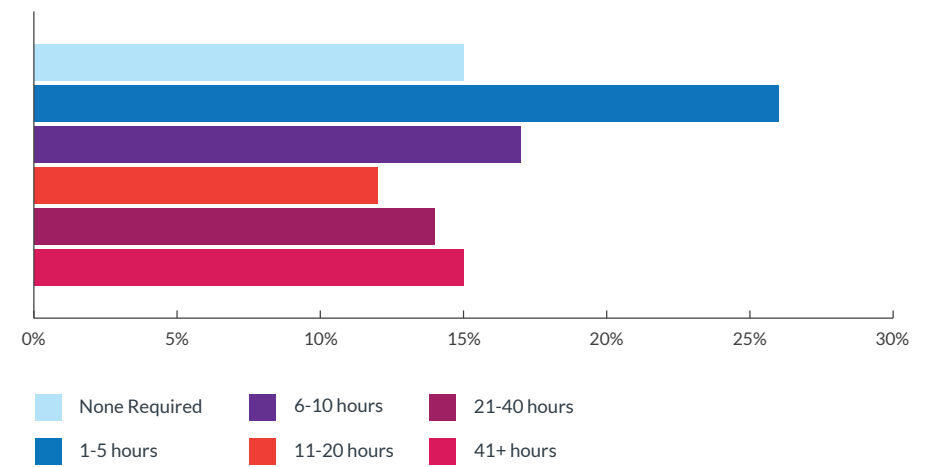
- None Required
- 1-5 hours
- 6-10 hours
- 11-20 hours
- 21-40 hours
- 41+ hours

While nearly all campuses are reaching out to their incoming students with prevention programming, few are reaching out specifically to student sub-populations that research identifies as being the most at risk for experiencing harm.

While nearly all campuses are reaching out to their incoming students with prevention programming, few are reaching out specifically to student sub-populations that research identifies as being the most at risk for experiencing harm. Even among institutions that are designated as "advanced" in their Programming, only 20% are delivering targeted programming to students belonging to underrepresented racial or ethnic minority groups. In the general sample, this result is even worse: fewer than 10% of campuses report delivering targeted programming to underrepresented students on campus (8.8%).

A surprising and concerning finding arises from the analyses of the data related to transfer students. As incoming students, transfer students would be included in the Clery regulations that require all incoming students to be offered primary prevention education. Nevertheless, and despite evidence that transfer students are at greater risk for experiencing sexual assault, fewer than half (48.5%) of institutions reported delivering education to transfer students.[3]

Students who identify as LGBTQ are also at increased risk for experiencing sexual assault and would be an appropriate target for specifically-tailored educational efforts. While over 60% of advanced institutions are reaching these at-risk students, across the whole sample just over 25% of campuses have developed and delivered targeted programs for students who identify as LGBTQ.

Conclusion

Overall, more than 50% of schools included in this analysis were designated as Proficient (51%) or Advanced (6%) in their sexual assault prevention efforts. The results of the SADI suggest a number of places where campuses can focus their efforts to increase their effectiveness in preventing sexual assault. Specifically, we encourage senior administrators to continue speaking publicly about the importance sexual assault prevention on their campuses in order to visibly demonstrate their commitment to the issue and its importance to the institution as a whole.

Campuses recognize the importance of developing and delivering rigorous, theory-driven programming that is appropriate to the broad undergraduate student body as well as particularly vulnerable subpopulations.

However, many institutions—particularly mid-sized and large schools—do not have the level of prevention personnel or programming dollars necessary to execute the strategic planning, program development, and program evaluation needed to move the needle on this mission-critical issue.

And, of course, these two issues are related. Fundamentally, when college and university presidents make an issue a priority, institutional attention, policies, processes, and funding align to support that priority. As the University of Texas-Austin President, Gregory L. Fenves, recently noted, "[w]e must not be silent anymore, and we must not be afraid to face the very real problems that exist at our university and in society in general."[4]

4 http://www.dallasnews.com/news/higher-education/2017/03/23/survey-15-percent-female-undergraduatesat-ut-raped

About The Author
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Holly is the Senior Director of Prevention Education at EverFi. Previously, Holly directed the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center at the University of Michigan. Holly provided expertise to President Obama's White House Task Force on best practices for campus-based sexual and intimate partner violence prevention and response efforts and represented four-year colleges and universities in the federal negotiated rule-making committee for the 2013 Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization. She brings over two decades of experience in violence prevention and response and in higher education to her role at EverFi.

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