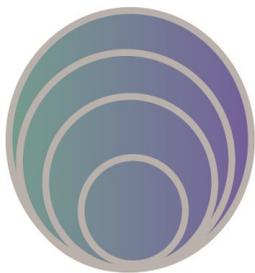


5 Theories that Can Help Mobilize Campus Men

INFORMATION SHEET

CAMPUS
Technical Assistance
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Building Prosocial Norms

Mobilizing men in the prevention of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking goes well beyond the one-time workshop. Mobilizing men is about reaching out to campus men with both challenging and positive messages that can motivate them. It's about learning how healthy masculinity

is connected to prosocial norms and prevention. Many of us are familiar with how the risk factors for gender-based violence can be connected to masculinity, but we have to build new collective understandings of healthy masculinity prosocial norms and how those norms challenge the risk factors. Here are five theoretical frameworks that can positively inform campus efforts to mobilize men.

#1: SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTIONISM:

Deconstructing social norms has almost become commonplace—certainly in the world of the university and college. Reconstructing social norms is less commonplace, but a vital part of addressing the role of masculinity and men in preventing gender-based violence. Theodore Brameld, a leading proponent of social reconstructionism in the United States, argues that it is teachers' responsibility to help students become social change agents in times of crisis.

#2: DOMINANT/COUNTER STORIES:

Dominant and counter stories can help with mobilizing men work, offering a concrete framework for deconstructing and reconstructing masculinity. It is often a framework used in critical race theory. When applied to men and masculinity it involves investigating the "stock" or dominant stories that characterize what it means to be a man—tough, win at all costs, for example—and evaluating whether they cause harm. Counter stories represent feelings and experiences potentially marginalized in men by dominant stories—being caring and collaborative, for instance—and can be the basis for healthy masculinity.

#3: EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE:

While still not as esteemed as academic learning, social and emotional learning's (SEL) value and importance is gaining ground. Certainly SEL has value in relation to mobilizing men work. Dominant stories of men and emotions are that men should show no emotions or that the primary emotion available to men is anger. On the other hand, the prevention field has long asserted that

empathy may discourage men from harming women. The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)* identifies the following five SEL core competencies: Self-awareness, social-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

#4: IDENTITY-BASED MOTIVATION:

The Identity-Based Motivation (IBM) model (see <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3079278>), attributable to Daphna Oyserman, argues that identity-based behavior is not determined by personal choices as much as it is by identities and behaviors associated with social groups. Based on IBM, then, mobilizing men work is going to be more effective if the behaviors associated with prevention are made congruent with a social identity important to men, such as healthy masculinity.

#5: SOCIAL NORMS THEORY:

Social norms theory, applied by Alan Berkowitz to mobilizing men work (see http://www.alanberkowitz.com/articles/college_men.pdf), is based on research indicating that many college males mistakenly believe the majority of men on campus are comfortable demeaning women. Social norms theory challenges these perceived norms by making known the actual norms—that a majority of men on campus are uncomfortable with women being treated as "less than."

* CASEL's mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school.

To learn more about changing campus culture to prevent gender-based violence, visit the Center for Changing Our Campus Culture:
www.changingourcampus.org

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