

Chapter 12

Interventions to Prevent Sexual Violence

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12.1. INTRODUCTION

Historically, the majority of rape-prevention efforts have been directed at female college populations, primarily teaching avoidance and self-defense skills (Parrot, 1990). Little was known about adolescent dating and even less about sexual violence in adolescence. As knowledge of adolescent sexual assault advanced, primary prevention efforts expanded, and more programs began to target younger audiences. Developmentally, it makes sense to educate children about appropriate and inappropriate sexual behavior at the same time that their sexual identities are forming and their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward romantic partners are beginning to develop. However, despite the data on adolescent sexual development suggesting that attitudes legitimizing sexual coercion may begin as early as age 12 years (Burkhart & Fromuth, 1991) and despite the fact the women aged 12–18 years experience a greater rate of sexual assault than any other age group (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995), the majority of research in the area of rape prevention has been conducted with college students (Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Schewe, 2002). Although most researchers in the field of sexual assault prevention work with college-age populations, the majority of prevention programs delivered by rape crisis centers and domestic violence agencies target students younger than 18 years of age (Schewe, 2004). This gap between research and practice must be addressed. Furthermore, nearly all sexual assault interventions and research have been directed at the level of the individual. More work and research needs to be directed at preventing violence at multiple levels of the social ecology.

This chapter explores the research on sexual assault prevention, focusing on data from adolescent populations when possible, in an effort to define the state of the art in sexual assault prevention efforts for adolescents and young adults. The

chapter focuses on primary prevention—that is, efforts to prevent first occurrences of sexual assault perpetration or victimization. This chapter will not address sexual abuse committed against children by an older perpetrator because these situations are more appropriately addressed with the prevention of child abuse. The prevention programs discussed in this chapter primarily address any nonconsenting sexual behavior committed against an acquaintance, a dating partner, or a stranger. These nonconsenting behaviors are commonly referred to as rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment.

12.2. PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL AGGRESSION

12.2.1. Middle School

Data from middle school students indicate that between 28% and 45% of students have experienced some form of sexual harassment by a peer or group of peers (Cascardi, Avery-Leaf, & O'Brien, 1998; Connolly, McMaster, Craig, & Pepler, 1997). Represented by these data are students from a Canadian urban community of primarily European descent and a U.S. urban community of predominantly African American students. Only one published study reports rates of sexual aggression among middle school students, with 1–5% of students reporting perpetration of sexual aggression and 7–15% reporting sexual victimization (Foshee, Linder, Bauman, & Langwick, 1996).

12.2.2. High School

Data from high school students indicate that the rate of sexual violence in a multiethnic, economically diverse sample was 15.7% (Bergman, 1992). Females consistently report higher rates of sexual victimization than do males; one study found that 17.8% of high school females reported experiencing forced sexual activity, compared to 0.3% of males (Molidor & Tolman, 1998). Similarly, Bennett and Fineran (1998) found that 16% of high school girls reported being the victim of sexual violence, whereas only 1% said that they had perpetrated sexual violence; for boys, the rates were 6% and 4%, respectively. Finally, in a survey of 830 high school boys from across Illinois, Schewe (2004) found that 12% reported that they would be “very likely” or “likely” to force a woman to have sex with them if they could be assured that they would not be punished. Only 47% of the boys indicated they were “not at all likely” to force sex on a woman under those circumstances.

12.2.3. College

Survey research among American college women indicates that as many as half report being victims of some form of sexual abuse, and 27% report being victims of rape (15%) or attempted rape (12%) (Koss, 1988). Gavey (1991) found a similar rate (25.3%) using Koss's survey in New Zealand. Moreover, 25% of men in Koss's survey indicated that they had behaved sexually with a woman against her will. Finally, Denmare, Briere, and Lips (1988) found that 22% of undergraduate males reported at least some future likelihood of raping.

12.3. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

Victims of rape often manifest long-term symptoms of chronic headaches, fatigue, sleep disturbance, recurrent nausea, decreased appetite, eating disorders, menstrual pain, sexual dysfunction, and suicide attempts (Resnick, Acierno, & Kilpatrick, 1997). Victims of date rape are 11 times more likely to be clinically depressed, and 6 times more likely to experience social phobia than are non-victims. Psychological problems are still evident in cases as long as 15 years after the assault (Kilpatrick, Best, Saunders, & Veronen, 1988). In a longitudinal study, sexual assault was found to increase the odds of substance abuse by a factor of 2.5 (Kilpatrick, Acierno, Resnick, Saunders, & Best, 1997). The adult pregnancy rate associated with rape is estimated to be 5%, and estimates of the occurrence of sexually transmitted diseases resulting from rape range from 3.6% to 30% (Resnick et al., 1997). A study examining the use of health services over a 5-year period by female members of a health maintenance program found that the number of visits to physicians by rape victims increased 56% in the year after the crime, compared to a 2% use increase by nonvictims (Koss, Koss, & Woodruff, 1991). The tangible and intangible cost of each rape in the United States in 1996 is estimated to be \$94,466, which totals to over more than \$26 billion each year (Post, Mezey, Maxwell, & Wibert, 2002).

12.4. SIGNIFICANT THEORIES PERTAINING TO SEXUAL AGGRESSION IN ADOLESCENCE

12.4.1. Feminist Theory

Feminist theory (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Yllo, 1993) identifies a patriarchal social structure as the root of relationship violence, with male as perpetrator and female as victim, except in same-sex relationships. This model posits a gender-specific explanation of relationship violence within the context of gender-role socialization, societal inequalities, and power and control. Thus a feminist approach targets attitudes and beliefs as the key to preventing intimate partner violence, specifically, individuals' attitudes toward interpersonal violence, adherence to traditional gender roles, and the behavioral expression of power and control.

12.4.2. A Sociobiological Approach

Finkelhor et al. (1986) proposed a model to account for child sexual abuse that could be adapted to account for adolescent sexual assault. He proposed that four components must be present before sexual offenses can occur. The first component can be termed *motivation to sexually offend*, which includes deviant arousal (sexual arousal to aggression or sexual violence) or the unavailability of more appropriate sources of sexual satisfaction. The second component entails overcoming internal inhibitions. A variety of personal and social factors, such as feelings of guilt or fear of criminal sanctions, ordinarily work together to inhibit sexual offending. Perceptions of social tolerance for the behavior and low probability of negative sanctions as well as distorted ideas or myths about rape and drug or alcohol abuse all work against the normal mechanisms that inhibit sexual

offending. The third factor involves overcoming external inhibitions. Bystanders and witnesses will generally not tolerate sexually offensive behavior. Offenders overcome external inhibitions by isolating their victims either by design or accident (Finkelhor et al., 1986). Last, the offender must overcome the target's resistance. An offender may overcome the victim's resistance through persuasion or coercion, by taking advantage of the victim's relative powerlessness, or by using threats of violence or other sanctions (Finkelhor et al., 1986; Walker, Bonner, & Kaufman, 1988).

12.4.3. Cognitive-Behavioral Theory

A cognitive-behavioral explanation of sexual assault is evident in most explicit and implicit theories of rape. Cognitive distortions justifying rape are the most common immediate precursor to rape (Scully & Marolla, 1985). Perhaps consequently, cognitive distortions justifying rape (rape myths) are targeted more often than any other construct in programs designed to prevent rape (Schewe, 2002). On the behavioral side, repeated pairings of sex and violence might account for the development of deviant arousal to violence, whereas a lack of skills (communication skills, anger management skills, ability to cope with rejection, etc.) might prevent adolescents from developing healthy sexual relationships. One example of how sex and violence are paired occurs in the stereotypical horror movie shower scene in which a naked actress is violently attacked. For adolescent boys, this is a near perfect pairing of sexual arousal and violence.

12.5. PROMISING PRACTICES

Currently there are few evidence-based sexual assault prevention curricula. Typically, packaged curricula offered for sale have little to no evidence of their effectiveness, and programs that have been evaluated have generally not been developed into packaged curricula. The two exceptions to this are the Safe Dates curriculum and a collection of six curricula recently published by the Illinois Coalition against Sexual Assault (ICASA). The Safe Dates intervention includes a 10-session curriculum, a play, and a poster contest and has demonstrated long-term effectiveness in reducing adolescents' self-reports of victimization and perpetration of dating and sexual violence (Foshee et al., 2004). Furthermore, a prevention educator in Illinois implementing the Safe Dates Program achieved greater improvements in students' attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral intentions concerning dating violence than 17 other teen dating violence prevention programs (Schewe, 2004). ICASA recently published 6 curricula, ranging from one to five sessions after a statewide evaluation of their 29 sexual assault prevention programs. These 6 curricula produced the best outcomes for students in terms of improvements in rape-related attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral intentions compared to the 23 other interventions (Schewe, 2004). Because of the scarcity of published curricula with documented effectiveness addressing sexual assault, this chapter explores the constructs that have been targeted in educational rape-prevention programs and evaluates evidence for the effectiveness of these intervention strategies (Table 12.1).

Table 12.1. Summary of Effectiveness of Sexual Assault Prevention Strategies^a

Strategy	Gender Primarily Targeted	Reducing Sexual Assault Perpetration	Reducing Sexual Assault Victimization	Changing Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs, or Behavioral Intentions
Intervention strategies				
Bystander interventions	Both	NE	NE	4
Addressing rape myths	Both	NE	NE	4
Teaching self-defense skills	Females	NE	4	4
Communication training	Both	NE	NE	4
Teaching victim empathy	Males	NE	NE	3
Avoiding high-risk situations	Females	NE	NE	3
Addressing negative consequences for perpetrators	Males	NE	NE	3
Addressing social norms	Both	NE	NE	NE
Rape-awareness programs	Both	NE	NE	2
Education about self-defense	Females	NE	2	2
Other considerations				
More sessions		NE	NE	5
Shorter sessions		NE	NE	4
Culturally relevant programs		NE	NE	4
Single-gender audience		NE	NE	4
Targeting younger students		NE	NE	4
Male–female co-presenters		NE	NE	3
Interactive presentations		NE	NE	3
Exploiting cognitive dissonance		NE	NE	NE
Confrontation		NE	NE	1

^aThe scale is as follows: 5, effective (supported by two or more well-designed studies or systematic review); 4, promising (supported by a preponderance of the evidence); 3, insufficient (insufficient or mixed evidence); 2, not effective (no effect found in two or more studies or systematic review); 1, harmful (negative effect supported by two or more studies or systematic review); NE, no Evidence.

12.5.1. Problems with Measuring Outcomes

Unfortunately, the problems associated with measuring outcomes of rape-prevention programs (Schewe & O'Donohue, 1993a) have not yet been solved. Clearly the most obvious measure of the effectiveness of rape-prevention programs would be a decrease in the incidence of rape. However, because so few sexual assault victims seek help from formal institutions and such a small percentage of rapes result in criminal convictions, tracking the incidence of rape from official sources is implausible. Also, while self-reports of sexual assault have been very useful in establishing prevalence and incidence statistics, the use of self-reports after intervention is problematic because an individual's definition or perception of what constitutes sexual assault is likely to change after sexual assault education. Individuals' reports of sexual assault and related behaviors might increase or decrease after intervention, regardless of any real changes in sexual assault experiences. Self-reports of perpetration have the added problem that after education, individuals may realize that past behaviors could be considered criminal, and this new understanding might suppress reporting. Evidence supporting these speculations comes from studies that have found that reports of lifetime victimization and/or perpetration *decrease* after intervention (Foshee et al., 2000; Schewe,

1999). Clearly, such changes in reporting would likely differ between treatment and control groups.

Without reliable incidence data, most evaluations of sexual assault prevention programs instead measure intermediate outcomes—changes in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, or behavioral intentions that are theoretically or rationally linked to the outcome of interest (a decrease in sexual assault). These measures suffer in that none of them has strong empirical links to changes in actual behavior.

12.5.2. Interventions with Preponderance of Evidence

12.5.2.1. *Bystander Interventions*

One of the more recently developed strategies for educating young people about sexual assault takes a “bystander” approach to prevention. With this strategy, audience members are addressed not as potential perpetrators or victims of sexual assault but as bystanders. This approach teaches students how to support a friend or loved one who discloses sexual assault and instructs students how to confront friends who express sexist attitudes and how they can potentially intervene with friends in risky situations (i.e., at a party where a friend has had too much to drink). The implied goal of these rape-prevention programs, changing participants’ attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors regarding sexual assault, is often left unstated. One rape-prevention program using this approach documented positive changes in rape myths and likelihood of raping among college fraternity members (Foubert, 2000). Similarly, across 29 different rape-prevention programs for high school students in Illinois, the content area most associated with positive outcomes for students was discussing how to help a friend who had been assaulted (Schewe, 2004).

Addressing students as potential bystanders to sexual assault has a number of benefits for prevention educators. The approach can be used with males and females in mixed-gender classrooms with less risk of being interpreted as victim blaming or male bashing than other approaches (e.g., discussions of high-risk situations, gender stereotypes, communication skills.). In addition, it can make use of much of the other information commonly presented in sexual assault prevention programs (i.e., prevalence statistics establish the likelihood that someday someone you love will be sexually assaulted, and information about the consequences and aftermath of rape provides motivation to learn how to help a friend who has been victimized and can increase empathy for victims of sexual assault). Evidence for the success of this approach and the fact that it can be implemented or incorporated into existing interventions makes this an approach that prevention educators should strongly consider.

12.5.2.2. *Rape Myths*

A review of recent literature reveals that rape myth acceptance is the most common construct addressed in rape-prevention programming; it is important to note that rape myth acceptance scales were the most frequently used measure of program outcomes (Schewe, 2002). A variety of irrational beliefs are associated with rape and sexual offending (Burt, 1980; Hildebran & Pithers, 1989; Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987), making rape myths an ideal target for prevention programming. For example, Pithers, Kashima, Cumming, Beal, and Buell (1988) analyzed the

case records of 64 incarcerated rapists and found that cognitive distortions justifying rape (rape myths) were the second most frequent immediate precursor to rape (anger was the first). In published evaluations of rape-prevention programs over the last 15 years, rape myths were frequently targeted in “successful” intervention programs and were rarely targeted in “unsuccessful” programs (Schewe, 2002). Again, success was largely defined as changes in students’ belief in rape myths. In a comprehensive study that evaluated 29 sexual assault prevention programs simultaneously, linear regression revealed that providing information about rape myths was positively and significantly associated with students’ change scores on the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Schewe, 2004).

Effective interventions targeting rape myths have been as minimal as the presentation of brief written material (Malamuth & Check, 1984) to as thorough as a 2-hour workshop targeting only empathy and rape myths (Lee, 1987). One warning is that a rape myths intervention (a presentation of false beliefs about rape along with corrective information) should not be confused with the presentation of factual information alone. Factual information such as legal definitions of rape, descriptions of victims and offenders, and descriptions of rape trauma syndrome have been found to have no effect on students’ attitudes about rape or their empathy for victims of rape (Borden, Karr, & Caldwell-Colbert, 1988; Lenihan, Rawlins, Eberly, Buckley, & Masters, 1992; Schewe & O’Donohue, 1993b).

12.5.2.3. Teaching Self-Defense Skills

Teaching women self-defense strategies appears to be an effective tool in helping students avoid rape. An evaluation of a “model mugging” course found that 46 of 48 women assaulted after taking the course fought back sufficiently to avoid harm (Peri, 1991). Other studies cite beneficial psychological consequences for women taking self-defense classes compared to a no-treatment control group (Cohen, Kidder, & Harvey, 1978). Furthermore, there is fairly strong evidence concerning the types of strategies that are effective in deterring an attacker. Ullman and Knight (1993) examined police reports and court testimonies of 274 women who were either raped or avoided rape by subsequently incarcerated violent stranger rapists. They found that women who fought back forcefully were more likely to avoid rape, that women who screamed or fled when confronted with weapons experienced less severe sexual abuse, and that increased physical injury was associated with pleading, crying, reasoning, and the women’s use of drugs or alcohol. Furthermore, when the sequence of attack–resistance–injury has been taken into account, studies show that fighting leads to less completed rape and *no* increase or decrease in physical injury (Quinsey & Upfold, 1985; Ullman & Knight, 1992; Ullman, 1998). The most important implication of this research is that women should be encouraged (if they are able and so choose) to resist rape with active strategies of fleeing, screaming, and fighting known to be associated with decreased rape completion.

When teaching self-defense or discussing effective rape-avoidance strategies, it is important to address social barriers that may prevent women from using effective defense strategies. For example, students might be too embarrassed to yell or scream or may be afraid of losing a friend if they fight back or may be so shocked that someone they trust is attacking them that they are unable to react. Also, participants should be warned that although active resistance strategies will generally be most effective, in some instances fighting back could result in greater physical

injury to the victim. Participants should, therefore, be instructed that the decision to fight back is extremely personal, and its effectiveness will vary from situation to situation. Finally, educating women about effective self-defense strategies in the absence of teaching actual self-defense skills is questionable.

12.5.2.4. Communication Training, Assertiveness, Limit Setting

Miscommunication has been implicated as a cause of date rape for many years. Results of one study involving prison inmates suggest that rapists are particularly poor at interpreting negative cues from women in first date situations when compared to incarcerated nonrapists (Lipton, McDonel, & McFall, 1987). Muehlenhard and Linton (1987) postulate that men interpret women's behavior more sexually than do women, and that this misunderstanding can lead to sexual offending. Muehlenhard and Andrews (1985) studied men's reactions to a woman's stating directly that she did not want to do anything more than kiss. The researchers found that this direct form of limit setting decreased men's ratings of how much the woman wanted to have sex, men's ratings of how likely they would be to try sexual behaviors beyond kissing, men's ratings of how much she led the man on, and men's ratings of how justified the man was to engage in petting after the woman said no. The construct of communication skills has been included along with other interventions in at least three different rape-prevention programs that have been evaluated and published. Each of these programs has indicated some level of success in changing knowledge and attitudes, although communication skills were not evaluated specifically as an outcome measure (Foubert & McEwen, 1998; Gilbert, Heesacker, & Gannon, 1991; Proto-Campise, Belknap, & Woodlredge, 1998). In addition, addressing healthy relationship skills, a construct that might include communication skills and problem-solving skills, was positively associated with successful outcomes in Schewe's (2004) evaluation of 29 sexual assault prevention programs.

12.6. POSSIBLE PRACTICES

This section discusses interventions that have demonstrated mixed evidence of their effectiveness.

12.6.1. Victim Empathy

Victim empathy is a cognitive-emotional recognition of a rape victim's trauma (Hildebran & Pithers, 1989). Programs that target victim empathy attempt to help students develop an understanding of the experiences of a rape victim and typically involve both an understanding of the victim's experience of the actual rape as well as the aftermath of rape (shame, guilt, depression, pregnancy, and social sanctions)—what has been called by some as the “second assault” (Williams & Holmes, 1981). The idea behind these interventions is that students who understand the horrible experience of rape would never inflict that type of pain on anyone and would be more likely to help/believe a person who reports that he or she has been raped. Examination of the evaluation literature reveals mixed support for including victim empathy in rape-prevention programs. Of the 10 programs that targeted victim empathy, 8 reported positive effects on student attitudes. One of the few prevention programs to demonstrate long-term positive effects included

victim empathy as a key component (Foubert, 2000). The two exceptions provide useful information for developers of prevention curricula. In Berg, Lonsway, and Fitzgerald's (1999) study of 54 college males, they found that men who were asked to empathize with a female rape victim reported a greater likelihood of sexual aggression than men who were asked to empathize with an adolescent male who was victimized by another adolescent male. In a similar study, Ellis, O'Sullivan, and Sowards (1992) found that when mixed-gender groups of undergraduates were asked to consider a situation in which a close friend told them that she was raped, women became more rejecting of rape myths, but men became *less* rejecting of them. Review of the other empathy programs reveals that having males empathize with other male victims of rape was a key part of many of the more successful programs (Schewe, 2002). However, in Schewe's (2004) outcome evaluation of 29 rape-prevention programs for high school students, victim empathy was *inversely* related to student outcomes as measured by the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). Unfortunately, details about how educators addressed victim empathy were not supplied.

Typical victim empathy interventions involve having participants listen to survivors' stories of rape, engage in written exercises describing a victim's experiences, or imagine themselves as a victim of rape. Whenever males are in the audience, empathy-inducing exercises should absolutely include at least one scenario in which the victim is a male. To reflect the reality of male rape, the perpetrator should also be male and the perpetrator should have a heterosexual orientation.

12.6.2. Avoidance of High-Risk Situations

Early research identifying high-risk situations for sexual assault (e.g., use of alcohol, hitchhiking, attending parties, dating in isolated locations, being involved with older men) (Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987; Ullman, 1997) suggested that educating women to avoid these situations could be an important part of efforts to reduce the incidence of rape among program participants. One program addressed this construct and was able to successfully increase women's perceptions of their vulnerability to rape and increase their intentions to avoid risk-taking behaviors (Gray, Lesser, Quinn, & Bounds, 1990). Hanson and Gidycz's (1993) risk-reduction program was successful in decreasing both women's involvement in situational factors associated with rape and victimization among women who did not have a history of sexual victimization. However, in Schewe's (2004) statewide outcome evaluation, teaching students to avoid high-risk situations was inversely associated with change scores on the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Payne et al., 1999).

There are two major cautions for educators attempting to incorporate information regarding high-risk situations into their curricula. One is that these programs should not be used for male or mixed-gender audiences. In the course of a program that highlights women's awareness of high-risk situations and perceptions of vulnerability, women in the audience may learn that date rape occurs very frequently, that most rapes go unreported to police, and that they should avoid alcohol and isolated dating locations. Men in the same audience may learn that rape is a common experience; that if they do commit rape, the chances of being caught are slim; and that if they get a woman intoxicated and take her to an isolated location, their chances of being caught are even slimmer. Given the differences in the information that men and women need concerning rape, it is important that coordinators of programs that attempt to target both sexes are very careful when selecting information to

present. A second caution is that information regarding high-risk situations might unintentionally increase victim blaming. Educators implementing such programs have the difficult job of teaching women about situations in which sexual assault is more likely to occur while instilling the belief that rape is never the survivors' fault, regardless of her prior behavior.

12.6.3. Negative Consequences for Perpetrators

Perceived rewards and costs and low probability of punishment can be viewed as contributory factors of rape (Bandura, 1973; Scully & Marolla, 1985). Decision-making theory asserts that when deciding which course of action to take, people weigh the costs and benefits of their actions along with the probabilities of potential outcomes. Breslin, Riggs, O'Leary, and Arias (1990) found that male undergraduates who committed acts of dating violence anticipated fewer negative consequences than nonaggressive students. Scully and Marolla (1985) used information from interviews of 114 incarcerated rapists to suggest that most rapists viewed rape as a rewarding, low-risk act.

Decision theories suggest that information that changes men's perceptions of rape so they begin to view it as less rewarding than consensual sex, in both the short term and the long term; more costly than consensual sex (e.g., imprisonment, guilt, loss of job); and more likely to lead to negative consequences (e.g., high probability of getting caught or feeling guilt) might be beneficial in preventing attempted rapes. However, out of the 33 rape-prevention programs reviewed by Schewe (2002), only 3 addressed the negative consequences of raping for men. Of these, 2 evidenced positive outcomes, and the other, a program highlighting victim empathy and the negative consequences of rape, was less effective than program's targeting rape myths (Intons-Peterson, Roskos-Ewoldsen, Thomas, Shirley, & Blut, 1989; Schewe & O'Donohue, 1996; Schewe & Shizas, 2000). In addition, in Schewe's (2004) statewide evaluation, programs that included discussions of the negative consequences of committing rape were less likely to demonstrate positive outcomes for students.

12.6.4. Changing Social Norms

Originally applied to substance abuse prevention, interventions to correct misperceptions about social norms have recently been applied to sexual assault prevention (Fabiano, Perkins, Berkowitz, Linkenbach, & Stark, 2003). This approach involves surveying students regarding risk and protective behaviors to identify misperceptions. For example, if male students are asked if it is important to get consent before sexual intimacy, 90% may report that consent is important; but the same students may also believe that only 40% of other men feel that consent is important. The correct information can then be fed back to students. The intended outcome is that with accurate information students will identify the protective behavior as normative, and social support for the protective behavior may increase. Social norms campaigns can similarly target risk behaviors (e.g., binge drinking in college students) by demonstrating that those behaviors, contrary to popular belief, are outside the norm. Although social norms campaigns have been effectively applied to substance abuse on college campuses, the effectiveness of the approach for addressing sexual assault has not yet been tested.

This approach may be particularly useful for engaging men as allies in prevention efforts by aligning them with the majority who do not support rape and sexually abusive behaviors. Instead of driving a wedge between men and women by

defining male culture as being synonymous with rape culture, prevention educators should try to support the positive qualities of the majority of men. Traditional educational programs can be revised to include data from a social norms survey; social marketing strategies, which have the potential to reach thousands of students, can be developed in collaboration with or independent of educational workshops (Fabiano et al., 2003).

12.7. UNSUPPORTED PRACTICES

This section discusses interventions that have demonstrated no effect or negative effects supported by two or more studies or systematic review.

12.7.1. Knowledge/Rape-Awareness Programs

The type of information covered by rape-awareness interventions include the definitions of *rape* and legal terms, presentation of statistics regarding the prevalence of rape, discussion of the ways that society condones or perpetuates rape, descriptions of typical perpetrators and victims, descriptions of the rape trauma syndrome, and information on local resources for victims of rape. These programs appear to operate on the premise that the more students know about rape, the less likely it is that they will become victims or perpetrators. However, perhaps the clearest message that comes from the evaluation literature is that these programs rarely work. When these programs do report success, often the success is based on increased knowledge or changed attitudes among females, with little or no change among male participants, the population for whom change is most essential (Schewe, 2002). In Schewe's (2004) statewide evaluation of sexual assault prevention programs, programs that emphasized statistics and sexual assault definitions were less likely than other programs to document positive changes among students.

12.7.2. Education about Self-Defense

Two prevention programs included a discussion of self-defense strategies without teaching actual self-defense skills (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993; Women against Rape, 1980). Both programs were effective in either decreasing the incidence of victimization or increasing confidence in the use of self-defense strategies and willingness to confront a perpetrator, but only for women without a history of sexual assault. However, two subsequent evaluations of educational sexual assault prevention programs focusing on psychological barriers to resistance found no reduction in sexual assault risk at follow-up, regardless of sexual assault history (Breitenbecher & Gidycz, 1998; Breitenbecher & Scarce, 2001).

12.8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

12.8.1. Promising Practices

12.8.1.1. More Sessions

Practical limitations often only allow a single session, and the majority of sexual assault prevention programs described in journal articles and implemented in the field are single-session interventions (Schewe, 2002, 2004). However, as a

general rule, more sessions are better than fewer sessions. Heppner, Neville, Smith, Kivlighan, and Gershuny (1999) evaluated a three-session rape-prevention program and found the strongest predictor of whether male participants would change and stay changed over a 5-month period was how many of the sessions they attended. Similarly, across 29 rape-prevention programs for high school students, the number of sessions (range 1–10) was positively and significantly related to positive outcomes (Schewe, 2004). Some curricula developers have overcome some of the practical barriers to multiple sessions by designing their programs to meet state guidelines for health education. In this way, the Safe-T for Teens program has replaced the existing health education classes in several middle schools; its 30-hour curriculum emphasizes healthy relationship skills and sexual abuse prevention.

12.8.1.2. Shorter Sessions

The attention spans of adolescents and young adults place a limit on the length of sexual assault interventions. The results of Schewe's (2004) evaluation of sexual assault prevention programs revealed that shorter programs were more effective than longer programs (range 40–90 minutes). Note that the effect sizes of interventions dropped off rapidly after 60 minutes. This result was more pronounced for male students than for female students.

12.8.1.3. Specifically Targeting the Race/Ethnicity of the Audience

Heppner et al.'s (1999) study is the only one to date that has tested the effects of including culturally relevant material in a prevention program. This study compared the effects of a "color-blind" intervention to one that subtly but purposefully integrated African American content and process into the intervention. The results indicate that "Black students in the culturally relevant treatment condition were more cognitively engaged in the intervention than their peers in the traditional treatment condition" (Heppner et al., 1999, p. 16). Cultural relevance meant having a Black group facilitator, including incidence and prevalence figures for both Black and White populations, specifically targeting race-related rape myths and facts, and presenting culture-specific information concerning the recovery processes of Black and White women.

12.8.1.4. Single-Gender Audience

As noted above, some of the information included in rape-prevention programs is more appropriate for one gender or the other. Many authors have cited strong arguments for addressing single-gender audiences in rape-prevention programs (Berkowitz, 1992; Lonsway, 1996; Schewe & O'Donohue, 1993a). A recent meta-analysis found that males in mixed-gender prevention programs experienced less attitude change than males in single-gender groups (Brecklin & Forde, 2000). Kline (1993) found greater positive changes for males in a single-gender group than for males in a co-ed group. Furthermore, both males and females in the single-gender groups reported a more positive group experience than those in the mixed-gender groups. When possible, single-gender curricula should be developed. However, because of practical constraints (schools often are not willing or able to split up classrooms), mixed-gender curricula should be developed that avoid blaming men and blaming victims and do not unintentionally teach males how to rape and get away with it.

12.8.1.5. Intervening with Younger Students

While advocates and researchers have argued for the need to intervene with younger students for some time, Schewe's (2004) statewide evaluation of sexual assault prevention programs was the first research to provide empirical data. The results of his study indicate that across interventions, younger students changed more than older students (range 9th–12th grades).

12.8.2. Possible Practices

12.8.2.1. Male-Female Co-presenters

Both educators and researchers have held a variety of beliefs about the gender of the presenter as it relates to the audience. Some believe that male presenters will have the greatest effect on male audiences, whereas females will have the greatest effect on female audiences. Others believe the exact opposite. Still others believe that a male and female team of presenters works best for all audiences because of the team's ability to model healthy male–female relationships. Jones and Muehlenhard (1990) specifically addressed the gender of the presenters in their experimental design and found that the gender of presenters (male, female, or male and female team) had no effect on the outcome of a prevention program to a mixed-gender college audience. However, Schewe's (2004) statewide evaluation of 29 sexual assault prevention programs found that a male and female team of prevention educators had a larger effect on high school students than male-only and female-only educators. Furthermore, results indicated that male educators had a much larger effect on the female students than on the male students in their classrooms.

12.8.2.2. Using Multiple, Interactive Presentation Methods

To maximize learning among students, educators should use several presentation methods. Students' memory for information will be enhanced when they hear it, see it, write it, read it, speak it, and do it. Heppner, Humphrey, Hillenbrand-Gunn, & DeBord (1995) compared a standard video and lecture presentation to an interactive drama and found that students in the interactive drama program were more motivated to hear the message, were more able to recognize consent and coercion, and were more likely to demonstrate behavioral changes. Generalizing from this study and from the literature on persuasion and attitude change, interactive presentations should be more effective than lecture only. Educators should engage students in discussions that draw on the students' own experiences and should use role-playing to help students understand the perspective of another person and to practice skills. Written exercises also help cement memories and reinforce what was learned. Homework assignments that involve parents can give them the opportunity to reinforce what their child learned at school. Videotapes might also be useful. In several interventions, videos alone were as effective as alternate treatments or video plus discussion and were more effective than discussion alone (Anderson et al., 1998; Harrison, Downes, & Williams, 1991; Mann, Hecht, & Valentine, 1988). Schewe's (2004) evaluation of sexual assault prevention programs showed mixed results for interactive formats; games, quizzes, handouts, and survivor presentations were all positively associated with positive outcomes, whereas lectures, videos, and drama were inversely related to success. Prevention educators from some of the more successful programs in Illinois anecdotally recommended using short clips

from recently produced videos rather than using an entire video or using older videos. No recommendations were offered regarding dramatic presentations.

12.8.2.3. Exploiting Cognitive Dissonance

The cognitive dissonance literature informs us that changing behavior can be an effective way of changing attitudes. It suggests that students who engage in antirape activities should show a positive shift in their attitudes concerning rape. Rape-prevention programming can take advantage of this knowledge by having students engage in activities that are the opposite of supporting rape. Such activities might include participating in antirape discussions, making antirape posters or artwork, performing in a dramatic presentation, or convincing a hypothetical person not to use force in sexual relations.

12.8.3. Unsupported Practices

The one study that specifically examined a “confrontational” format in a rape-prevention program found that confrontation resulted in a greater tolerance for rape among men (Fischer, 1986). Heppner, Good, et al. (1995) found that one third of the men reacted to a sexual assault prevention program in a bored or negative manner. In Heppner’s next two studies, the researchers worked to reduce male defensiveness by letting men know that they are leaders in their schools and that they can be part of the solution and by supporting men who got training.

12.9. LIMITATIONS OF THIS REVIEW

One limitation of this review is that it was based mostly on reports of rape-prevention evaluations that have been published in scientific journals. One bias in these journals is that studies with negative outcomes are less likely to be published. For researchers and rape advocates developing curricula, the lessons that can be learned from unsuccessful programs are at least as important, and may be more important, than the lessons learned from programs documenting success.

12.10. CONCLUSIONS

Although our knowledge of how to prevent rape is still in its infancy, the number of people dedicated to eradicating rape and improving the quality of rape-prevention programs continues to expand. This chapter presented a list of lessons learned from the hard work of advocates, educators, and researchers. The most effective sexual assault prevention programs will take a bystander approach and will address rape myths while teaching communication skills. Self-defense training is also indicated for women. Educational interventions will be most effective when they include multiple, short sessions (i.e., less than 1 hour) that are culturally relevant and target younger students in single-gender audiences by a male and female team of co-facilitators.

At this time, there remain many agencies providing school-based prevention services with little solid evidence of effectiveness. To progress as a field, more research regarding effective interventions is necessary both at the individual level

and at broader levels of the ecosystem. Research that will most benefit prevention educators in the field are studies that evaluate multiple interventions, use a wide variety of outcome measures, and include long-term follow-up. At the same time, more basic research needs to be conducted to identify differences in individual characteristics and life experiences between sexually aggressive men and nonsexually aggressive men and to link proximal outcomes (i.e., changes in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors) to distal outcomes of reduced sexual aggression.

While the decision to commit rape remains a very private, individual choice and interventions specifically aimed at changing individuals may always be necessary, more efforts need to focus on interventions aimed at the family, community, and societal level (Table 12.2 presents a matrix of potential activities at various levels of the social ecology). Also, by focusing on promoting positive behaviors (increasing communication skills and teaching conflict-resolution and social problem-solving skills) instead of focusing on risk factors (correcting rape myths, avoiding high-risk situations, changing perceptions of negative consequences), sexual assault prevention advocates may find it easier to collaborate with other advocates working to prevent other problem behaviors, such as teen suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, delinquency, dating violence, and teen pregnancy.

Table 12.2. Multilevel Prevention of Sexual Violence^{a,b}

Activities	Sample Interventions within Settings ^c
Change individual's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide universal rape-prevention education and parent education through schools and workplaces • Insert character development into training for young athletes and sexual assault education for high school, college, and pro athletes
Promote community education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way parent education through multiple agencies
Educate providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train teachers, staff, and administrators, along with students • Teach coaches to be mentors
Foster coalitions and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize family well-being committees at places of worship • Organize athletes against sexual assault
Change organizational practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create gender-inclusive classes • Develop bullying, sexual harassment, and order of protection policies at schools and workplaces • Infuse violence against women into curricula at all levels • Change training programs • Promote family-friendly holidays, proactive policies • Get women involved in running sports organizations, promote greater inclusion (e.g., eliminate tryouts), alter definitions of success • Integrate prevention programs into mandatory coursework, such as health education
Influence policy and legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise juvenile sex offender laws • Change educational reporting requirements • Expand the Family Leave Act • Enact school and workplace sexual harassment laws • Expand the Violence Against Women Act

^aAdapted from the work of Baguato, Bowen, Browning, Bubar, Cohen, Domas, Faweett, Hargreaves, Kegler, McNamee, Moos, Prothrow-Stith, Schewe, Shea, and Sullivan who served on a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expert advisory panel on multilevel prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence, May 2005.

^bAdditional dimensions to address within each setting are cultural/ethnic groups; sexual orientation; universal, selected, and indicated interventions; and the age and developmental stage of the audience.

^cPossible settings include family, neighborhoods, schools, justice, government, arts/culture, media, health care, sports, and workplace.

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