

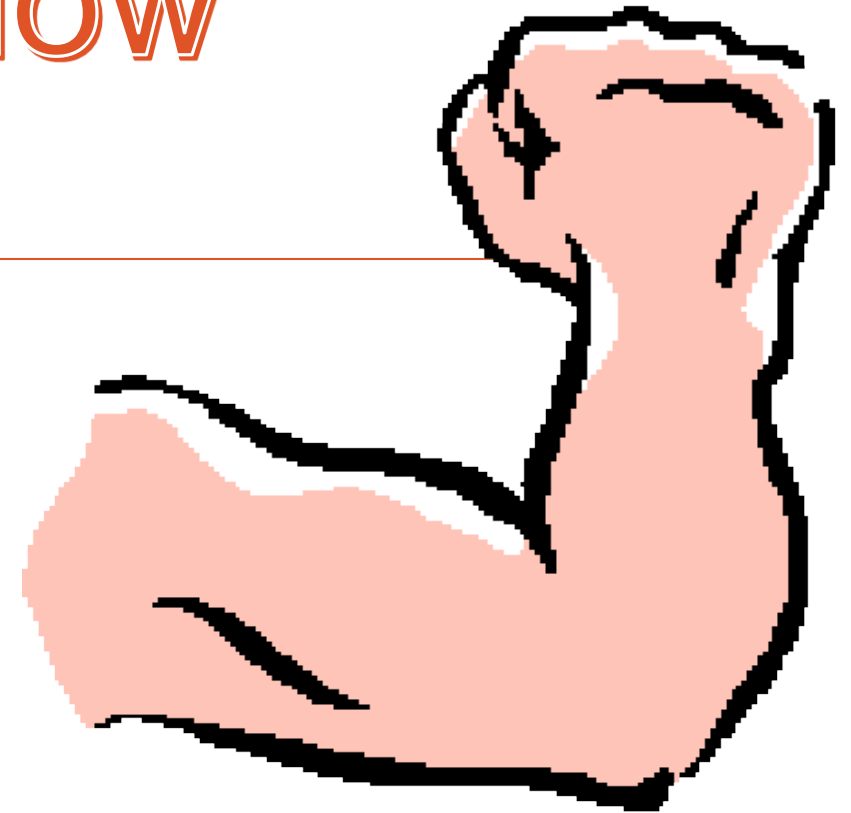
# INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE AMONG ATHLETES: WHAT EVERY ADMINISTRATOR NEEDS TO KNOW

---

December 14, 015

2015 National Athletic Directors Conference

Rebecca Leitman Veidlinger, Esq.



# Why do athletic administrators need to know about interpersonal violence?

- Assumption that interpersonal violence is a problem
- Assumption that interpersonal violence may be a particular problem among athletes
- Assumption that administrators can influence the problem, for the better or for the worse



# What is “interpersonal violence?”

- Dating violence
- Stalking
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault

# Perpetration rates

- General: 1 in 10 high school students has experienced physical violence in dating relationships; among college students, the figure rises to 22%
- Peak age of victimization of domestic violence and non-stranger rape for women is 16-19 years, second highest age-range for victimization is 20-24 years
- One study: male athletes made up 3.3 percent of male study body (college level) but were involved in 19 percent of the sexual assault cases
- Another study: four percent of athletes reported physically forcing a date to have sex, 27 percent stated they coerced a woman into sex, and 11 percent reported physically assaulting a woman while on a date. Results were similar to other non-athletic males in college
- Studies about perpetration rates of athletes are inconclusive

# Common Predictors of Perpetration

- Childhood sexual, physical or emotional abuse
- Hostility toward women
- Rape supportive beliefs
- Sexual dominance
- Misperception of women's sexual intentions
- Delinquency
- Impulsivity
- Narcissism
- Lack of empathy
- Heavy alcohol consumption

# Additional predictors related to athletes?

- Rewarding qualities associated with hypermasculinity
- Attitude of fans/supporters/parents—sense of entitlement
- Media attention— maybe it just looks that way



# Possibilities for prevention: Bystander Intervention





# Why don't teenagers intervene?

- Bystander doesn't recognize risky situations or people who may need help
- Diffusion of responsibility
- Bystander doesn't know what to do; lacks skills to intervene
- Bystander doesn't know if intervention is welcome
- Situation is too ambiguous, the bystander is worried about misjudging the situation and thus will be embarrassed by intervening



# Steps of bystander intervention

- 1) Identify problematic situation
- 2) Know that it is wrong
- 3) Know that it is right to intervene
- 4) Acquire skills for action
- 5) Act\*

\*Be mindful of your own safety if/when acting

# Why don't teenagers intervene?

- Bystander doesn't recognize risky situations or people who may need help
- Diffusion of responsibility
- Bystander doesn't know what to do; lacks skills to intervene
- Bystander doesn't know if intervention is welcome
- Situation is too ambiguous, the bystander is worried about misjudging the situation and thus will be embarrassed by intervening
- **Social norm theory and misperceived norms**

# Common Predictors of Perpetration

- Childhood sexual, physical or emotional abuse
- **Hostility toward women**
- **Rape supportive beliefs**
- **Sexual dominance**
- **Misperception of women's sexual intentions**
- Delinquency
- Impulsivity
- Narcissism
- Lack of empathy
- Heavy alcohol consumption

# Documented misperceptions in adolescents and young adults

- Overestimating the frequency of coercive sex
- Overestimating peers' beliefs in rape myths
- Underestimating others' willingness to intervene and confront abuse
- Underestimating others' support for school policies and enforcement
- Underestimating others' support for safe sex practices

# What is a coach's role in bystander intervention?





# What is a coach's role in bystander intervention?



- Model language and behavior reflecting that you value gender equality
- Be explicit that you reject violence against women and the objectification of women
- Train your sniffer
- Model the use of bystander intervention
- Recognizing and rewarding the good behavior

# QUESTIONS?

---

[rebecca@veidlinger.com](mailto:rebecca@veidlinger.com)

[veidlinger.com](http://veidlinger.com)