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UNH Media Relations

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June 9, 2015

UNH Center Releases Sexual Assault Prevention Findings to White House

DURHAM, N.H. -- Prevention Innovations Research Center (PIRC) at the University of New Hampshire released important findings today in a report, "[It's Not Just the What but the How](#)," prepared for the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. The findings inform strategies for the prevention of and response to sexual violence on college and university campuses.

The findings conclude that campus sexual misconduct policies need to be disseminated in a manner that is engaging for students and provides opportunities for them to increase their knowledge and develop skills so that they are able to help themselves, their friends, and people they don't know. Findings also indicate that varying the way the messages are delivered works best as does reminding students about the policies throughout their years on campus. The goal of creating campus communities that are free of sexual assault will be reached through strategic planning and resource allocation for multiple prevention and response strategies that reach students, faculty and staff in ongoing ways.

In April 2014, UNH was one of three universities tapped by a White House task force to conduct further research related to ending campus sexual assault. They were also identified in "Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault," for developing and implementing evidenced-based prevention strategies.

Working with researchers and campus sexual and relationship violence experts from seven colleges and universities in seven states -- Brown University; Johnson C. Smith University; Molloy College; University of California, Merced; University of Michigan; University of New Hampshire; and University of Utah -- PIRC researchers examined the effectiveness of different methods to deliver campus sexual misconduct policy information to students. This seven-college team collaborated to determine the impact of delivery methods used to inform students about policies and resources regarding campus sexual assault.

Sharyn Potter and Jane Stapleton are co-directors of PIRC. Potter stated, "The U.S. government, the general public, and students themselves are demanding change in how college and university campuses address sexual assault prevention and response. We know much more today about prevalence and perpetration, including that most sexual assaults on college campuses are perpetrated by someone the victim knows, including intimate partners, not the strangers jumping out of the bushes. We also know that the rate of sexual violence on campuses is not in decline."

"The impact of this violence on those who experience it is significant," said Stapleton. "Researchers have found common and numerous negative outcomes that result from exposure to sexual assault. These affects are not only immediate but frequently lifelong, often affecting educational outcomes,

career attainment, health and family. Today we know a great deal more than even a few years ago about what makes a difference in preventing sexual violence on campuses. This report contributes new information to that body of knowledge.”

Prevention Innovations Research Center develops, implements and evaluates evidence-based and customizable programs and practices with the mission to end sexual and relationship violence and stalking.

The [University of New Hampshire](#), founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 13,000 undergraduate and 2,500 graduate students.

Prevention Innovations Researcher Center co-directors Sharyn Potter (603) 862-3630; Sharyn.potter@unh.edu) and Jane Stapleton (603) 862-5444; jane.stapleton@unh.edu) are available for interviews. UNH Media Relations has an on-site ReadyCam broadcast studio available through VideoLink (617-340-4300) for television interviews and an ISDN line for radio interviews.

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