

Katie Brown Educational Program



Members of UMass Dartmouth's Alpha Sigma Tau sorority participate in an RSVP piloting session

We've conducted focus groups and piloting sessions with:

- Sorority members at University of Massachusetts--Dartmouth
- Fraternity members at University of Massachusetts--Dartmouth
- Football players at University of Massachusetts--Dartmouth
- Members of the all-male step team at Boston College
- Sorority members at Bryant University
- Sophomore students at Bryant University
- Members of a sexual health education group at Brown University
- Baseball players at Assumption College
- Administrators and faculty members from area colleges

"If we've ever needed this, we need it now."

*-- Bryant University
focus group
participant*

Community Action Care Grant Final Report

The Katie Brown Educational Program is a relationship violence prevention organization that works primarily with students in grades 5 through 12. We teach participants how to recognize unhealthy relationship behaviors so that such behaviors can be avoided. By empowering young people with the knowledge and skills to avoid violence and promote healthy relationships, we hope to replace a culture of violence with one of respect and empathy.

The KBEP has created a new series of workshops that targets members of college communities. These workshops address relationship violence, dating violence, and sexual assault within the college community. This new program is called **the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Program-- RSVP**.

Accomplishments and Results

We **conducted nine focus groups** with 69 college students and 6 administrators from various colleges throughout Rhode Island and Massachusetts. From these focus groups, we were able to forge meaningful relationships with college communities and gain invaluable insight about campus attitudes and needs regarding sexual assault and dating violence. Key findings from the student focus groups were that:

- lack of knowledge is a large contributor to the prevalence of relationship and sexual violence
- students are receiving many messages about sexual assault, but are still uninformed about dating violence and healthy relationships
- students need practical skills for maintaining healthy relationships

Administrators gave us insights regarding the difficulties of supporting thousands of students through the complexities of relationship violence. Preventing relationship violence requires the unpacking of deeply ingrained systems and cultural norms such as patriarchy and slut-shaming, leaving many administrators underprepared to adequately support the needs of each student.

After conducting and analyzing the focus groups, we **developed a curriculum** that addresses the needs communicated to us by students and administrators and is guided by the best research available. We also made sure to adhere to the best practices and recommendations of The White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault.

We **piloted the new RSVP curriculum** with 3 groups of college students to measure the program's effectiveness. At the end of the piloting sessions, students completed satisfaction surveys.

Here is a summary of the results:

- 94% of pilot participants would recommend RSVP to a friend
- The average score of the RSVP was 95.77%

Based on the survey responses, we made a minor adjustment to ensure that we were releasing the best program possible. To better accommodate college students, we separated the 2-hour workshop into two 1-hour workshops.

We then **released marketing materials** to college administrators in effort to publicize our new program and begin scheduling RSVP workshops for this fall.

Setbacks and Obstacles

Scheduling focus groups and piloting sessions proved to be a major difficulty. It was difficult to get timely responses from the people to whom we reached out, which slowed down the scheduling process. Furthermore, many students made a commitment to participate in the focus groups and piloting sessions, but later were unable to attend because of exams or other obligations. As a result, we did not reach as many students as we had hoped.

To accommodate for these setbacks, we organized additional focus groups and piloting sessions with new groups of students. We have stayed in contact with students who had agreed to participate but were unable to so that we could engage them in our programming in the future. We also have been building relationships with college administrators and faculty so that they can promote or mandate our programming. This will make it easier to ensure student participation.



Funding and Sustainability

We received an additional \$3000 from Bay Coast Bank. To accommodate our needs for the focus group participants' honoraria, we garnered support from local businesses in the form of in-kind donations.

To sustain the RSVP program beyond grant funding, we will charge a fee to universities and student groups. This fee will cover the costs of administering the program.

Collaboration

KBEP collaborated with ten student organizations, two groups of Bryant University students from a service-learning course, and a student-intern from UMass Dartmouth. We also built a strong partnership with UMass Dartmouth's Department of Public Safety. Our partners were helpful in recruiting and securing other students to participate in our focus groups and piloting sessions. Our partnerships have also helped us foster meaningful relationships with engaged members of college communities who can help promote and advocate for RSVP on their campuses. This will allow us to have a stronger presence on campuses in the future.



KBEP staff presenting a lesson on the skills needed to maintain healthy relationships



KBEP staff facilitating a discussion on perceived social norms and actual social norms regarding sexual violence

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Program**

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Quotes from the Field

"Trainings are important and sexual assault won't drop without it." -- UMass Dartmouth focus group participant

"If we've ever needed this, we need it now." -- Bryant University focus group participant

"No one really talks about healthy relationships here-- how to be in one or how to get yourself out of one.... I think having a more skill-based approach to these types of topics" would be more helpful. -- Brown University focus group participant

"Wonderful group of people. Very knowledgeable to the content. And I really like how the presenters were not 'all men' or 'all women.'"-- UMass Dartmouth piloting session participant

"The use of power point lecture and activities were a good balance. Good energy from both presenters. Good information and can tell that you are both passionate and knowledgeable about what you teach." -- Bryant University piloting session participant

"Thank you! You guys were really knowledgeable and easy to talk to." -- UMass Dartmouth piloting session participant

Thank You for the Support!

The staff of the Katie Brown Educational Program would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for your generous support of our new RSVP Program. Without your financial contributions, we would not be able to launch a program that targets college students to provide them with much needed information on sexual assault and healthy relationships.

Thank you!

