CAMPUS ACTION KIT

CAMPUSES START BY BELIEVING

Many students on college and university campuses experience the trauma of sexual assault or dating violence without ever speaking a word about it to anyone. They may not know where to turn, who will believe them, or how to get help.

When victims have the courage to tell someone about their abuse – whether it is a roommate, friend, resident advisor, or even a professor or administrator – if their disclosure is immediately challenged with doubt or blame for their own actions, the survivor may shut down before fairly considering their reporting options. Or they may recant their report. This offers the campus no opportunity to properly respond and investigate, allowing offenders to continue their abuse.

When we Start by Believing™ we create an atmosphere where victims receive the support they need to report their abuse and participate in an investigation. This increases the likelihood of a thorough inquiry and appropriate determination. It is the right thing to do for victims, and best for our campus communities.

> “My name is Emma. As a member of the Office of Equity at Utah State University, I recognize the significance in believing survivors of sexual assault without attempting to attribute blame and further victimize them. When someone tells me they were sexually assaulted or abused, I Start by Believing.

END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN INTERNATIONAL™

Start by Believing™

CAMPUS ACTION KIT

CAMPUSES TAKE THE LEAD

We have all the tools campuses need to launch a Start by Believing campaign. Visit the website for resources like a pledge placard, brochure, proclamation template, social media graphics, posters, and more.

> My name is Tracy Cassalia. I am a campus health educator and want to end sexual violence. I want to educate my community and serve as a resource for advocates and victims. When someone tells me they were sexually assaulted or abused, I Start by Believing.

> My name is Dr. Stuart Blacklaw. I am vice president at Yavapai College in Arizona, and I am committed to making our campuses a safe place for our students to pursue their dreams. When someone tells me they were sexually assaulted or abused, I Start by Believing.

Start with your own campus administration. When the message comes from the top, it trickles down into daily actions that have a powerful impact. You can encourage strong leadership by including campus administrators in your efforts.

Utah State University

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Give a presentation to students, faculty, staff, or campus administrators. Use the Start by Believing research-based presentation to build your own PowerPoint slides, and begin your presentation by showing the Start by Believing video, which introduces the philosophy and offers inspiring examples of local initiatives.

State University of New York
Plattsburg Greek Life

Write an article for the campus newspaper. Many campuses spotlight the issue of sexual assault while they are in the "Red Zone," the period of time spanning the start of fall semester through Thanksgiving break, when the incidence of sexual assault spikes on college campuses.

Send a campus wide email. At Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), nearly 50,000 students learned about Start by Believing through a personal email sent by University President Dr. Michael Rao.

Challenge others to join your campaign. If your campus participates in a local Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) or a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) Team, this is a great place to start. Otherwise, you can contact criminal justice partners and other community agencies to extend your reach.

Iowa State University &
Story County SART members

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Display posters, fliers, banners, and signs where survivors and other students will see them, such as residence and dining halls, recreational and sports facilities, classrooms, administrative offices, the Student Union, and the library. You can also create yard signs to place around campus. Target different populations across the campus community, for an inclusive campaign that benefits all survivors.

Old Dominion University
Norfolk, Virginia

Set up a pledge station where students, faculty, and staff can learn about the campaign, and make a personal pledge. Then create a pledge wall to showcase their commitments to Start by Believing.

Montclair State University
Montclair, New Jersey

Make a video to explain why everyone should Start by Believing. Want an example? Lewis University created this short yet powerful video of students, faculty, and staff banding together to pledge their commitment.

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Formally proclaim that your college or university is a Start by Believing Campus. Join Arizona State University, University of Michigan, Utah State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and others. Use this proclamation template as a starting point, and adapt it for your own college or university.

Share on social media. Broadcast your campus commitment to Start by Believing survivors. Our social media toolkit and graphics are designed to help, and don't forget to use #StartbyBelieving to join the global movement.

University of Michigan Department of Public Safety and Security

Officer Briana Jackson
Virginia Commonwealth University Police Department

Then take your campaign to the next level! Use our campaign toolkit for inspiration and creative ideas.

Need more support? Submit a request for technical assistance. Thank you for being a Start by Believing partner!