Running a student programme on active bystanding

Perspectives from the University of Cambridge

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Overview

- University of Cambridge Breaking the silence campaign
- Three models for active bystander training for students
- Questions and discussion

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Breaking the silence - preventing harassment and sexual misconduct

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Office of Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA)

University Student Counselling Service, tel: 01223 332865

University Staff Counselling Service, tel: 01223 762160

Cambridge Rape Crisis, tel: 01223 245888

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“Deep dive” model

- 2017-18 Pilot programme hosted by colleges within the University
- Four x two-hour workshops with two facilitators, group of 10-15 students committed to attending all workshops
- **Total 8-hour commitment, not including facilitator prep**
- Sessions: (1) Introduction, culture and gender

(2) Rape and sexual assault, domestic abuse

(3) Bystander options and role play

(4) Role play interventions

The Intervention Initiative

Public Health England

UWE Bristol University of the West of England

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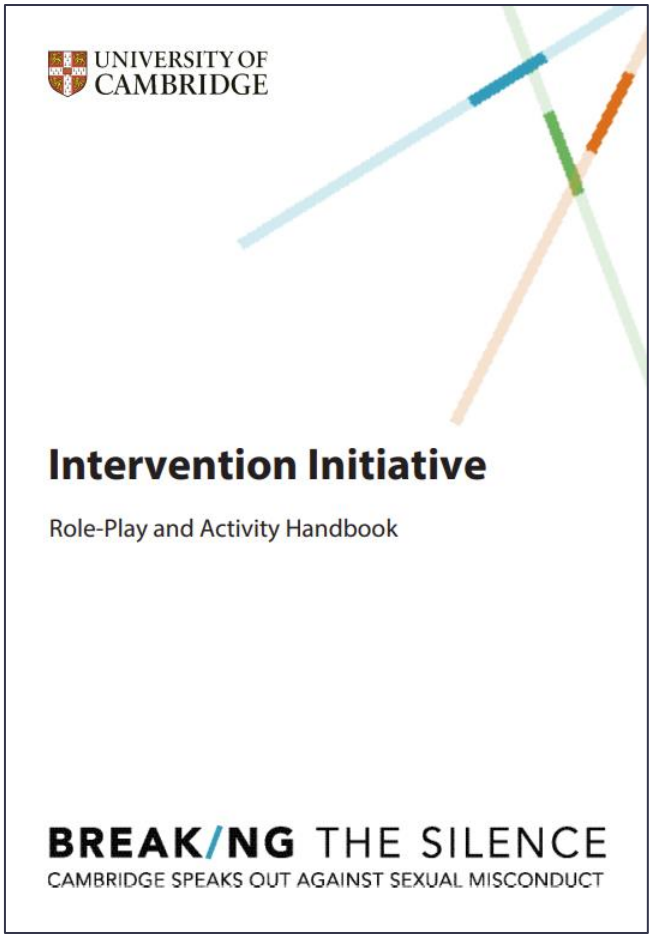
“Deep dive” model

- Pros
  - In depth training, lots of detailed theory/background and extensive practice in role playing scenarios
  - In depth background content enabled all participants (in a diverse group) to achieve the same base level of understanding
  - Student cohort building, building on experience in previous sessions and became very comfortable within the group
  - Students who participated were very positive, and felt very competent in active bystander techniques at the end
- Cons
  - Very time consuming, hard to get students to commit, time-intensive for facilitators as well
  - Pace was challenged by some as too slow (detailed theory not needed for most student participants)
  - Concerns around disclosures
  - Limited number of students reached

Was reduced to three 2-hour workshops (6-hour commitment) in 2018-19

“Case study” workshop model

- Format adjusted in response to student and facilitator feedback, from 2019-20
- Introductory lecture, 30 minutes (initially delivered in person; from 2022-23 this was available pre-recorded)
- Accompanying student handbook with role-play scenarios, worked through in smaller groups (college-based) in one 4-hour or two 2-hour workshops
- **Total 4.5-hour commitment, not including facilitator prep**



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“Case study” workshop model

- Pros
  - Reduced time commitment, easier for students/facilitators to fit in
  - Retains most of the benefits of the “deep-dive” model in terms of student group cohesion
  - Focussed time on the role play and scenarios, rather than on the background/theory, which appealed to more students
- Cons
  - Still a considerable time commitment alongside academic work, and difficult to recruit student participants
  - Some participants felt there was insufficient theoretical background, which made the role play/scenarios more challenging to participate in fully
  - Less practice in role playing so lower levels of confidence post course
  - Limited number of students reached

Embedded model

- At Hughes Hall, active bystander training is included within our induction programme for all students
- Part of a 1-hour inclusion and allyship session compulsory for all new students
- Opportunities for more in-depth training for students who wish (both in-person and via online modules)

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Embedded model

- Pros
  - Reaches all students in the cohort
  - Part of a wider programme on inclusion, recognising that bystander intervention is one piece of a larger puzzle on tackling sexual harassment and violence
  - Opportunities for further in-depth engagement for students who wish
- Cons
  - Much higher level, no work on role play or scenarios
  - Students indicate they would like more in-depth training, but we are not yet sure how many will take this up!

References

- https://www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk/home
- https://www.studentsupport.cam.ac.uk/harassment-and-violence-support
- Pathways - Hughes Hall
- https://enough.campaign.gov.uk/
- https://youtu.be/iUj2OHLAG3w?si=CT3cdDuSmsihmjnQ (note this video contains material that may be distressing to some, especially survivors of sexual assault or violence)
- https://youtu.be/OSsPfbup0ac?si=chiHD_Pu7Kwv70qJ (the bystander effect, now quite an old video, but a useful starting point)
- https://youtu.be/mt7X5tjp9Js?si=ftxF9ClCmjHd2R7V (the 5 Ds of bystander intervention)
- https://www.edx.org/learn/social-science/jesus-college-cambridge-preventing-and-responding-to-sexual-harassment-and-violence?utm_medium=partner-marketing&utm_source=referral&utm_campaign=jesuscollege&utm_content=Moodle (EdX 26-hour self-paced training course)

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Thank you,
happy to take questions!

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