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MANDALAY BAY / LAS VEGAS



#BHUSA / @BLACKHAT EVENTS

How Can Communities Move Forward After Incidents of Sexual Harassment or Assault?

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Heads Up!

We will be discussing:

Sexual harassment

Sexual assault/rape/abuse

Please take care of yourselves and take a break if you need to.

Goals!

- By the end of this presentation, you will...
 - ✓ Know how to **respond/support** someone who tells you that they've been sexual harassed or assaulted
 - ✓ Know how to **respond** when someone you're close to is accused of sexual misconduct
 - ✓ Have the **tools to take back** with you to help think about how your unique community can address these issues

Sexual Harassment

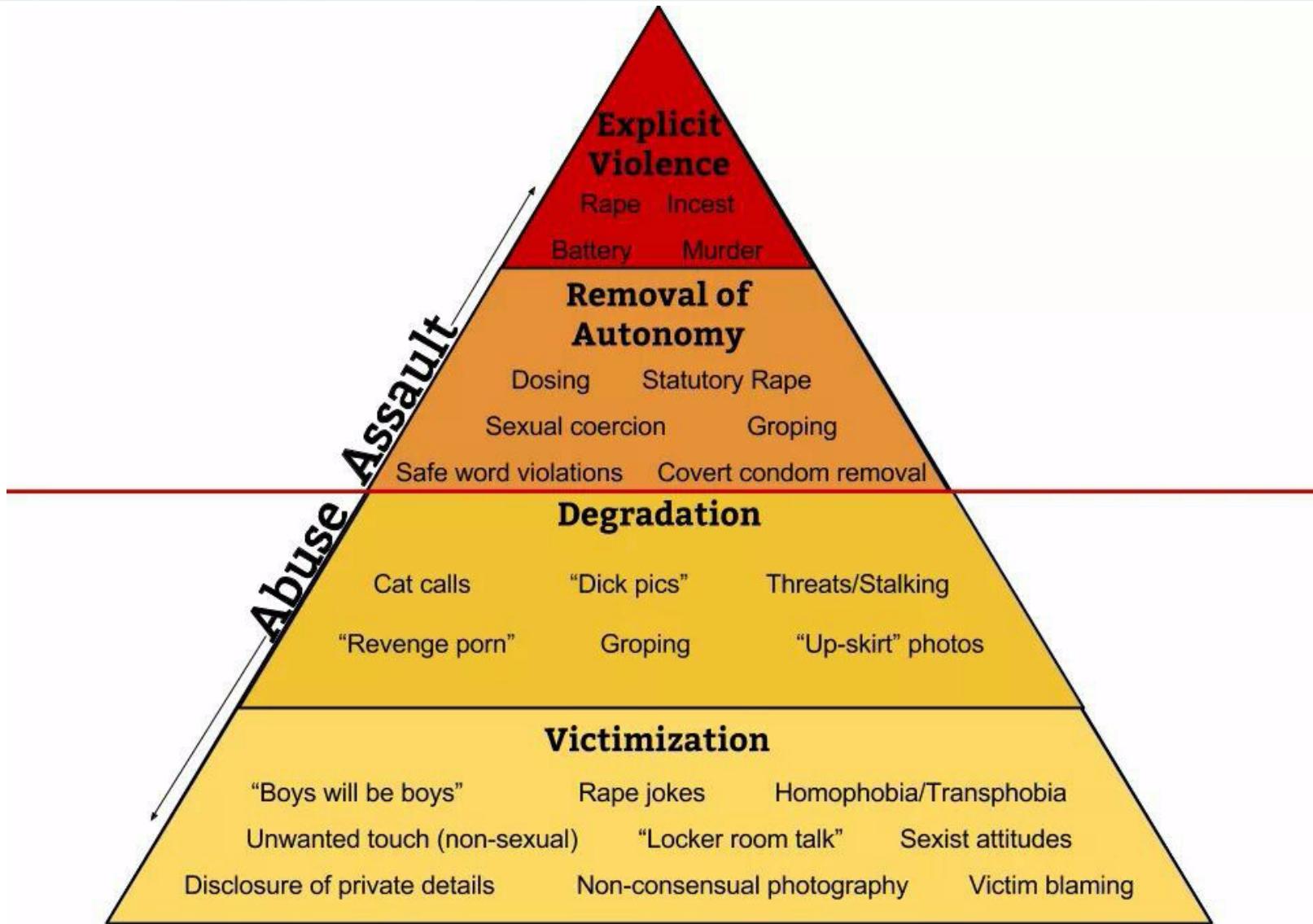
- Employment decisions affecting an employee, such as hiring, firing, promotions, awards, transfers or disciplinary actions, as a result from submission to or rejection of unwelcome sexual conduct
- Any activity which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for members of one sex, whether such activity is carried out by a supervisor or by a co-worker

Sexual Assault

- Covers a wide range of nonconsensual sexual behaviors that are attempted or completed
- A person cannot consent because of age, disability, or the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Sexual assault may involve actual or threatened physical force, use of weapons, coercion, intimidation, or pressure and may include:
 - Intentional touching of the genitals, anus, groin, or breasts
 - Voyeurism
 - Exposure to exhibitionism
 - Undesired exposure to pornography
 - Public display of images that were taken in a private context or when the person was unaware

Rape

- Nonconsensual oral, anal, or vaginal penetration of a person by someone's body parts **or** objects using force, threats of bodily harm, coercion, or by taking advantage of a person who is incapacitated or otherwise incapable of giving consent



Common ways that people respond to sexual violence?

- Flight, fight, freeze
- Fear/anxiety
- Loss of control
- Flashbacks or Nightmares
- Anger
- Trouble concentrating
- Feeling “dirty” or “unworthy”
- Depression or sadness
- Disrupted relationships
- Increase/Decrease in sexual activity
- Self-blame
- Disordered eating habits
- Withdrawal from people/activities

How Do I Respond When Someone Tells Me That They Have Been Assaulted or Raped?

- Offer unconditional support and compassion. Tell the person that you believe them.
- Offer resources and information without pressure or judgment about their decisions.
- Don't press for details. Allow them to share what they want, when they want. Avoid "Why?" questions. *The answers won't change what's happened.*
- Don't tell them what to do.
- Challenge statements of self-blame.
- If they want to seek medical attention or report the assault, offer to accompany them wherever they want to go (e.g., hospital, police station, HR, etc.).
- Ask how you can help and check in with them periodically.

What does support sound like?

- “I believe you. / It took a lot of courage to tell me about this.”
- “I’m sorry this happened. / This shouldn’t have happened to you.”

- “It’s not your fault. / You didn’t do anything to deserve this.”
- “You are not alone. / I care about you and am here to listen or help in any way I can.”

If you've experienced sexual harassment...

- You're not alone
- Reach out to a specialized advocate
- Consider talking with someone in the community that you trust
- Review your community's policies and protocols
- Document everything
- Laws: know enough to know your rights
- If safe to do so, consider approaching the harasser
- If safe to do so, consider reporting
- Organize
- Take care of yourself

Ways that leadership can support people who have been sexually harassed...

- Adopt a clear sexual harassment policy or stance - and share it with your community
- Take all complaints seriously and immediately support the victim
- Train/teach community members at least twice per year about sexual harassment
- Provide mental health resources to your community
- Monitor your community and look for signs of sexual harassment
- Have inclusive hiring/recruiting practices to balance power dynamics
- Consult with experts for additional programming needs and advice

How to Support a Friend Who Is Accused...

- Go to your friend and ask what happened. Explain what you've heard/read and ask them if it's true. Do not blindly defend them until you know, don't be a rape/harassment apologist. It is also not your role to be a detective, be there to listen.
- Violence or retaliation is not the answer to helping your friend. Remember, harassing and threatening behaviors towards the person(s) who've accused your friend are not helpful and could undermine any court or judicial proceeding taking place.

How to Support a Friend Who Is Accused...

- Hold your friend accountable for the negative behavior(s) that they did – don't make excuses for them and don't let them make excuses for themselves.
- You can support your friend without making a judgment as to whether or not a sexual assault occurred.
- Support them in finding a way to offer restitution/restoration for those impacted and in making serious efforts to not repeat the behaviors again.

How to Support a Friend Who Is Accused...

- Educate yourself on the topic of sexual assault/harassment. Make sure that you're modeling authentic, positive behaviors yourself to all your friends and colleagues – even if you're working on unpacking this topic yourself.
- Refer them to resources. If the friend is coming to an awareness of their problematic behavior, it's a great idea for them to see a counselor/therapist to address the root of that behavior so that they do not negatively impact/violate another person again.

Taking Care of Yourself as a Support Person...

- Be mindful of your self-care
 - People in supporting roles may benefit from consultation or counseling with a confidential professional
 - Plan extra time for the activities that you enjoy
- Be firm about your needs
 - Boundaries
 - Limitations
- Ask if there's other people that you can share support roles with

What makes a *community* versus a *group*?

Community

A community is “a group of individuals who ***share a mutual concern for one another’s welfare.***”

Group

“They root for the same team and they share some of the same interests, but they are unaware of each other’s existence. Their ties, in short, are to common symbols, common leaders, and perhaps, common ideals, but not to one another.”

- Robert Putnam, Harvard University

Four Components of a Strong Community

1. Shared Values

- What are the core values that attract members and keep members?
- Values are usually explicitly stated on a website, marketing materials, or found through formal inquiry
- Values are also implicitly expressed by what members say to one another, whom they welcome, and where they spend their time and money
 - More powerful and meaningful to members than explicit

2. Membership Identity

- Who am I? How should I act? What do I believe?
 - If you don't know the answers to these questions, you either only have a group or you aren't recognizing the membership identity
- Have two spheres: one for outsiders to visit and one for insiders to share a protected space together

Four Components of a Strong Community

3. Moral Proscriptions

- What and whom do we protect? What is intolerable? What do we share? With whom do we share? Whom do we respect? How do we show respect?
- Morals relate to the core community values (as opposed to individual values)

4. Insider Understanding

- You don't have to explain vocabulary, recap history, or the fundamentals of our field
- Can use "coded" language with one another
- Likely have shared feelings (fears, challenges, discomforts, elation) or experiences that don't have to be explained

A Resilient Community

One that “*has the ability to transform the environment through deliberate, collective action*” and “*requires that the community as a whole must cope effectively with and learn from adversity.*”

Communities Advancing
Resilience Toolkit (CART)



THE SPECTRUM OF PREVENTION

Influencing Policy and Legislation

Changing Organizational Practices

Fostering Coalitions and Networks

Educating Providers

Promoting Community Education

Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills

Community Accountability

- Individual right versus Community Rights
 - My rights end where someone's safety begins
- Things to consider when addressing violations of community norms
 - History, severity, response from the individual accused, wishes of the individual negatively impacted, and equity
- Individual accountability and community accountability
 - Individual violence versus systemic violence



Questions To Think About In Your Community

- What are the core values that attract members and keep members?
- What is the membership identity? Who is encouraged to be a member?
- What and whom do members protect?
- What is intolerable? How is that communicated?
- What do members share? With whom do they share?
- Whom do members respect? How do they show respect?
- Do members know what to do/who to reach out to when an incident occurs? Is there an understood process?

If you would like to
know more...

**Moving Forward After
Incidents of Sexual
Harassment/Assault – Group
Discussion**

Thursday, August 9th

11:00am - 12:00pm

Coral C (North Hall)



Thank you!