Buddies

"A peer protection network keeping students safe"

June 2022

Brief summary of development

Developed a pitch for our campus safety app "Buddies". We created a comprehensive business model that allows us to forecast our earnings, this business model was developed with poindexter. For our MVP we designed an interactive Figma design.

Elevator pitch

Buddies is a mobile app that educates and combats sexual assault on university campuses. It creates a peer-to-peer network of safety, allows students to maintain their privacy with anonymous reporting, and educates students with access to meaningful resources. Universities can have access to this app to fulfill their Clery Act requirements by paying on average less than $1 per student per year.

Investor pitch

Buddies!

A peer protection network keeping students safe

Lean Startup Canvas

PROBLEM	SOLUTION	UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION	UNFAIR ADVANTAGE	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS
Sexual assault cases are rampant in colleges. Students don't feel comfortable reporting incidents. Students are unaware of what to do after an attack.	Provide a peer to peer network of safety. Anonymous reporting system. Educate students about sexual assault and guide to resources in app.	Customers: Fulfills Clery Act requirements for universities. Users: Creative use of gamification to combat rape culture.	We combine privacy, behavioral economics, and smart alerts into one solution. Clery Act compliance appeals to existing University requirements.	Customers: Universities seeking better S.A. protection for students. Users: Students who feel unsafe regarding sexual assault.

KEY METRICS		HIGH-LEVEL CONCEPT	CHANNELS	
1 in 5 women are sexually assaulted in college. 60% of student find campus programs and services not useful.		Peer protection network for students.	Dedicated Sales team that meet with School officials Social Media team for creating evangelists	

EXISTING ALTERNATIVES

LiveSafe

Some universities already have safety apps.

Student organized outlets (Reddit, Twitter, etc.)

EARLY ADOPTERS

Proactive students who take sexual assault seriously.

COST STRUCTURE

REVENUE STREAMS

Small Universities (5K-15K students) pay $10,000 per year.
Mid Universities (15K-30K students) pay $15,000 per year.

Large Universities (30K-45K students) pay $20,000 per year.

PROBLEM

1. Sexual assault cases are rampant in colleges.
2. Students don't feel comfortable reporting incidents.
3. Students are unaware of what to do after an attack.

Explanation:

1. By referencing the key metrics we've gathered through research, 1 in 5 women are sexually assualted in college. This clearly shows the severity of the issue and why Buddies want to combat this.
2. From research (online and our own customer discovery), sexual assault victums to not feel comfortable reporting incidents. It's sexual assualt is and should be treated as personal and private matter.
3. Again research (online and our own customer discovery), we found that most students don't know what to do after being assaulted. By referencing the key metrics 60% of students find campus programs and services not useful. Students would benefit from having centralized information about sexual assualt in a app that they can use with their friends.

SOLUTION

1. Provide a peer to peer network of safety.
2. Anonymous reporting system.
3. Educate students about sexual assault and guide to resources in app.

Explanation:

1. By using the power of the student body, we can provide a peer to peer network that enables and encourages users to take sexual assualt seriously. With this network they can protect their friends at school and prevent life altering incidents from happening.
2. By keeping sexual assualt reports anonymous, students can keep thier privacy while also alerting other students about the incident. This keeps students aware of what is going on in their community so they can take initiative.
3. In addition to giving students a system to combat sexual assault, it is also important that students are educated on the topic. By offering advice and resources in app, we can educate students to understand all the forms of sexual assualt, how to prevent it, and what they can do if a sexual assualt has occured.

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

1. Customers: Fulfills Clery Act requirements for universities.
2. Users: Creative use of gamification to combat rape culture.

Explanation:

1. Universities must meet Requirements set by the Jeanne Clery Act or they risk facing fines of millions of dollars. The Clery Act includes the reporting of any campus sexual assualt reports and data.
2. Our user Safety Score gamification feature promotes taking S.A. seriously among students. It also is designed to keep the users returning to the app to receive daily advice to improve their Safety Score.

CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

1. Customers: Universities seeking better S.A. protection for students.
2. Users: Students who feel unsafe regarding sexual assault.

Explanation:

1. Our profits will come from the universities themselves. We plan to show most universities that the systems they currently have in place for sexual assualt prevention can be improved, and our app will offer valuable data to them that will meet their Clery Act requirements.
2. The user base will consist of the students that attend these universities. The app interface will be designed around the user's needs. Without the users we have nothing to offer the customers.

CUSTOMER CHANNELS

1. Dedicated Sales team that meet with School officials
2. Social Media team for creating evangelists

Explanation:

1. Meeting with school Clery Act coordinators is how we will begin acquiring our customers. We've already done this with the University of California, Riverside and received the feedback that our product is unique and they would be willing to pay for it.
2. Since having a user base is critical to the success of the app, we will have a social media team that will reach out to big influencers to help gather traction for the app.

EARLY ADOPTERS

1. Proactive students who take sexual assault seriously.

Explanation:

1. The app will appeal to the students who are passionate about sexual assault awareness / prevention but are not safitised with the current system(s) in place for that. Social media reach and word of mouth is how we plan to acquire early adopters.

EXISTING ALTERNATIVES

1. LiveSafe
2. Some universities already have safety apps.
3. Student organized outlets (Reddit, Twitter, etc.)

Explanation:

1. LiveSafe is an all encompassing safety app designed for incident reporting, live help, and includes an area safety map.
2. Some universities have attempted their own versions of a safety app. Unfortunately, our research shows that none have been positively received or even widely used. They often lack features such as having a friends list that we offer and believe will set our app apart from the rest.
3. At universities, there will be multiple student organized outlets designed to combat sexual assult. For example, at UCR there exists a twitter space for frats so that students can hold accountability at parties. However, these are limited in functionality and are more inline with bulletin boards.

KEY METRICS

1. 1 in 5 women are sexually assaulted in college.
2. 60% of students find campus programs and services not useful.

Explanation:

1. This is a striking metric that shows the severity of sexual assaults in colleges.
2. This metric supports our claim that students don't feel like they have good resources when it comes to sexual assualt. Our goal is to improve that metric and bring the percentage down.

HIGH LEVEL CONCEPT

1. Peer protection network for students.

Explanation:

1. By using the power of the student body, we can provide a peer to peer network that enables and encourages users to take sexual assualt seriously. With this network they can protect their friends at school and prevent life altering incidents from happening (same as solution bullet point #1).

Customer discovery

Our customer discovery process helped us solidify 3 key considerations for our product.

1. First, we established that sexual assault is not being prevented by current measures put in place for university students.

2. Second, we established that sexual assault occurs on and around school campuses, meaning students need an app that can help them even when they are not directly on school grounds.

3. Lastly, we determined the specific reasons why student victims of sexual assault were not reporting the incident. Many of the features in our app, such as the interactive safety map, anonymous reporting system, alerts, and check in system, all originated from these 3 considerations taken from our customer discovery studies.

Below are the top 3 most significant graphs we found during our customer discovery.
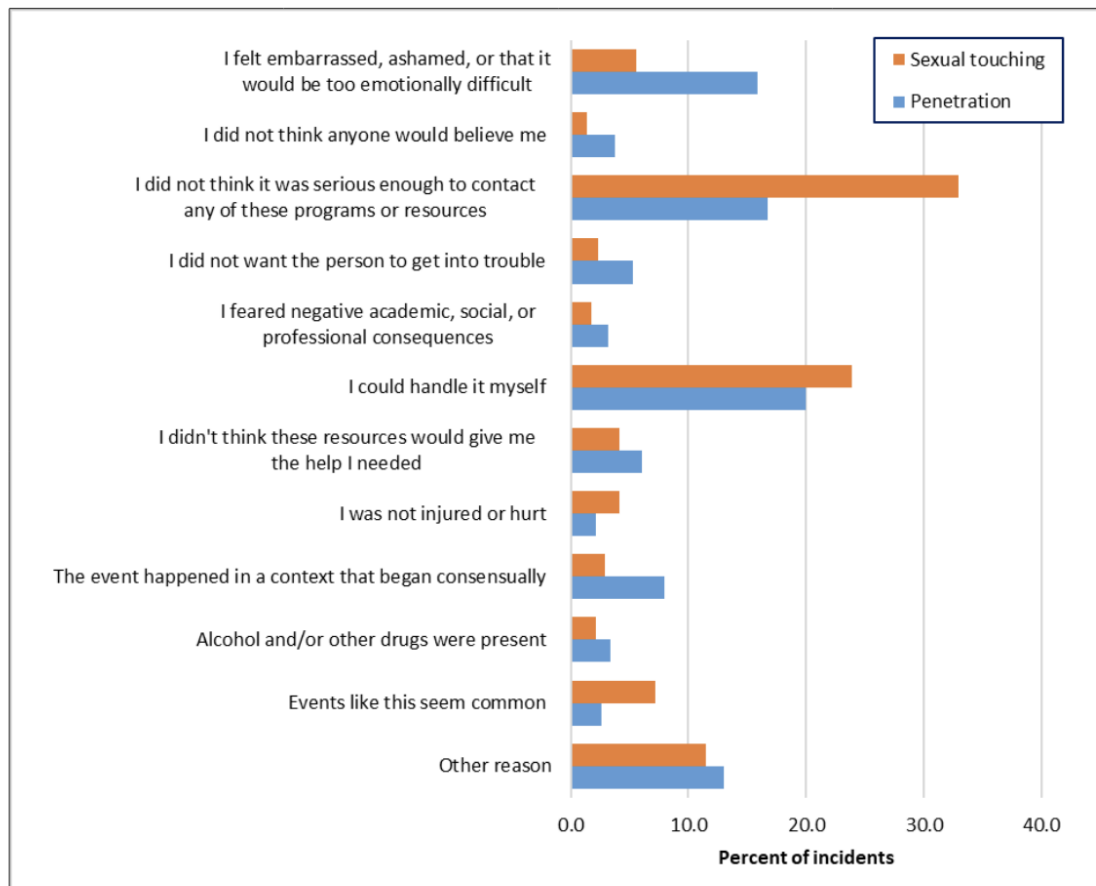
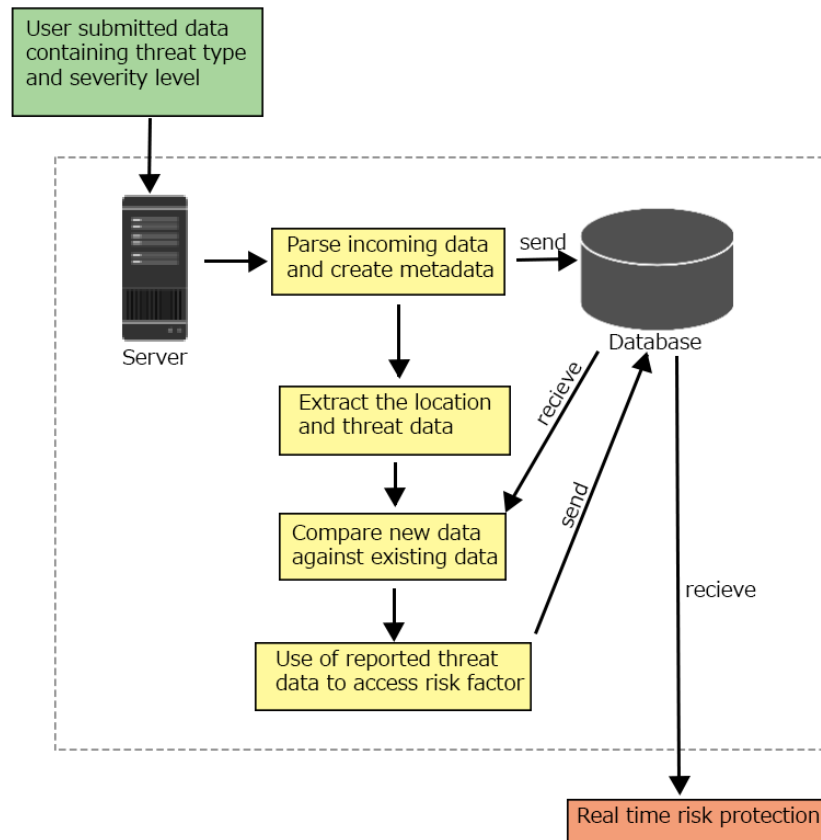**Percentage of reported sexual assaults by gender and affiliiation**
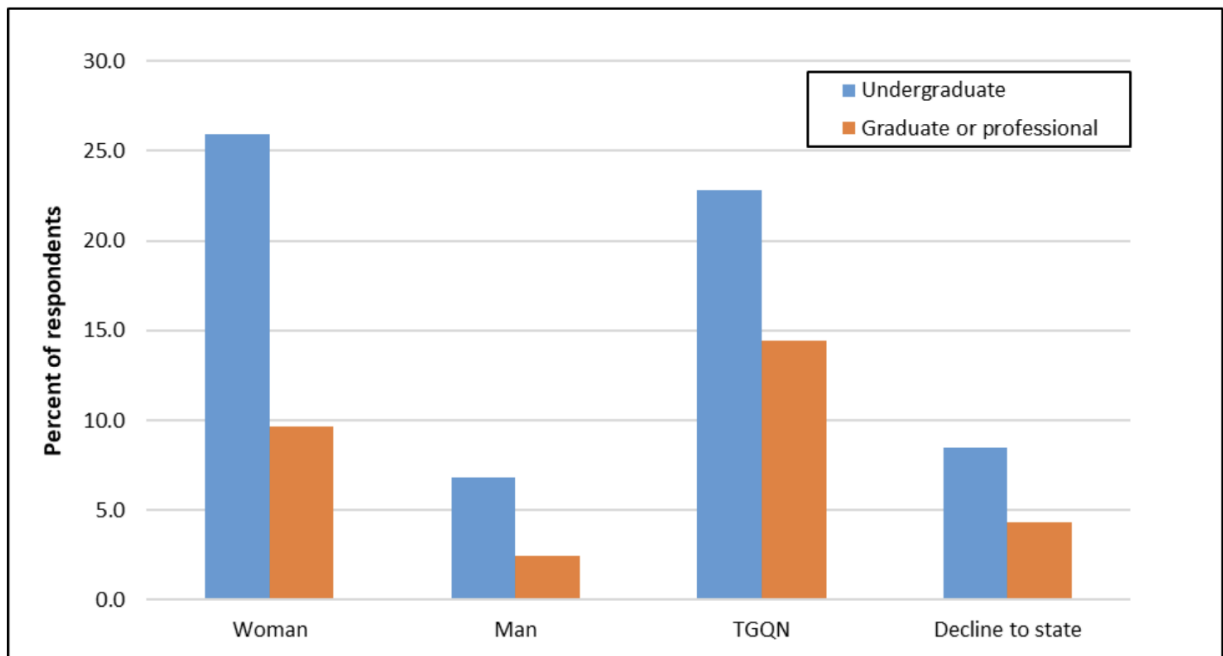
Locations of sexual assaults reported by women
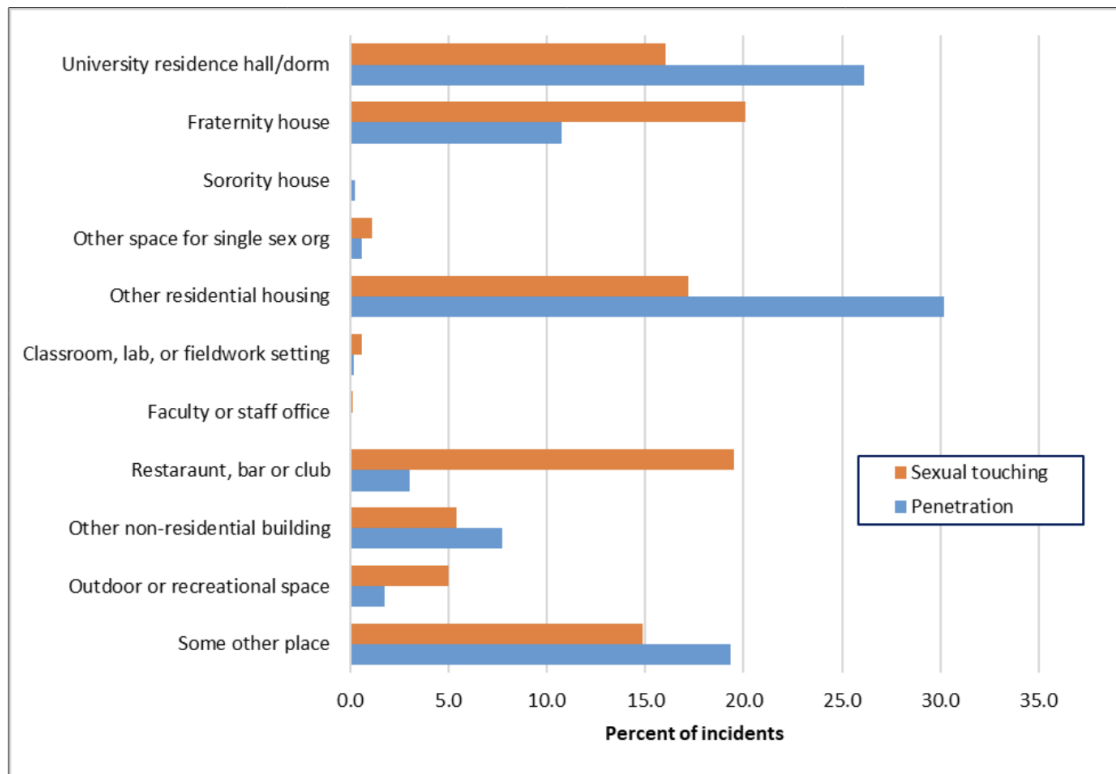
Most important reason provided by women for not reporting a sexual assault

Patent abstract

A system and a method that takes user submitted application data, then does some processing, and produces an assessment of a location's risk level in real time. What is the input: Our system takes as input a plurality of information including but not limited to user location data, user sent reports in application containing threat level and type, and any other additional data that the user is willing to send to aid in risk assessment. What is does: Our system does the following operations on the input, including but not limited to parsing the information packets sent from the user and constructing metadata, running newly acquired data against previous data to predict a location's risk factor, and combining all high risk areas into a user accessible database. What is the output: Our system produces a location's risk prediction updated in real time that is accessible to all service users. Our system can be used by many different types of users, including but not limited to Universities, students, government institutions, and big businesses. Our system can be used to predict future threats and advise users on mitigating threats. Part of the novelty is the use of many sources of information, combined in a unique way, to achieve novel capabilities, in a way that is easy to inform and engage the user; as for one of many possible examples, having a report posting board that connects an interactive map of a location to the report posts that were made. The implementation of the system can be in many different ways including but not limited to: (a) fully stand along in a handheld device, (b) desktop computer, (c) server, (d) cloud infrastructure, (e) corporate or institutional infrastructure or (f) in a combination of any or all of the above. Furthermore it can be implemented in a centralized or a distributed way.

Explanation of your development

For this class we developed an interactive figma app that showcases the main features of our app. Our design is based on 4 main features: providing resources, allowing anonymous reporting, access to an alert system, and a peer-to-peer network of safety

Screenshots
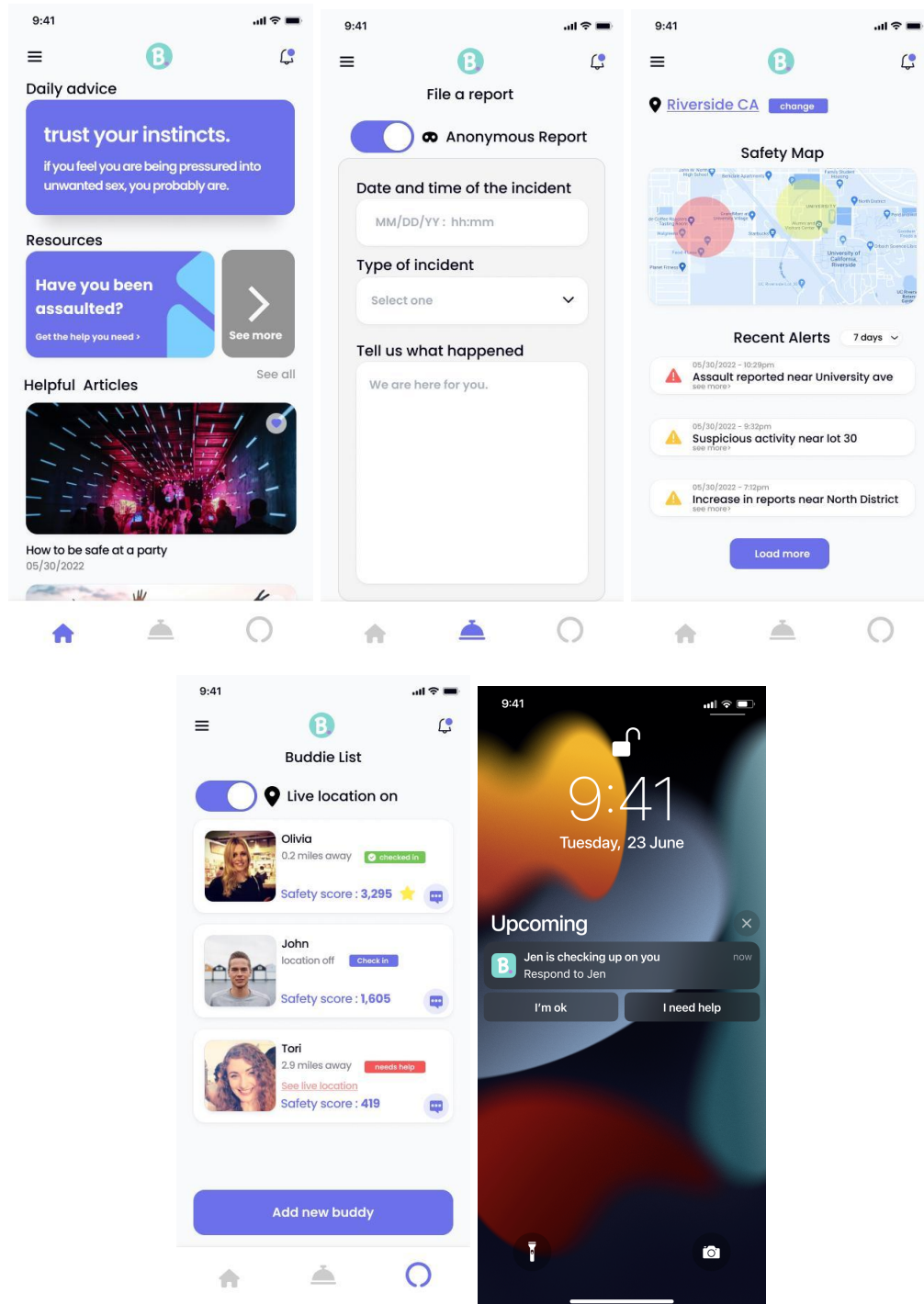
Providing resources

After the user logs in they are taken to the home screen. In this home screen students are welcomed with what we call "Daily advice". These pieces of advice are rotated daily, upon interacting with them you can learn more about the specific advice. We also added a section of resources victims of sexual assault or students who just want to learn more on how to be safe. When developing the design of the app, it was important for us to provide up to date information. We decided to add helpful articles that would showcase some of the recent news on sexual assault prevention. All of these features are meant to keep the user engaged and informed on the matter.

Allowing anonymous reporting

To give students the peace of mind to report their assault, we incorporated an anonymous reporting option. From our research, we found that 2 of the top reasons why students do not report their assault, could be solved by providing this anonymous reporting system. Once the toggle is turned on, no personal information is collected and we provide end to end encryption.

Access to an alert system

The design for the safety map is intended to keep students aware of what is happening in their surroundings with regard to safety. The safety map indicates areas that have a lot of reports, these areas are probably best to be avoided. The student can also see detailed information or recent alreats, in case something is happening around them. Every student would have the option to customize these notifications depending on their preferences.

A peer-to-peer network of safety

Your buddies list is the people that you trust with your safety, your close circle of friends and family. In this page you are able to share your location with others as well as send in check-ins. To make the app more engaging, we added a safety score, this score serves as a gamification aspect for our app. Within an app notification, your buddies will be able to check in or alert you if something is wrong.

Challenges

Providing a nice design and engaging messaging were the most challenging part of the design. Sexaul assault is a very serious topic, it is because of this that we had to place special emphasis on everything we added.

What is next

Now that the UI and UX have been developed, the next step will be developing a functioning application and back-end server to support this. We decided to spend our efforts on making the UI and UX excellent since this is what would be demoed to universities. Our thinking was that if they could have an interactive figma in their hands, it would be a lot more valuable than a back end server they might not interact with.

Access to your code

Buddies Figma Prototype