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WOMEN'S PERSONAL SAFETY

Executive Summary

At the stage in the process, our app is currently in the concept stage, so the first level of research was obtained by a simple survey to ensure participation from busy college women. We surveyed 8 women at the University of Texas in Austin, and the results were not surprising. There is a continuing need to help women not only feel safe but be safe. Of course this is a concern for women of all ages; however, for this study we chose to focus on college campuses due to the overwhelming issue of sexual violence from unwanted attention to sexual assault (i.e. groping) to rape. RAINN (Rape and Incest National Network) reports that 1 in 6 women are raped. Virtually every single woman has been the target of sexual misconduct in their lives.

As our society becomes increasingly aware of the shocking ubiquity of sexual misconduct post-#MeToo, it's as important as ever to keep the topic on the forefront of cultural dialogue. It is a serious issue—especially so in high school and on college campuses, where there are so many parties and people are experimenting with drugs and alcohol. It's essential to utilize technology to address these issue and assist women (and people across the gender spectrum) to have more tools at their disposal to call for interference or help.

KEY FINDINGS

As expected, all participants reported that they sometimes or often feel unsafe due to unwanted romantic/sexual attention or advances. Women are socialized to be nice and polite, we are also taught not to anger men, as angry men are dangerous men. Together, this creates a barrier to asking for help or even signaling they are uncomfortable or scared. Often when trapped by unwanted attention or advances, women are afraid to reach out for help or they simply don't know what to do.

Thanks to technology with people being on their phones so much for communication and social networking, it's easier to surreptitiously signal a friend for help. Our 8 participants indicated that a one-button app to signal friends for a diversion or even emergency services in would've been helpful in the situations where they felt unsafe.

WHAT WE WANTED TO LEARN

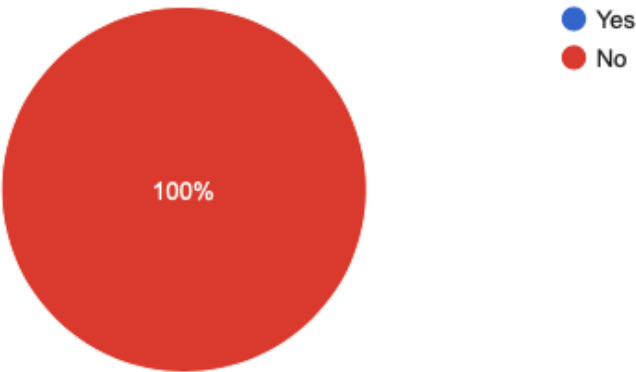
Our team wanted to initially verify the need for such an app as well as check the pulse of our culture post-#MeToo. Sadly, not much has changed, as our results showed.

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Do you currently use a personal safety app?

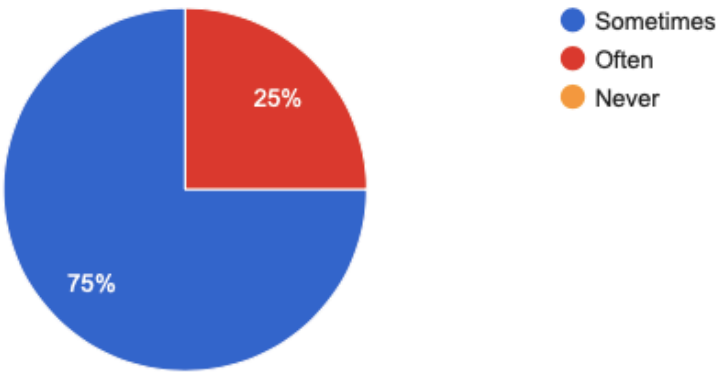


8 responses



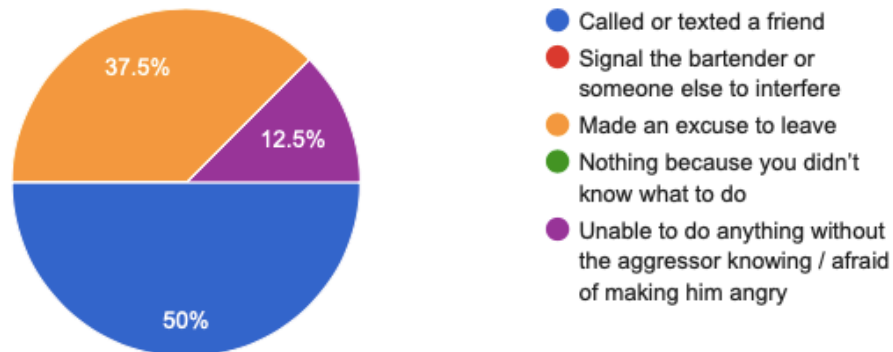
Do you feel unsafe due to unwanted romantic/sexual attention at a party or at a bar, or even walking alone day or night?

8 responses



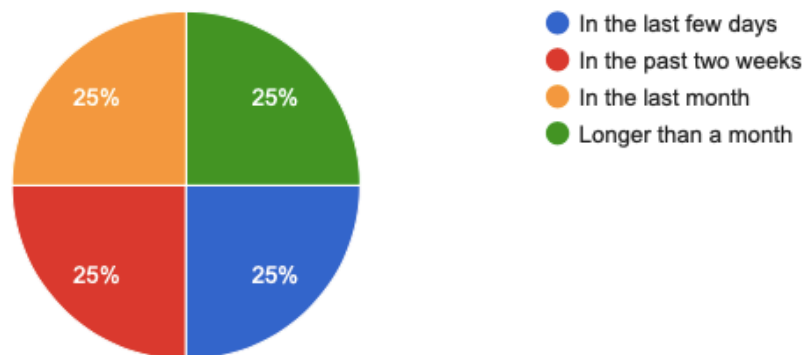
If you answered sometimes or often, what (if anything) have you done to feel safe again?

8 responses



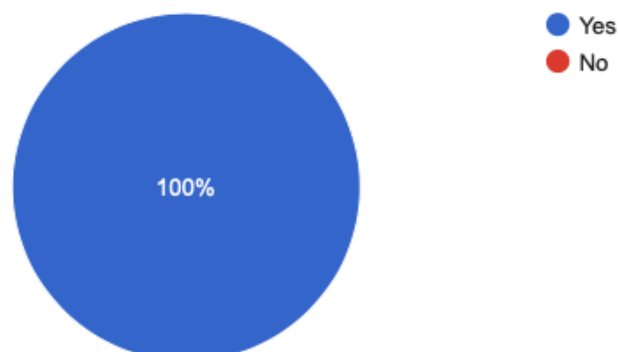
When was the last time you felt unsafe due to unwanted attention?

8 responses

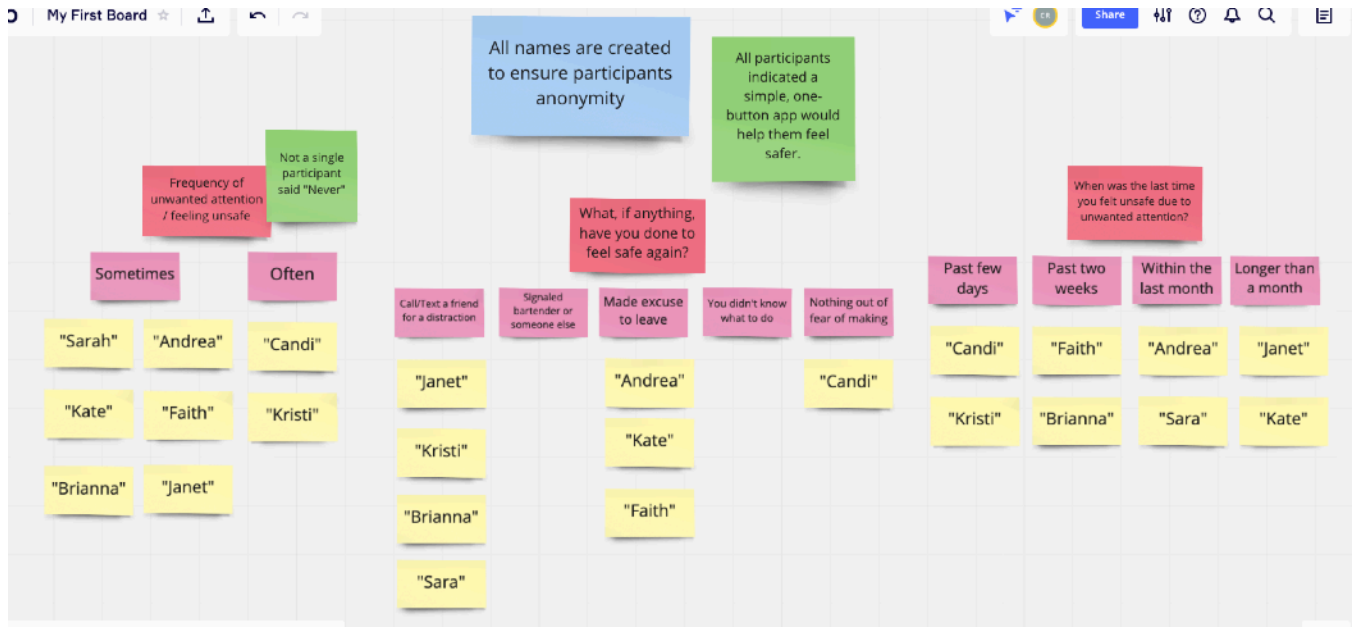


An app with a single-button to text a friend for help or even 911 would be helpful in those situations.

8 responses



ANALYZED DATA



SIGNIFICANT KEY FINDINGS

Key Finding 1:

Women frequently feel unsafe from unwanted sexual or romantic attention / advances.

Key Finding 2:

An app women can easily use secretly to call for a distraction or for help would help them feel safer.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Our app should focus on ease-of-use with large, clearly marked buttons to enable the user to request help surreptitiously. In cases of the immediate need of assistance, this button should be accessible on the lock screen.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Our app should have settings to put the user in complete control of features, fully customizable for their personal safety.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Consider the need to request different levels of assistance:

- * Text a friend to ask them to stand-by, as things are getting suspect
- * Text a friend to request a call for a diversion
- * Text a friend and call 911, an audio recording starts to capture the interaction.

NEXT STEPS

- * Run a design sprint for brainstorming
- * Design a prototype
- * Conduct a deeper study, watching people interact with the app