

Sarah Kingsley  
Robert St. Jaques  
Mobile App Development  
November 5, 2016

## BuddyUp the iOS Application

This past Saturday I was at a party, hanging out downstairs with my friends when one of us got a panicked text, “porch pls hlp”. My friends and I excused ourselves to go find that our friend had been cornered and was alone with a man she had recently turned down for a date and couldn’t get away. We had been recruited to come interrupt the conversation, largely because it was an awkward, but also because our friend felt out of control and unsafe. This is a common experience that most college women, and I’m sure to a lesser extent men, experience. We establish hand signals, we have conversations about if it’s ok to be left alone with a certain person that night, and we have code words to check in and to ask for help or tell friends things are ok. In a broader context of sexual assault prevention, this is a way many people implement bystander intervention in an elaboration of the classic buddy system. More and more, phones have taken on a role in this practice and so I believe that we can eliminate some of the steps my friend and those in similar situations as her took that night with this app.

Aimed at college students, or young party goes, in possible dangerous or merely awkward situations, this app has to have a non assuming interface that has one simple interaction to alert friends. Before going out the user sets up the phone numbers they would like to be contacted with a stress signal. Then when used, the app simply opens and the user only has to shake the phone to send a sms message to their chosen numbers with a text “👩” or the “face with no good gesture” emoji. This will alert friends that they would like to be found and helped out of the situation they are in. I believe that this can revolutionize this interaction by reducing the process most of us use in messenger to two motions, opening the app and proceeding with a long press.

In future iterations of this app it will be necessary to fully implement the transfer of data between the two views, or so that the numbers in the group match the numbers being sent the message two. In this current iteration, that data is hard coded in as we are learning those functionalities currently. Furthermore, I’d like to utilize different notifications than messenger in general, by looking into creating non-assuming and customizable notifications that are discreet and effective.