

**Year 2 Public Description of Work for
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

Soteria Solutions

Bringing in the Bystander® - Adapting for Livestream

Relevant Rubric Area(s):

Prevention - Audience-specific anti-sexual harassment education; Bystander Intervention Programs (specific to higher education or field, and/or audience)

Description of Work:

Bringing in the Bystander® (BITB) was created as an in-person educational program that encourages participants to become prosocial bystanders in instances of sexual and interpersonal violence or harassment. Participants learn to identify problem situations; they also learn practical skills for safe and effective intervention. Highly interactive, researched and evaluated, BITB College uses a community of responsibility approach, rather than a narrow focus on victims and perpetrators. It teaches bystanders how to safely intervene in situations where an incident may be occurring or where there may be risk. There are currently three versions, high school, college and workplace, of BITB for different target audiences.

Bringing in the Bystander is built on 20 plus years of collaboration between researchers and practitioners who have worked together to develop, evaluate and implement this in-person bystander intervention program that is informed by research, best practice and evaluation. Through a series of research studies, BITB has been demonstrated to be an effective prevention tool on college campuses. Research with college students suggests that BITB is effective in changing attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors related to sexual abuse and relationship abuse. For example, researchers (Cares et al., 2014; Moynihan et al., 2014) found that college students who engaged in BITB training reported significantly higher bystander intervention behaviors (i.e., prosocial behavior, party safety, risky situation intervention) and more positive bystander attitudes one year following the program.

BITB is a unique sexual and relationship abuse prevention program because of its focus on the engagement of prosocial bystander intervention. BITB aims to target all members of a given community, with the understanding that everyone has a role to play in the prevention of sexual and relationship violence. Therefore, the goal of the training is to teach people how to improve their ability to recognize potentially violent situations and to intervene in such situations in safe and effective ways.

Development of Guidelines and Community Input

Year 2 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

BITB was designed and evaluated to be delivered in-person and face-to-face. In March 2020, the pandemic shut down high schools and colleges and allowed delivery only by virtual means. Quickly, the Soteria Solutions team realized prevention work would continue but needed to adapt to the pandemic conditions. Beginning in April 2020, the team met monthly with license holders in virtual “water cooler” discussions, to hear what was happening on campuses and what prevention advocates needed. We also disseminated surveys and asked license holders for feedback on what they needed to continue implementing BITB. We used our listserv to query what prevention providers needed.

During summer of 2020, the team assessed all of the information we gathered from license holders. Based on their input, as well as best available evidence about e-learning pedagogy, interactive design, and cognitive load, we created an amended program that allowed for delivery via synchronous (real-time, livestream) online platforms such as Zoom. While we have not conducted an outcome evaluation of BITB through this modality, we have collected formative evaluation data from our license holders and piloted the program through our BITB Train-the-Trainer program. As a result of these evaluation findings, we have made curriculum adjustments as part of this iterative evaluation process.

Some of the innovative changes to the in-person programming include the following:

- Training presented by co-facilitators with a third person running tech and answering chat questions. This allows the trainers to focus on the training and increasing participation without worrying about the technology requirements.
- Developing opening icebreakers to make participation comfortable but not required
- Use of electronic whiteboard to increase comprehension and group participation
- Customized training manual with scripted material for easy use
- Customized scenarios not only for the current pandemic and remote working conditions but also to take into account what students might be facing at home

Adapting Program for Unique Audiences

BITB College was developed with principles of community psychology in mind: a main tenet being that programs developed for one community cannot be put in a box and dropped into another community. Therefore, it was important to us that we consider how the present reality, due to COVID-19 and physical distancing, impacted campuses. To help support this, we have also provided new scenarios relevant to the current environment and encouraged campuses to further tailor them as the situation evolves.

We always facilitate BITB in an environment in which students have experienced or are currently experiencing harm and trauma. That trauma was further exacerbated by the reality that people are getting sick and dying during the pandemic. It was important to ensure that

Year 2 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

delivery of BITB is trauma- informed and considers the realities that students are facing. Students, for example, may be attending the training from a home with abusive family members or may be living with an abusive partner. They may be a survivor attending the training in a residence hall room with a roommate who is making jokes about sexual violence. Uncertainty can also exacerbate trauma.

Current Status

Following release of the Guidelines during the summer of 2020, over 165 license holders requested the Guidelines for their campus and the number continues to increase. We held eight listening sessions with license holders and presented the Guidelines in an open forum to all interested parties. We answered questions on our listserv and offer consultation as schools move to remote presentation. In June 2020, we held our first virtual train-the-trainer program and we continue to hold those monthly. Up to 40 attendees participate in a two-day training, where a large portion of the programming details the best way to facilitate to remote audiences.

Most people agree the remote presentation makes BITB more accessible and allows more people to be trained.

“Bringing in the Bystander training was converted to an online format by its authors which enabled us to resume our work in promoting a community responsibility approach to sexual violence prevention, with increased participation and mandatory training for all Bison athletes.” [University of Manitoba](#)

Feedback to our virtual trainings have been overwhelmingly positive. One attendee stated:

“Providing a flexible and virtual workshop will let us reach more people especially while we are limited in what we can do in-person.”

Even as schools prepare to return to in-person education, we do see an uncertainty about whether large trainings will continue in-person. We also see the demand for a more accessible program such as what BITB Virtual provides. We have plans to update the curriculum further based on what we have learned and further improve delivery. Ideas for further improvement include increasing interactivity with polls, breakout rooms, graphics, etc. We also need to update supporting documentation that aids in implementation. These materials will further incorporate remote learning.

Website for further information (if applicable): www.soteriasolutions.org

Point of Contact Name: Jane Stapleton

Email Address for Point of Contact: jane.stapleton@soteriasolutions.org