



A Sexual Violence Prevention Programme Professor Louise Crowley



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh¹

The Power of a pro-active Bystander to effect cultural change

Active bystanders create a new normal on our campuses.

A bystander can intervene –

- When red flags are evident, preventing a potential incident**
- In the course of an incident**
- After an incident has occurred or on receipt of a disclosure**

- A bystander can challenge insidious and sexually hostile language, comments and behaviours to demonstrate their absolute unacceptability.**

- Identifying and challenging unacceptable behaviour will tackle perceived tolerance and critically, de-normalise the behaviour**
- Early intervention can stop behaviour at the source and prevent escalation**




Awareness and recognition

- Fundamental aspect of Bystander training – ability to recognise the breadth of unacceptable behaviours
- If it is not regarded as problematic, it will never be challenged
- Danger of normalisation of sexual harassment and violence – huge challenge to our campus culture



Awareness - Participant testimonials




"This programme has highlighted ways to see if someone is in a situation where they need help in ways I wouldn't have noticed before. Now I know the signs."

"I feel I am more aware of possible harassment or able to anticipate aggressions than I would have been before this programme."

"I do have a heightened understanding and greater consciousness of what I could do in relevant situations. I am more mindful of the potential for harmful situations when I'm in public now."

"The programme has stimulated me to be more observant of what happens around me and consider what role I may have if the situation may arise when an intervention is needed. The programme has certainly raised my awareness.
Thank you"



Recognising sexual violence



Pre-Workshop

Post-Workshop

I have a good understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment and violence.

69

96

Agree

28

3

I have limited understanding

2

<1

I do not have a good understanding

Empower and upskill for change

- **You are part of the solution**
- **Personal and collective responsibility**
- **All students deserve a safe and enjoyable third level experience**
- **Collectively demand and effect a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of sexual harassment and violence**



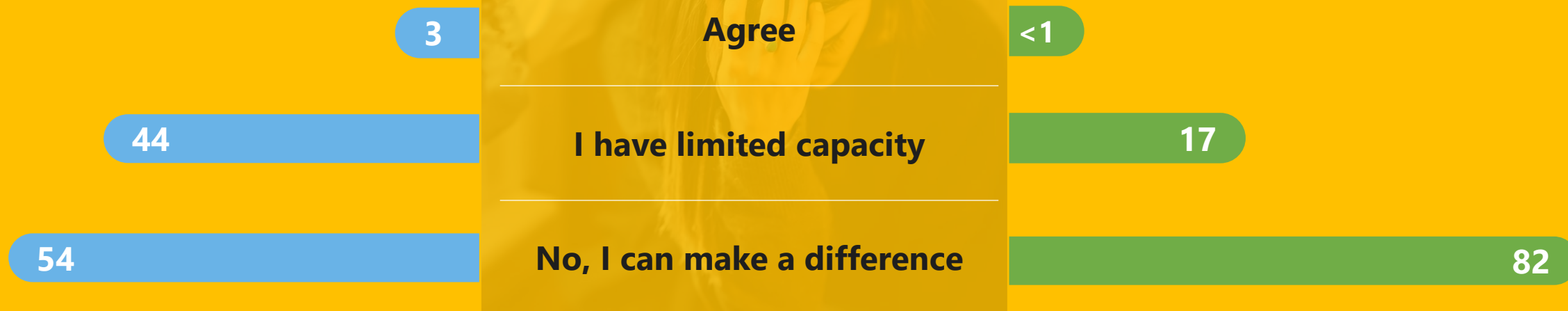
Individual capacity to effect change



Pre-Workshop

There is little I can do about sexual harassment and violence at my institution.

Post-Workshop



How we upskill our staff and students:



Online Workshop 5

- Education: Participants gain an understanding of the breadth of interventions possible – its rarely a confrontation!
- Videos: Participants are shown examples of safe and effective interventions
- Padlet: Participants submit responses to challenging situations, view anonymous responses of others – powerful peer engagement and validation.

In-Person Workshop

- Participants reflect on the value and impact of the training
- Consider and respond to problematic scenarios
- Vocalisation of oft-internalised reactions
- Skills rehearsal
- Critical forum for shared appetite for change

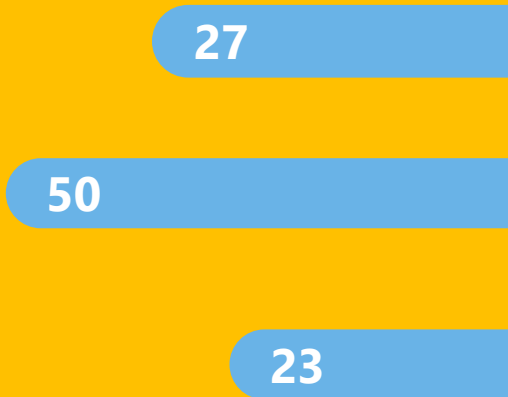
Reflective Response

Participants submit their reflections on the programme and the challenges faced; through various media (artwork, poetry, writing)

Develop skills to make an intervention



Pre-Workshop



I have a good ability to intervene in a threatening or dangerous situation.

Agree

I have limited ability

I don't know how to intervene

Post-Workshop



Questionnaire Feedback *

"Yes. I have seen a girl in an alley on her own looking very intoxicated. I was on a work break and notified my workplace, so they knew where i was. I approached the girl and asked if she was ok. she explained she was waiting for her parent. I asked if it was ok that I waited with her so she wasn't on her own and she seemed happy to have me there. I asked to ensure she knew I was there to help and to ensure she wasn't in a dangerous situation."

"Yes, I helped a girl find her friends on a night out when her friends were lost, and some guy would not take no for an answer about going back with his mates. I'm 6'4 so I simply stood in front of her, and he scarpered like a startled dog."

Questionnaire Feedback *

"To my surprise - yes! The programme certainly opened my eyes to the late-night real world. Recently, on St. Patrick's Day in Cork City Centre, I was with my partner around 1am when we entered a takeaway where we noticed a young woman who looked quite drunk, in a daze, and was alone. Concerned, we decided to guide her past groups of young men to buy her some food. She sat and ate with us and once finished, we were able to signal a taxi for her. Thankfully the driver was very understanding and did not hesitate to take the woman home..... I think before this programme I would have had a tendency to walk on and let somebody else deal with the 'problem'."

"Yes. A couple of weeks ago I was cycling my children home from school. Near Kent train station there was a couple (late 20's) walking along very intoxicated. The man was being very aggressive to the woman. I didn't jump in as I was taking care of my children, so the most appropriate action was to call the Gardaí when I got home a few minutes later. I described the couple and the situation. They sent a car out."

Questionnaire Feedback *

"Although it wasn't a direct intervention, my friends and I walked a stranger home after a night out as she was alone. I felt this was a very responsible preventative measure."

"I've been more frank with my discomfort at a couple of my friends making sexist jokes. It's gone down well, and they've copped on a bit."

"I wouldn't say it was much of an intervention, but I was coming back home from my shift when I saw a woman, sitting in the curb and I felt it was dangerous to leave her. So I asked her whether everything was fine. her phone was out of charge. I was able to help her by lending my phone for the call. I was able to both identify her need for help as well as successfully provide her with one."

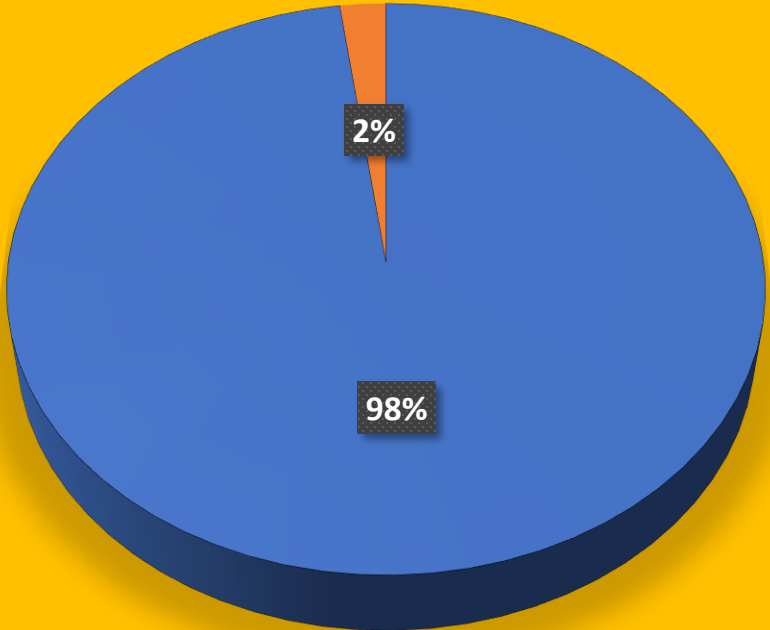
"I recently had an opportunity to intervene in the way a friend of mine was talking about pronouns, I explained that pronouns and their correct use helps to validate and recognise an identity, further noting that he should be respectful of it. I probably would have let it go before, but I decided to tell him how he made me feel. Fortunately, he took this well and was open about it."

In person Orientation Bystander Intervention - Active* Consent

Was the orientation session worthwhile?



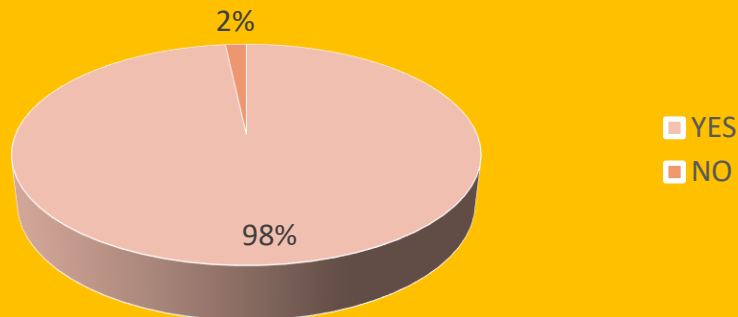
Results



RSVP (Relationships and Sexual Violence Programme)

- First year students are auto enrolled – online learning pathway to the Bystander Intervention Programme.
- Two-module programme (1 hour to complete)
 - Consent and awareness of harmful behaviours including Image Based Sex Abuse, drink spiking, intimate partner violence and stalking.
 - Introduction to Bystander skills With emphasis placed on reporting problematic behaviour through the Speak Out tool, and support services

Would you agree that all first years would benefit from completing this programme?



Bystander Intervention - Voluntary v Compulsory?

- Appetite from participants for compulsory approach and recognition of the power of the programme to effect real cultural change
- "... imagine if 20,000 people took one thing from that class that's changed that's a lot of people....if [they] learn how to prevent it or see it leading up to what was going to happen it could prevent it, that will be quite significant..."

"I really do hope that this goes mainstream, valuable life lessons and students deserve to learn these skills..."

-Student Participant

"I would make it mandatory"

-Student Participant 2022

"I can't stress enough how important it is that more students get the opportunity to participate in this workshop. I didn't actually realise that I was personally affected by the material, but it meant that I could go and talk about it."

-Student participant





Staff engagement with training:

- Expanded programme allows participant to explore staff experiences of SVH but still gives an insight into the student experience – informed by recent HEA Surveys (2022)
- Content and scenarios adapted following consultation with staff members.
- Tyndall Institute Leadership Management undertaking training to encourage all staff to participate. Key element of Athena Swan award.
- UCC ULT undertaking training January 2023

"Many of the staff I lead are front line staff who meet students for one-one sessions, and it is within these sessions that students can disclose for the first time, an incident they have experienced in confidence. The student meeting might occur under the guise of a chat about subject choice or a postgraduate qualification... however, with the skills of the staff member and through gentle probing they are able to see a student in trouble. It is then the truth can unfold.... it is crucial that staff are given the valuable training and confidence to intervene in a situation as a bystander, and the training and guidance given in the five module course has been invaluable to me. It will also be invaluable to staff to be able to make referrals to professional avenues of help for students, but it will also provide that guidance and confidence as a human being that we all need at times, to step in when the time is needed, once safe and secure to do so, and help in a situation that could potentially be much worse if we didn't."

-Eleanor Donoghue



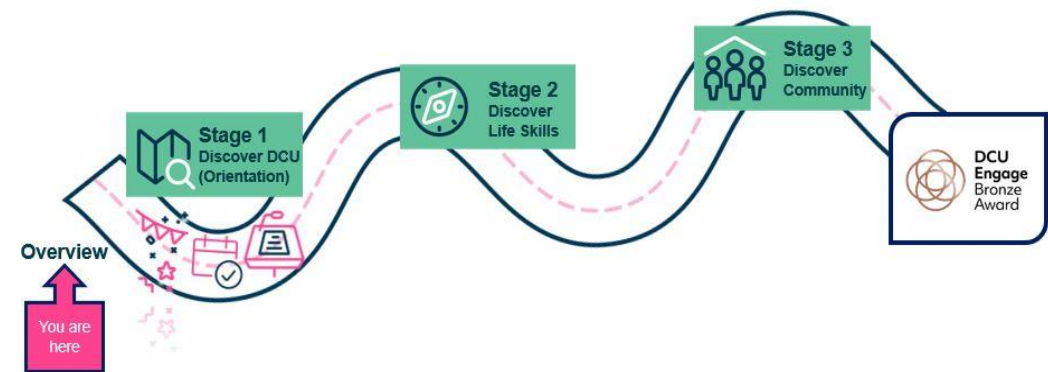
Reflections showcase

- An [art showcase](#) in UCC Boole library was held during Bystander Week 2022. The exhibition was a display of programme participant reflection works including paintings, poems, The event gave participants an opportunity to consider the learning and reflect the impact of learning not only on themselves but on the issue of sexual harassment and violence.



Bystander Intervention @ DCU

- UCC Bystander Intervention is incorporated in the DCU Orientation offering for all first years.
- Also recognised as part of the DCU Engage Award - Bronze level.
- Students complete two of three short courses to earn the Discover your Community badge



UCC Bystander Intervention programme: Impact on RCSI

Bystander Intervention in a healthcare setting

1. Shifts understanding of social norms and what is unacceptable behaviour

2. Equips students for work placement

3. Real-life scenarios tailored to RCSI

4. Empowered staff



RCSI

“UCC’s Bystander Intervention programme has started a conversation around these issues”

- RCSI Staff Member

Making change happen!

- Pre SVF – slow to progress at first – sensitive issue across sector
- Built my vision on an educational platform with emphasis on student wellbeing and empowerment
- Benefit of my own institutional positioning
- Small steps – pilot delivery
- Key learnings:
 - Taking a pro-active, student-supported, cross-institutional, management-led approach to tackling sexual harassment and violence results in an engaged student body that feels supported by its institution.
 - Institutional reputation is enhanced by engaging with the issue of sexual harassment and violence, potential students and their parents are reassured by a university that accepts the fact of the problem and is proactive in addressing it through educational and supportive endeavours.
 - Cross sectoral co-operation is critical for Institutional buy-in and collective progress



BYSTANDER

INTERVENTION

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