

Other ideas for making spaces safer

Make a poster with your co-op's definition of consent and put it up in a common space

Put **zines and articles** in bathrooms and common rooms

Make a list of resources for survivors available near you (hotlines, counseling, college, etc.) and post it in a bathroom.

Write consent into your house policies!

Make an "Ask First" rule around nudity, physical contact, being publicly intoxicated, and anything else that might make people uncomfortable.

Recommended Reading

"Learning Good Consent" and "Support" (Zine; available on Philly's Pissed website)

Attention: People with Body Parts <http://www.atnpeoplewithbodyparts.org/>

Philly Stands Up

Generation 5 <http://www.generationfive.org/>

The Revoultion Starts at Home and The Color of Violence, by INCITE

Thanks so much for coming!

Feel free to reach out to either of if you have any questions, concerns, or critiques.

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Facilitating Conversations about Sexualized Violence

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Before the workshop begins, tell the participants that some of the language may be upsetting or triggering.

Let them know that it is okay to leave the room at any time, for any reason.

There are many valid reasons that someone might leave the workshop to take care of themselves besides feeling triggered (going to the bathroom, getting water or something to eat, stretching, dancing, whatever!) and no one owes anyone an explanation.

Set Ground Rules for your discussion

Encourage questions and comments, but acknowledge the need to be respectful, ect.

It's good to assume that there are survivors in the room.

Offer a framework

This lets you set an agreed upon foundation to build off of rather than starting from scratch.

Our Framework

We believe sexualized violence includes all acts of gender/or sex-based harassment, stalking, all forms of sexual assault, and domestic violence. We also operate with an understanding that sexualized violence, like everything in our world, does not happen in a vacuum. So people with marginalized identities are at the highest risk of experiencing sexualized violence, and have the least access to support resources.

Acknowledge your positionality and its limitations.

We are only experts on our own experiences which, are limited in part by the identities we hold.

For example, I am a queer white able-bodied cis-woman and those identities impact the ways I have and have not experienced sexualized violence.

Consider having a "tap-out" person.

A tap-out person is someone with basic support skills who checks in with people in a non-disruptive way as they leave the room (making eye contact) to see if they are okay and/or need some type of support (a set of ears, someone to sit with, etc.).

Survivor vs. Victim

Victim: this is the traditional term for people who have experienced sexualized violence, and the one most commonly used by the legal system.

Many people take offense to being labeled a perpetual "victim" and feel the term takes away their agency.

Someone can claim the identity of victim if they want. A person might claim the term victim if they don't feel like they are surviving or just to acknowledge how power is taken away from people who experience sexualized violence..

Survivor: acknowledges the process & achievement of survival: **not everyone survives life after sexualized violence.** Not everyone continues to live in the way they want to or need to.

When in doubt, use "survivor" rather than "victim". It's best not assign people labels you are not sure they want used. "People who have experienced sexualized violence" is a phrase that acknowledges experience without calling it anything.

A Few Suggested Activities

These are only a few ideas to get you started. Complete consent and survivor support workshops are available on the NASCO shared resource library. For more complete workshops covering intimate partner violence and some activities around “bystander intervention”/community accountability, email kleader@oberlin.edu

Brainstorming consent! Break up into groups to discuss. - *What does consent mean to you? What does it look like?* Come back as a whole group. Share highlights from small group discussions.

This can be useful in the context of co-ops because it can serve as an agreement for conduct.

Discussion Question: Where might consent come up? (Hint: think outside of sexual interactions as well!)

Practice saying” no“

(from FORCE: Upsetting Rape Culture website)

“Saying no can be hard, no matter your partner or your experience. FORCE invites participants to develop the skill with a low-cost, conversational method by interacting with other audience members. (Do you like chocolate? No. Is it raining today? No.) Through repetition, humor, and variations in conversation, participants can get comfortable using the word and meaning it.” -

Role Plays around bystander intervention/community accountability

Give a situation (strange-feeling interaction at a party, someone disclosing an assault, ect), and ask participants to brainstorm what they would do to help.

Stop light activity Index Card Activity

Everyone is given a card and instructed to answer the following prompts: What does support look like to you/what is a time when you have felt supported? Everyone hands in the cards/they are redistributed so people have an anonymous response in their hands. Go around the room and read responses aloud/if not enough time, take a few volunteers

Troubleshooting

(or “what to do when people say effed up stuff”)

Some people may be new to these topics.

If someone uses the wrong language, but seems to mean well, the situation should be seen as an exciting opportunity for education and growth. Focus on the idea not the person, assume best intentions or use the “Yes, and....” Approach

Be prepared to address myths around sexualized violence.

* If someone says something damaging or offensive, it’s worth addressing that. Say something like “a lot of people think that, but actually... Here are a couple of things that come up a lot in our trainings.

There is a “grey area” around consent and alcohol.

Intoxication (having consumed intoxicants) is different than Incapacitation (being unaware of the who, what, when and where of the situation). Consent cannot be given if someone is incapacitated.

If you’re not sure whether someone is incapacitated or just intoxicated, DON’T HAVE SEX WITH THEM.

People are still responsible for the harm they cause when they’re drunk (same as drunk driving)

People in abusive relationships are weak and/or “asking for it” if they don’t “just leave.”

people are often emotionally, physically, or financially dependent on their abusers—even a combination of the three leaving also does not guarantee that they’ll be safe.

Sometimes people try to make sexualized violence about their own political beliefs

An example of this is professors refusing to give trigger warnings or offer alternative assignments because they understand it as a matter of free speech, rather than a traumatized student not having equal access to an educational environment they feel safe in.

A decent strategy is to try to bring the subject back to survivors’ experiences.

Sometimes it’s worth changing the subject.

If it seems like the conversation is headed into territory that might not be safe for members of the group, be a good facilitator and move on! This is a space for learning, so we do not have to be in agreement all the time, but this is not a space for debate and some discussions are not appropriate.

Sometimes the best thing to do is to ask people to leave.

It doesn’t happen very often, but if someone seems intent on arguing with the facilitators or is actively making others feel unsafe, it’s not worth sacrificing your workshop for them.