



IOWA

TALKING WITH YOUR STUDENT ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DATING VIOLENCE

A parent and family handbook



Office of Civil Rights Compliance

Welcome to the University of Iowa!

The transition to college is an important time for students and their families, and we want to provide you with information about how the University of Iowa addresses sexual misconduct (which includes sexual assault and sexual harassment), dating violence, and stalking.

Sexual misconduct, dating violence, and stalking happen everywhere and on every campus; what distinguishes one campus from another is the way a campus works to prevent and respond to these issues. The University of Iowa has done much work in recent years to prevent violence, provide support to survivors, and hold offenders accountable. We have dedicated staff and resources that focus on sexual violence prevention, victim support, investigation, and policy development.

We know having conversations with your student about sex and sexual violence can be difficult. This guide serves as a resource for you and a starting point for conversations with your student about preventing and responding to sexual violence on campus.

The University of Iowa is committed to addressing sexual misconduct, dating violence, and stalking. There is absolutely no place for these actions on our campus. We take the safety of your student and the University of Iowa community seriously.

Many organizations in the handbook are available to you, to ask questions, receive support, and get help for your student or yourself. If you have questions or concerns, we encourage you to contact any of the resources in this guide.

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- Monsoon Asians & Pacific Islanders in Solidarity
- Nisaa African Family Services
- Domestic Violence Intervention Program

The following University of Iowa offices assisted in the writing and editing of this handbook.

- Office of Student Accountability
- Office of the Vice President for Student Life
- Rape Victim Advocacy Program
- Student Wellness
- Women's Resource & Action Center

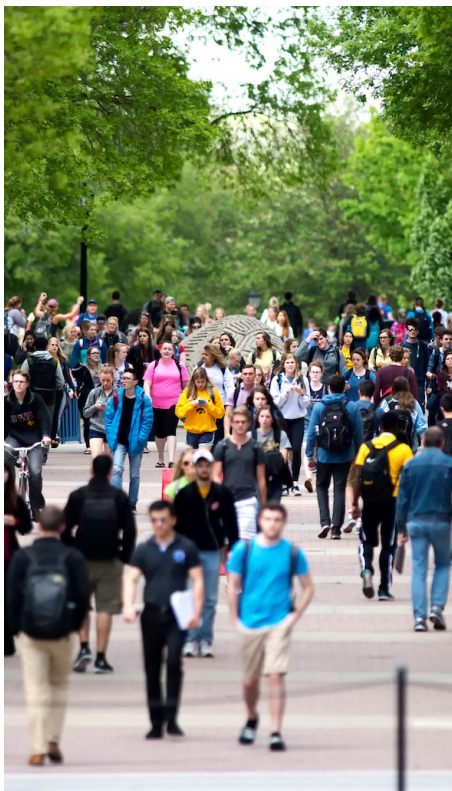
The University of Iowa would also like to thank the students who volunteered their time and effort to write, edit, and provide input on the handbook.

This handbook is based on the Parent & Family Handbook created by the University of Wisconsin.

DEFINING VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS

Sexual assault and harassment, dating violence, and stalking affect people of all genders and sexual orientations. To learn more about what is prohibited under UI policy see

→ uiowa.me/title-ix



Primary prevention is a long-term strategy that focuses on harmful behaviors and aims to prevent violence on a community-wide scale before it happens. While most of our programs and resources are directed toward primary prevention, the University of Iowa has a comprehensive education model that includes primary prevention, risk mitigation, and awareness raising. For a list of workshops and classes visit

→ endingviolence.uiowa.edu

DEFINITIONS

Gender-based violence refers to any act of violence that is committed against a person's will, and is based on gender norms and/or unequal power dynamics.

Sexual violence is an umbrella term describing any kind of sexual activity or attempted sexual activity when consent is not given. It encompasses sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and dating violence.

Consent is the presence of a free and clearly given yes, and not the absence of a no. It is the responsibility of the person pursuing sexual activity to get consent. Persons who are incapacitated from alcohol and/or other drugs cannot give consent.

Sexual assault is any sexual contact without consent. This can include groping, fondling, or touching someone without their consent, and rape, which is penetration of the mouth, vagina, or anus with another body part or object without consent.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome/unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, physical contact/conduct of a sexual nature. Differences in power and status (such as professor/student, therapist/client, supervisor/supervisee) can be a significant component of sexual harassment.

Dating/domestic violence also referred to as intimate partner violence, is an ongoing pattern of power and control used by one partner over another, such as verbal, physical, and sexual violence, and emotional and financial abuse.

Stalking occurs when a person purposefully and repeatedly follows or harasses another person, physically and/or virtually, so that the person being stalked fears harm.

Victim advocate is a person who is trained to assist people facing violence and harassment with support, referrals, or resources.

Survivor is a person who has experienced sexual assault or relationship violence. Some people prefer the term "victim" instead of survivor.

Bystander intervention is interrupting or taking action when a person is experiencing hurtful or harmful behavior.

¹ opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/sexual-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct

PREVALENCE

According to the 2021 University of Iowa Speak Out Iowa survey, for those who completed the survey, 16.6% of women students, 5.1% of men students, and 22.6% of transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) students have experienced a rape/attempted rape.

Key findings from the *Speak Out Iowa* survey include:



PREVENTING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT HAPPENS: WHAT YOU CAN DO

The University of Iowa takes sexual violence very seriously and understands that parents, families, and new students do as well. The university works to prevent violence through a series of innovative and empowering strategies that build upon the realities, skills, and values of being a Hawkeye, but we can't do it alone. That is why we need your support to continue these conversations with your student.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Things You Can Say

It is understandable that conversations with your student about sex, consent, and sexual violence can be difficult to start. The more you address these issues, the easier it will become. We have provided a few tips for ways you can start or continue conversations with your student about the realities of sexual violence as they prepare to attend the University of Iowa.

- See [page 8](#) for tips on starting conversations and [page 11](#) for tips on how to support a survivor.

Keep it Simple

- You don't have to be an expert!
- Open the door for conversations early, often, and casually.
- Look for opportunities to weave topics of sex, gender, dating, and communication into everyday interactions.
- Find opportunities to ask what your student thinks about a TV show, news story, or blog post.
- Rather than attempt lengthy conversations, ask simple, open-ended questions and listen without judgement.
- Encourage your student to explore what they want out of their social life or dating experiences in college.
- Everyone benefits from having conversations about sex, consent, and sexual violence; every student should hear about these topics and how they can be a part of having safe and healthy interactions with others.

EXPLORE RED FLAGS

Encourage your student to think about the red flags for sexual violence. They may be in a position to safely intervene in a potentially harmful situation. Even off campus you have an important role in the Hawkeye community, where we are all expected to support each other.

- Red flags can include someone who:
 - does not respect boundaries
 - is sexually aggressive
 - is jealous and controlling in dating relationships.
- Your student has likely seen many red flags already. Help them develop strategies for noticing and safely interrupting them when they see those behaviors on campus i.e. being an active bystander.
- Reinforce that they are going to a university that expects them to look out for their peers.

ENCOURAGE BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

There are countless ways to intervene in a situation, so talk with your student about what feels comfortable for them. Safety is of utmost importance, so think through strategies that don't cause risk for personal harm. Below are some strategies to get them thinking, but interventions can be as unique as individuals.

Interrupt

You can interrupt the behavior without directly addressing it or the person causing harm. A distraction provides time to assess the situation, gives the person causing harm time to rethink their actions, and gives the targeted person a chance to leave.

- **Example:** "Hey, sorry to interrupt but I'm thinking about grabbing some pizza. Want to come with me?"

Get Help

Sometimes it's how you say it that can make or break an intervention. Blaming and judging often increase defensiveness. However, letting someone know how the behavior affected you is harder to deny.

- **Example:** "It looks like your friend might be making some people uncomfortable. Would you be willing to talk to them?"

I Statements

You may witness a person demonstrating some concerning behavior and while you don't feel comfortable addressing it directly, you could find someone who can. See if the person has a friend nearby who would feel comfortable addressing the issue. Or ask for assistance from a friend, staff member, resident assistant, counselor, coach, or health professional. Tell them what you've observed and ask them for support.

- **Example:** "When you tell jokes like that, I feel like you're not a safe person to talk to about things that have happened to me."

We're Friends, Right?

This intervention sends a message that you care about the person and are worried how their behavior may be negatively affecting them or someone else.

- **Example:** "Listen, you know you're my friend, but that makes me uncomfortable. I know you would never try to hurt someone, but what you're doing isn't reflective of the good person I know you are."

Other Things You Can Do To Help

- **Group Intervention:** People often remain silent because they believe that they are the only one who is uncomfortable. When you speak up in a group setting, you let others know that they are not alone. Engaging a group to get involved provides a lot of support, resources, and ideas. Consult with others in the moment or later and get their input.
- **Support the Survivor:** You can offer support in several ways. You can ask them in the moment or approach them afterwards. The point is to let them know that you saw what happened and you want to be helpful. Ask if they are okay and what they would like you to do to help.

TIPS FOR PROMOTING PREVENTION

Discuss

Talk to your student about respect and communication.

All healthy relationships require ongoing, clear communication.

- Communication is an important part of sex and dating. How do you talk about your and your partner's boundaries?
- You don't have the right to push someone else's boundaries. Tell me about how you might recognize and respond when someone is not interested?
- No one has the right to cross your boundaries or push you further than you want. This is something you can always talk to me about.

Ask

Ask your student about their plans to be active bystanders.

We all have a role to play in creating a safe Hawkeye community for everyone.

- What are some behaviors from others that might be a red flag? (see [page 6](#) for examples of red flags)
- What are some ways you could be an active bystander when you see an unsafe situation? (see [page 7](#) for examples of bystander interventions)
- Watch out for others. Alcohol and partying are never an excuse for someone to be inappropriate, cause harm, or cross someone else's boundaries. How would you help if you saw this happening to someone else?

Talk

Talk to your student about how they would help.

Everyone deserves judgement-free support.

- How would you respond in a supportive way if a friend experiences sexual violence? (see [page 11](#) for ideas)
- Do you know what resources are available on campus? (see [pages 12-15](#) for more information about campus resources)

PREVENTING VIOLENCE BEFORE IT HAPPENS: UNIVERSITY OF IOWA PROGRAMS

Incoming University of Iowa students receive various forms of education on topics surrounding gender-based violence and discrimination that are aligned with the University of Iowa gender-based violence prevention learning outcomes.

ONLINE SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION EDUCATION

All incoming undergraduate and transfer students are required to complete an interactive online sexual violence prevention program. This program is designed to help students address and prevent sexual assault, harassment, stalking, and dating/domestic violence. The program also focuses on bystander intervention skills to help students feel empowered to speak up and intervene to prevent potentially violent situations from occurring.

FRATERNITY AND SORORITY LIFE

Students who are members of Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council receive mandatory education on gender-based violence. Students participate in a series of trainings throughout the academic year, and each chapter must receive at least one training throughout the academic year.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION TRAINING

Student organizations are able to request additional trainings about topics that include bystander intervention, healthy relationships, consent, healthy masculinity, and policy.

MEN AND MASCULINITIES

The university is committed to mobilizing and engaging male-identified students, staff, faculty, and community partners to work as allies with all genders to create a culture of respect free from gender-based violence through fostering critical conversations about healthy masculinity, increasing students' knowledge and skills in engaging in healthy relationships, and promoting educational events that provide training and mentoring around healthy relationships for high school students.



To learn more about the University of Iowa gender-based violence prevention learning outcomes visit

→ endingviolence.uiowa.edu

A photograph of two people sitting on a grassy field at sunset. The person on the left is seen in profile, wearing a white patterned shirt. The person on the right is seen from the back, wearing a blue t-shirt. The background is a bright, hazy sunset with trees and a building visible in the distance. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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SURVIVOR SUPPORT

When an incident such as sexual assault or dating violence does occur, it can be challenging for a parent or family member to know how to respond. It can be especially hard to respond if you're not physically present with your student. We hope this page can serve as a guide for you if your student reaches out for help. **Research and experience tell us that having a supportive and empathetic response from loved ones helps a survivor's healing process.**

Hearing that someone you love has been harmed can bring up a variety of feelings based on your own experiences. Your well-being is important and may help you better support your student. Seek resources that are meaningful to you – advocacy services also support families and friends of survivors.

WHAT TO SAY: SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENT

LISTEN

Listen with patience and without judgment. Allow your student to share as much or as little as they want, understanding that there may be parts that they do not feel comfortable sharing with you. Thank them for trusting you and continue to let them know that you are there for them. **Listening and being empathetic may be the most important things you can do.** In addition to disclosing recent assault or abuse, some students may have experienced victimization before coming to college and may feel safe sharing only with the passage of time and distance.

Try...

- I love you, and I'm here for you.
- Thank you for trusting me enough to share this. What do you need?
- I believe you.

Because...

Your student needs to know that you are there for them no matter what.

SUPPORT

Support the decisions your student makes in their healing after experiencing assault or abuse, even if you want them to do something different. When a person experiences sexual harassment/misconduct, their power is taken away from them. **Allowing them to make their own informed decisions is one way they can regain control over their lives.** In your conversations with your student, focus on their options, not on your opinions.

Try...

- There are people who can help you in the community. Let's talk about what your options are.
- Whatever you choose to do, I'm here for you.
- What would you like to happen next?

Because...

Offering options and supporting choices is one way to give power back to your student.

REFER

Refer your student to places on campus and in the community that can offer support. There are many reporting and confidential support options available to your student. Even if they don't access these options immediately, continue to check in, but don't force the issue. It is common for survivors to experience trauma symptoms for months and years after experiencing assault or abuse. Remind your student that they can seek help at any time, even if the harm occurred a long time ago.

Try...

- How are you feeling? Do you want to go to the hospital?
- There are people on and off campus who can help you through this.
- If you want to report, there are several options.

Because...

There are many people on campus and in the community who can help your student navigate their healing process.

CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

CONFIDENTIAL OFFICES

Services provided by these resources will not result in a report to campus or law enforcement for students aged 18 and older, except as required by law. Generally speaking, they need a person's permission to tell someone about their experience or speak on their behalf.

Victim Advocates are a free, confidential resource that can provide support, information, and options to people impacted by sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, or sexual harassment. Victim advocates can assist if the violence occurs on or off campus or if a person lives on or off campus. They provide support services to students, families, and friends.

Rape Victim Advocacy Program (RVAP)

Provides free, confidential, trauma-informed advocacy, counseling, and support to all affected by sexual violence.

24/7: 319-335-6000 or 800-228-1625 | rvap.uiowa.edu

Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP)

Provides comprehensive support and advocacy services to victim/survivors, focusing on immediate and long-term safety, empowerment, dignity, and hope to victim/survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and human trafficking.

24/7: 800-373-1043 | dvpiowa.org

Monsoon Asians & Pacific Islanders in Solidarity

(Formerly Monsoon United Asian Women of Iowa) Serves victims/survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities in Iowa. This agency has multicultural and multi-lingual services available.

24/7: 866-881-4641 | monsooniowa.org

Nisaa African Family Services

Functions as a resource advocate and support for the African communities and refugee communities in Iowa affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. This agency has multicultural and multi-lingual services available.

24/7: 844-269-6203 | nisaa-afs.org

For additional victim service organizations across Iowa, call the Iowa Victim Service Call Center at 800-770-1650 or visit

→ survivorshelpline.org

UNIVERSITY CONFIDENTIAL OFFICES

University Counseling Service (UCS)

Offers a variety of services to currently enrolled University of Iowa students.

To make an appointment, call 319-335-7294 | counseling.uiowa.edu

Ombudsperson

Provides informal conflict resolution, mediation services and advocacy for fair treatment and fair process for any member of the university community, including students, faculty, and staff, with a problem or concern.

To make an appointment, call 319-335-3608 | ombudsperson.org.uiowa.edu

Faculty and Staff Services (EAP)

Provides integrated services to faculty, staff, and their family members to promote emotional well-being and to increase engagement and productivity among members of the university community.

To make an appointment, call 319-335-2085 | hr.uiowa.edu/employee-well-being/employee-assistance-program

Women's Resource & Action Center (WRAC)

Hosts support groups and offers advocacy and counseling to people of all genders.

To make an appointment, call 319-335-1486 | wrac.uiowa.edu

CONFIDENTIAL MEDICAL OPTIONS

In the state of Iowa, per code 709.22, survivors of sexual assault have the right to a sexual assault examination (ex: forensic evidence exam, rape kit) performed at state expense and the right to a victim advocate to be present during the exam.

Sexual assault examinations may be done up to 120 hours after a sexual assault and may include a wellness check, the preservation of physical evidence, and STI and pregnancy prevention (if applicable). Examinations are generally performed by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) who has received specialized training.

The following emergency departments in Iowa City are options for students:

University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics Emergency Treatment Center

200 Hawkins Drive, Iowa City, IA | 319-356-2233

UI Health Care Medical Center Downtown

425 E. Bloomington Street, Iowa City, IA | 319-339-3600

For additional health concerns, resources in Iowa City may include: UI Student Health, Emma Goldman Clinic, Planned Parenthood, and the Free Medical Clinic.

MAKE A UI REPORT OR CONSULT ABOUT UI POLICIES/PROCEDURES

NON-CONFIDENTIAL OFFICES

These are **not** confidential resources. Non-Confidential offices balance a reporting party's request for no action with the responsibility to protect the larger community. Not every "report" will result in an investigation; however, it is possible that the university may move forward with an investigation even if the reporting party does not want an investigation to take place.

Office of Civil Rights Compliance (OCRC-Title IX)

Coordinates the university's response to all reports of sexual harassment/misconduct, serving as a central place to report an incident and learn about university complaint options, resources, and supportive measures. Investigates all formal complaints of sexual harassment/misconduct involving members of or visitors to the university community.

319-335-6200 | diversity.uiowa.edu/resources/tixge-resources

Dean of Students – Office of Student Accountability (OSA)

Investigates and resolves all non-sexual harassment/misconduct reports of alleged violations of university policies by students.

319-335-1527 | dos.uiowa.edu/accountability

Dean of Students - Student Care and Assistance (SCA)

Provides assistance to students experiencing crisis and emergency situations. SCA works with campus partners to assist students with overcoming challenges to be successful and continue towards graduation.

319-335-1162 | dos.uiowa.edu/assistance

Threat Assessment Team (TAT)

Provides an integrated and coordinated process for identifying and responding to students, faculty, staff and other individuals who may be at risk of harming themselves or others.

319-384-2955 | safety.uiowa.edu/threat-assessment-team

MAKE A CRIMINAL REPORT OR ASK FOR POLICE ASSISTANCE

Making a police report is different from making a university report. Law enforcement will address safety concerns and/or investigate to see if any state laws were violated. University officials will investigate to see if any university policies were violated. State law states that victims have the right to have a victim advocate with them when making a report to law enforcement.

Non-Emergency: On Campus

University of Iowa Police – 319-335-5022

Non-Emergency: Off Campus

Iowa City Police – 319-356-6800

Coralville Police – 319-248-1800

Johnson County Sheriff – 319-356-6020

North Liberty Police – 319-626-5724

University Heights Police – 319-356-6800

For additional reporting options, contact a victim advocate. See [page 12](#) for a complete list.

IOWA

Office of Civil Rights Compliance-Title IX

455 Van Allen Hall
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
319.335.6200
ocrc-titleix@uiowa.edu

This document provides a summary of services available to students and university policies. A complete and detailed listing of each of these services and policies can be found on the Division of Access, Opportunity and Diversity website: diversity.uiowa.edu/resources/sexual-harassment-misconduct-resources

