

Report on the Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

November 2017

Brigham Young University is a faith-based academic institution committed to “the balanced development of the total person”—intellectually, physically, socially, spiritually, and emotionally—in an environment “sustained by those moral virtues which characterize the life and teachings of the Son of God” (BYU Mission Statement). Sexual assault and dating/domestic violence violate fundamental principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which principles are integral to BYU’s educational environment. Furthermore, the university’s primary concern is the safety and well-being of its students and the overall well-being of the campus community. Therefore, BYU’s commitment to the elimination of sexual assault and dating/domestic violence on campus is mandated by the precepts of our faith, is consistent with our institutional purpose, and is essential to protecting our students.

In the spring of 2016, the university administration formed the Advisory Council on Campus Response to Sexual Assault to study the handling of sexual assault reporting and investigation at BYU and to recommend improvements. After reviewing the available information, the Advisory Council recognized the need to survey students to gather information about the campus climate with regard to sexual assault. Such surveys have been conducted by many universities and are recommended by advocacy groups, experts, and government agencies.

Accordingly, a BYU subcommittee prepared a survey based on the survey developed by the Campus Climate Survey Validation Study (CCSVS) funded by the Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Statistics (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). The BYU survey was designed to assess the following key topics:

- ♦ incidents of sexual misconduct;
- ♦ student attitudes toward the Title IX Office;
- ♦ student perceptions of the campus climate;
- ♦ student participation in training regarding sexual assault, student awareness of resources for responding to sexual assault, and willingness of students to act to prevent or resolve incidents of sexual assault; and
- ♦ suggestions for making BYU safer.

The online survey was conducted in spring 2017. Email invitations were sent to 29,471 BYU students; 13,784 (48%) started the survey and 12,602 completed the survey, for a response rate of 43%.¹ Demographic data revealed the survey participants to be very similar to the broader BYU population in terms of gender, ethnicity, year in school, and other measures. Key demographics include the following:

- ◆ Average age: 22.5 years old
- ◆ Gender: 52% male, 48% female, and 0.2% transgender or other²
- ◆ Relationship status: 59% single, 8% single and engaged, 32% married, 0.3% divorced, and 0.1% separated/widowed/other
- ◆ Ethnicity: 85% White, 6% Hispanic/Latino, 4% two or more races, 3% Asian, 1% race and ethnicity undisclosed, 0.6% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 0.4% Black or African American, and 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native

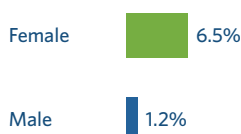
Key Findings

This report provides an overview of key findings of BYU's campus climate survey.

Sexual Misconduct

1. Of the 12,739 students who answered the survey question about experiences of unwanted sexual contact, 475 (3.7%) had experienced some form of such contact while enrolled at and attending BYU during the 12 months prior to the survey. More women (397; 6.5%) than men (78; 1.2%) experienced unwanted sexual contact (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percent of **female** and **male** survey participants who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past 12 months while enrolled at and attending BYU



2. Students who reported unwanted sexual contact were asked to provide additional information about the incident. Each student could provide information for up to three incidents; 475 students provided information about 730 incidents of unwanted sexual contact that occurred during the 12 months prior to the survey while they were enrolled at and attending BYU.
3. The most frequent type of unwanted sexual contact reported in the survey involved forced touching of a sexual nature (forced kissing, fondling, touching of private parts, grabbing, or rubbing up against you in a sexual way even if it is over your clothes). (See Figure 2.)³

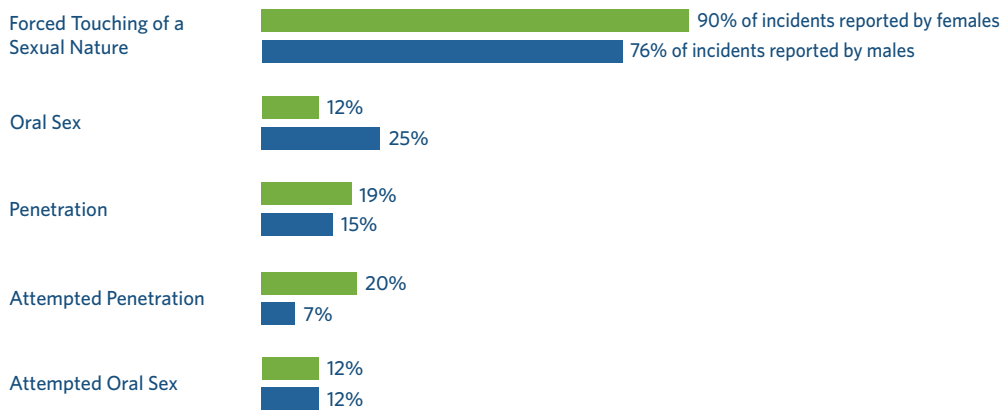
1. Response bias is expected in any voluntary-participation survey. While all BYU students were invited to take this survey and more than 40% responded, it is not possible to know how student decisions to participate or not to participate may have influenced the results. For example, it is difficult to know whether students who have experienced unwanted sexual contact were more or less likely to complete the survey. This does not make the findings from the survey less accurate; it simply means that the rates based on those who responded to the survey may or may not be accurately extrapolated to the BYU population, and the results must be compared to results from other surveys with caution.

2. Students selecting "other" could self-identify with a text description of their gender identity.

3. The exact wording used in the survey for the various forms of unwanted sexual contact is listed here: Forced touching of a sexual nature (forced kissing, touching of private parts, grabbing, fondling, rubbing up against you in a sexual way, even if it is over your clothes). Oral sex (someone's mouth or tongue making contact with your genitals or your mouth or tongue making contact with someone else's genitals). Sexual penetration with a penis, finger, or an object (someone putting their finger or an object like a bottle or a candle in your vagina or anus). Even though it did not happen, someone TRIED to have oral sex with me (someone's mouth or tongue making contact with your genitals or your mouth or tongue making contact with someone else's genitals). Even though it did not happen, someone TRIED to sexually penetrate me with a penis, finger, or an object (someone putting their finger or an object like a bottle or a candle in your vagina or anus).

NOTE: The percentages in Figures 2 through 5 refer to the 730 incidents of unwanted sexual contact reported in the survey and do not apply to all survey participants or to the BYU population as a whole.

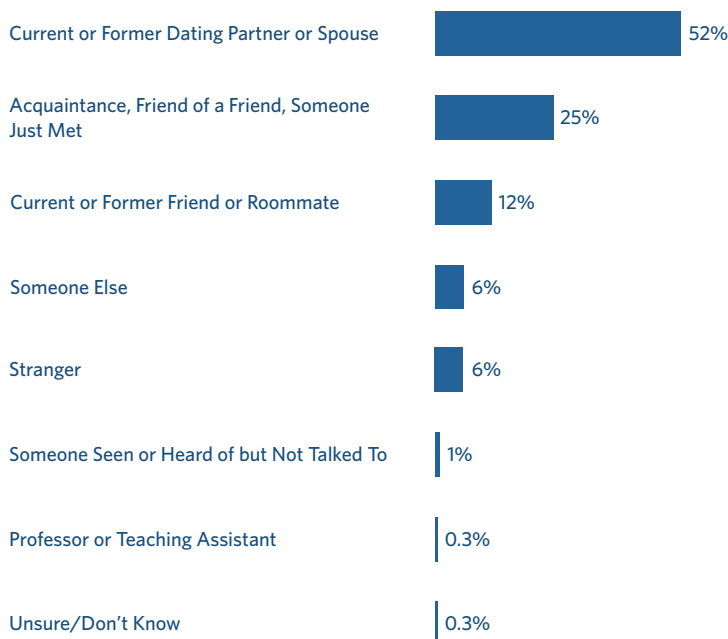
Figure 2. Percent of incidents in which **female** and **male** victims experienced the following types of unwanted sexual contact*



*730 incidents were reported by 475 (3.7%) survey participants; incidents occurred in the past 12 months while the survey participant was enrolled at and attending BYU; more than one type of contact could be selected for each incident

4. Incidents of unwanted sexual contact were most frequently perpetrated by someone the victim knows (see Figure 3; current or former dating partner [52% of incidents], acquaintance [25%], current or former friend [12%]), by men (89%), and by someone affiliated with BYU (51%).

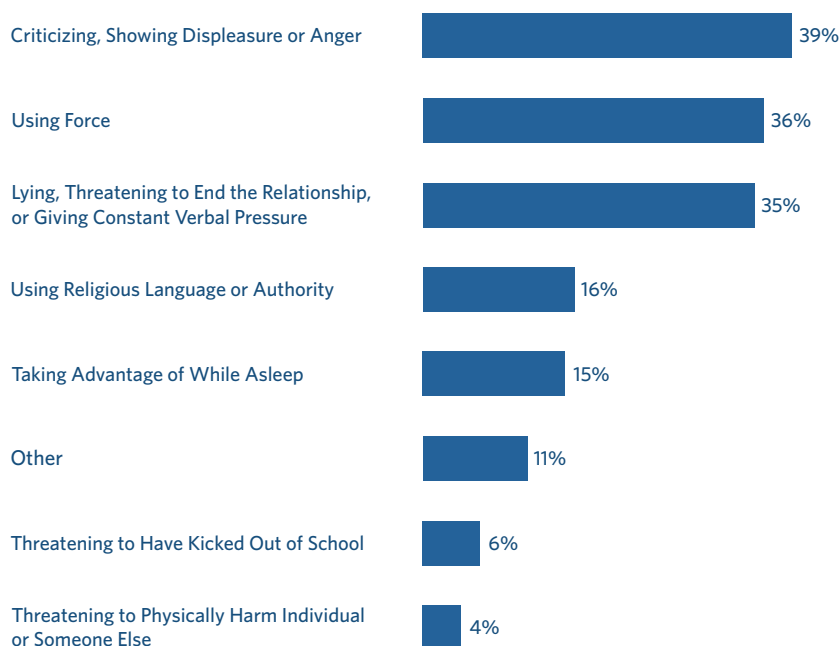
Figure 3. Percent of incidents of unwanted sexual contact in which the following types of perpetrators were reported*



*730 incidents were reported by 475 (3.7%) survey participants; incidents occurred in the past 12 months while the survey participant was enrolled at and attending BYU

5. The methods of coercion used by perpetrators most frequently were showing criticism, displeasure, or anger (39% of incidents); using force (36%); and continual verbal pressure, lying, or threatening to end the relationship (35%).⁴ (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4. Percent of incidents of unwanted sexual contact in which the following types of coercion were used*



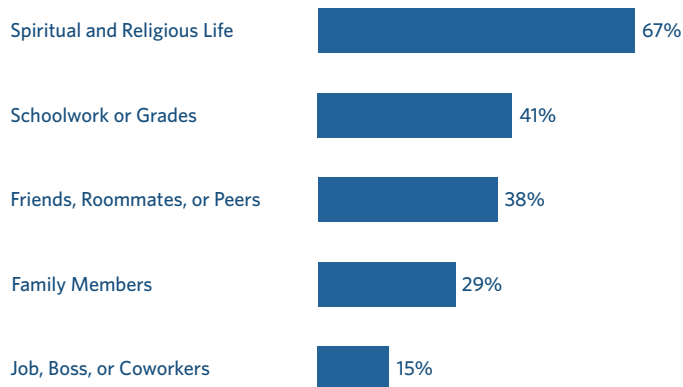
*730 incidents were reported by 475 (3.7%) survey participants; incidents occurred in the past 12 months while the survey participant was enrolled at and attending BYU; more than one type of coercion could be selected for each incident

6. Alcohol and drug use was rarely evident in incidents of unwanted sexual contact reported in the survey. Victims reported that the perpetrators had been using drugs or alcohol prior to 6% of the incidents and that they (the victims) had been using drugs or alcohol prior to 2% of the incidents.
7. Most incidents occurred at an off-campus location (in BYU-approved housing [32% of incidents]; in Provo [29%]; or in a different city [18%]). The survey results reveal that the number of incidents of unwanted sexual contact occurring on campus (40; 6% of incidents) or in on-campus housing (102; 14%) is higher than the numbers reported in the annual Jeanne Clery Act report.⁵ The BYU Clery Act report may underestimate rates of certain sex offenses (e.g., rape, fondling) on or adjacent to campus, likely due to underreporting.
8. Unwanted sexual contact negatively impacted many students spiritually (67% of incidents), academically (41%), and interpersonally (38%). (See Figure 5.)

4. The complete wording used in the survey for the perpetrator's methods is listed here: Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me. Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force. Using religious language or authority to imply a spiritual obligation/duty, permission, sanction, punishment, justification, or threat. Threatening to have me kicked out of school by talking to the Honor Code Office or the person who signs my ecclesiastical endorsement. Taking advantage of me when I was asleep, too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening. Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me. Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.

5. The Clery Act is a federal statute requiring universities to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their campuses. BYU's 2017 report is available online at police.byu.edu/sites/police.byu.edu/files/provo-cr.pdf

Figure 5. Percent of incidents of unwanted sexual contact after which the individuals reporting the incidents experienced problems in the following areas*

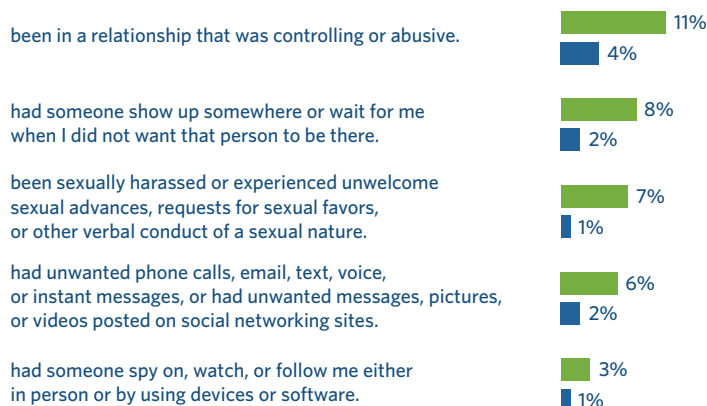


*730 incidents were reported by 475 (3.7%) survey participants; incidents occurred in the past 12 months while the survey participant was enrolled at and attending BYU; more than one problem area could be selected for each incident

9. Many survey participants have experienced or witnessed sexist remarks or jokes about women (63%), inappropriate comments about their or someone else’s body or appearance (57%), or sexist remarks or jokes about men (48%).
10. More than one in five survey participants have experienced or witnessed crude or gross sexual talk (23%), had someone repeatedly ask them on dates after they said no (17%), or had someone tell them about their sexual experiences when they did not want to hear them (17%).
11. Eleven percent of survey participants have received offensive sexual email messages, text messages, pictures, or videos that they did not want to see, and about 6% reported that someone tried to bribe them to engage in a romantic or sexual relationship.
12. Between 3% and 10% of survey participants experienced various stalking-related behaviors (see Figure 6).

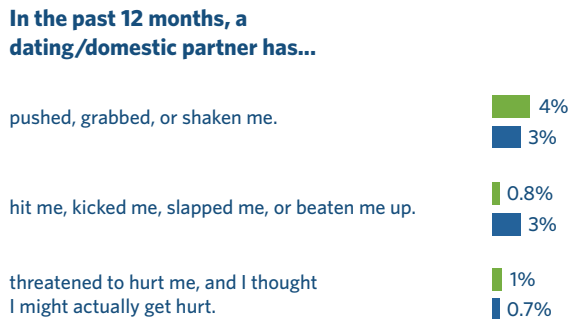
Figure 6. Percent of **female** and **male** survey participants who have experienced the following while at BYU

While at BYU I have...



- Less than 5% of survey participants reported being victims of dating or domestic violence (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Percent of **female** and **male** survey participants who report having been victims of specific types of dating/domestic violence in the last 12 months

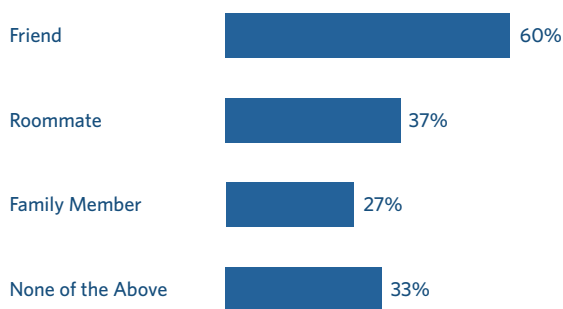


- An additional 56 students experienced unwanted sexual contact during the previous 12 months while not enrolled at and attending BYU, and many students experience unwanted sexual contact prior to enrolling at BYU. These students may want or need access to support services upon their arrival at or return to BYU.

Reporting

- Individuals who experienced unwanted sexual contact and chose to disclose it were most likely to tell friends, roommates, or family (in that order) about their experience (see Figure 8).

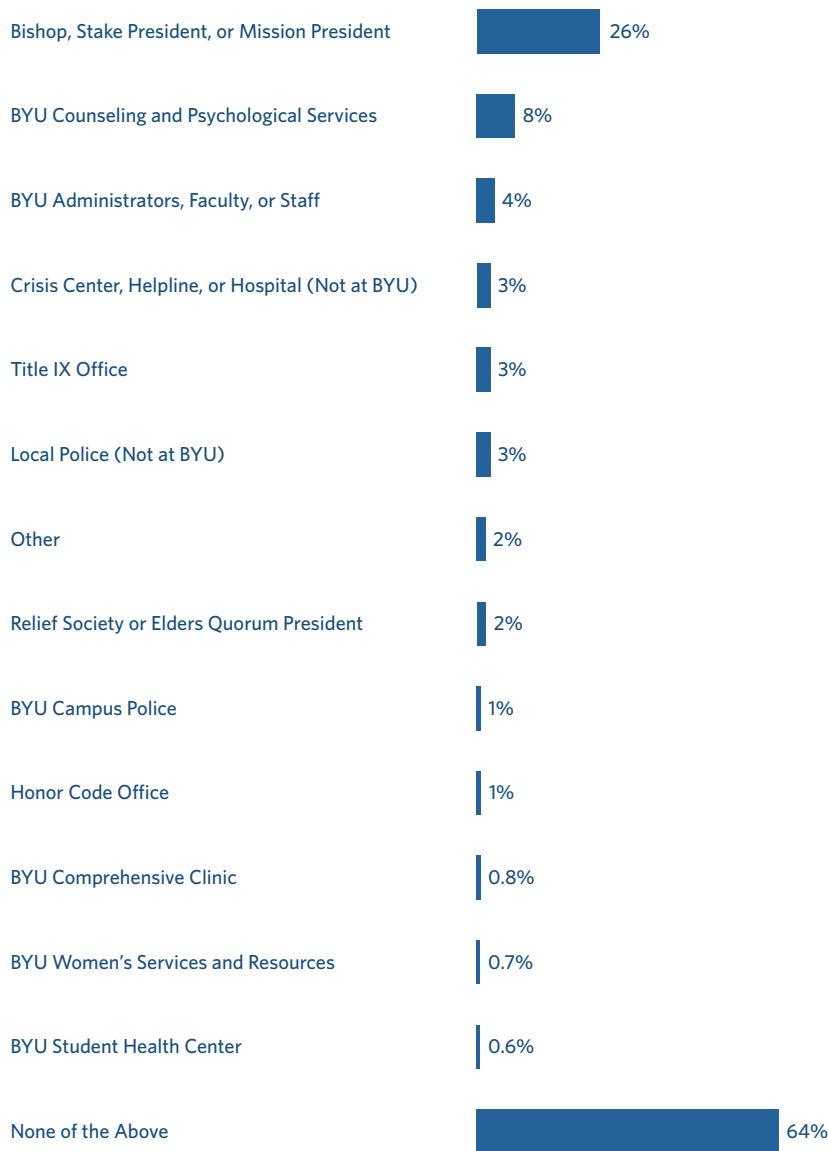
Figure 8. Percent of incidents of unwanted sexual contact that were reported to the following informal sources of assistance*



*730 incidents were reported by 475 (3.7%) survey participants; incidents occurred in the past 12 months while the survey participant was enrolled at and attending BYU; more than one source of assistance could be selected for each incident

- The survey’s findings regarding rates of reporting unwanted sexual contact match findings in the research literature. Most students who experience sexual assault do not report the assault to any formal source (Carretta, Burgess, & DeMarco, 2015; Fisher, Daigle, Cullen, & Turner, 2003; Orchowski, Meyer, & Gidycz, 2009; Sabina & Ho, 2014; Spencer, Mallory, Toews, Stith, & Wood, 2017; Wilson & Miller, 2016). The majority of incidents of unwanted sexual contact in this study (64%) were reported to no formal organization (see Figure 9), and 24% of the incidents of unwanted sexual contact were reported to none of the formal or informal sources of support listed in the survey.

Figure 9. Percent of incidents of unwanted sexual contact that were reported to the following formal sources of assistance*



*730 incidents were reported by 475 (3.7%) survey participants; incidents occurred in the past 12 months while the survey participant was enrolled at and attending BYU; more than one source of assistance could be selected for each incident

3. While most incidents of unwanted sexual contact were not reported to any formal source of support, individuals who experienced unwanted sexual contact reported most frequently to ecclesiastical leaders (26% of incidents). (See Figure 9.)
4. Very few incidents of unwanted sexual contact (3%) were reported to the Title IX Office (see Figure 9).

5. Survey participants were asked why they did not report to each of the formal sources of support listed in the survey. While there was some variance between sources, the reasons for not reporting (averaged across all sources) were as follows: students did not think the incident was serious enough (57% of incidents), they did not want or need help or they did not want the organization to take any action (43%), they were worried about Honor Code discipline or their ecclesiastical endorsement being questioned (21%), they were worried that they would be blamed for what happened (17%), they had concerns about confidentiality (14%), other reasons (7%), or they were worried about possible retaliation (4%).

Title IX Investigations

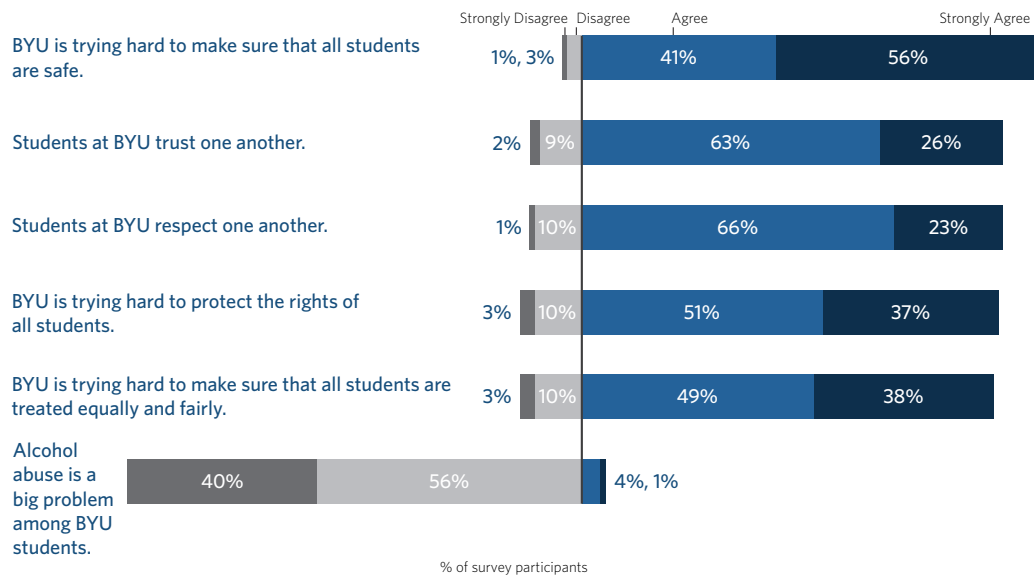
1. For students who participated in a Title IX investigation (130; 1% of survey participants), the investigations most frequently concerned sexual assault (52% of reported incidents), sexual harassment (46%), stalking (30%), and partner violence/abuse (23%).⁶
2. About three-fourths of the complainants (those who report they have been subjected to sexual misconduct) and witnesses in an investigation reported that the Title IX Office respected their privacy (78% of complainants, 72% of witnesses/other), was sensitive to their emotions (74% of complainants, 63% of witnesses/other), took the case seriously (78% of complainants, 75% of witnesses/other), and was fair, impartial, and unbiased (71% of complainants, 61% of witnesses/other).
3. Respondents (those accused of sexual misconduct) were more critical of the Title IX Office than complainants or witnesses. Respondents reported that the Title IX Office respected their privacy (69%), was sensitive to their emotions (61%), and took the case seriously (54%). Only 38% of respondents reported that the Title IX Office was fair and impartial.
4. Many participants in investigations reported lacking information about the investigation process (45% of complainants, 61% of respondents, and 42% of witnesses/other).
5. Some participants in Title IX investigations reported misgivings about the investigation process. For example, of complainants, 26% were dissatisfied with the outcome of the case, 23% disagreed with the statement that the investigator valued what they had to say, and 22% disagreed with the statement that the investigator treated the case with the gravity and severity that they felt was appropriate.

Campus Climate

1. Overall, survey participants feel good about the general campus climate. They reported feeling safe, respected, and trusted among fellow students; feeling valued at BYU; and feeling a part of the BYU community. They believe BYU is trying hard to make sure students are safe, to protect students' rights, and to treat them equally and fairly. They do not see alcohol abuse as a problem at BYU (see Figure 10).

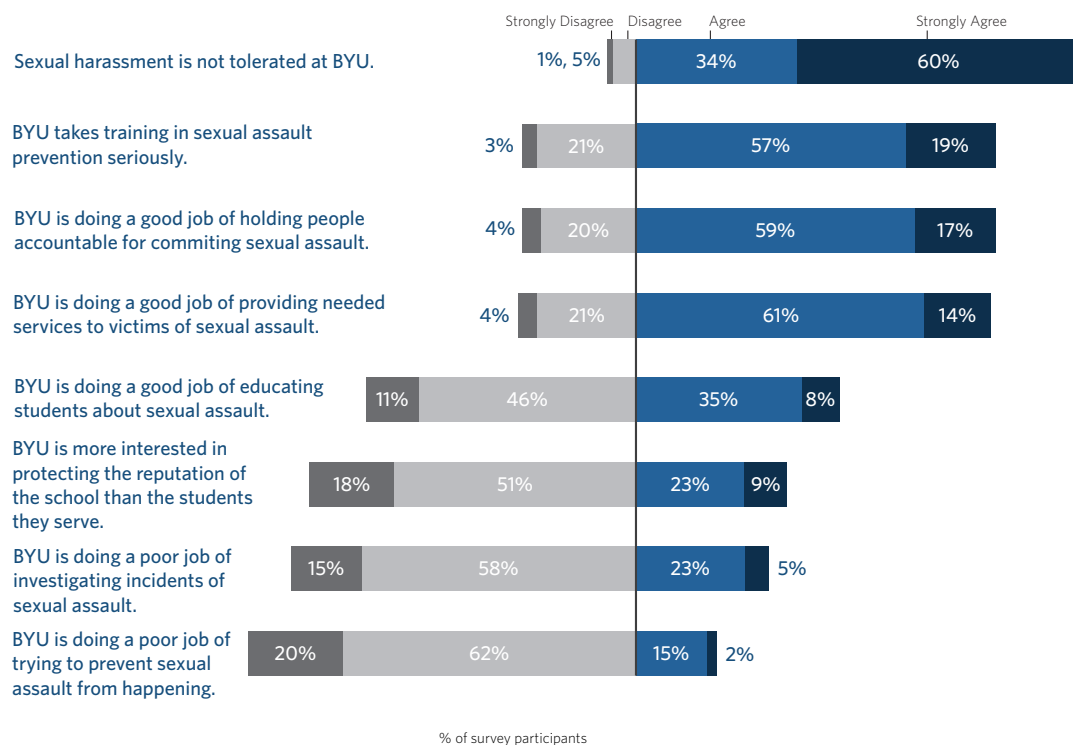
6. Survey questions related to survey participants' perceptions of the Title IX Office were not limited to experiences in the past 12 months. Survey participants could report on any experience in the past.

Figure 10. Student perceptions of the BYU climate



2. When responding to questions with a specific focus on sexual assault prevention, the majority of survey participants were still positive about the campus climate, but the rates of agreement dropped by 10% to 15% (see Figure 11 as compared to Figure 10). Nearly one in four survey participants expressed concern about a variety of issues, such as the lack of sexual assault-related training, services for victims, sexual assault investigation, sexual assault prevention, or accountability for perpetrators of sexual assault. Some of those concerns were also expressed in the responses to the open-ended question, which asked for suggestions to make BYU’s campus safer.

Figure 11. Student perceptions of sexual assault and harassment prevention efforts on campus



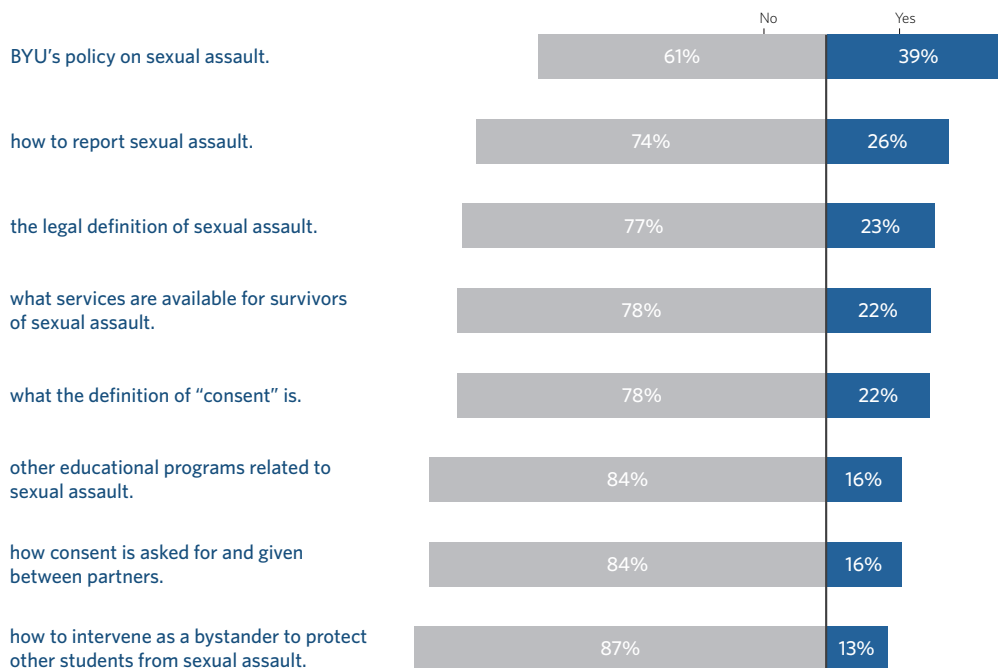
3. Most survey participants thought that if they were sexually assaulted, their case would be taken seriously (85%), they would be treated with dignity and respect (85%), and their privacy would be protected (86%).
4. Almost all survey participants (93%) thought that if they were sexually assaulted, their compliance with the Honor Code would be investigated, and nearly half (45%) thought that in order to continue in school after being sexually assaulted, their ecclesiastical endorsement would be questioned.

Training

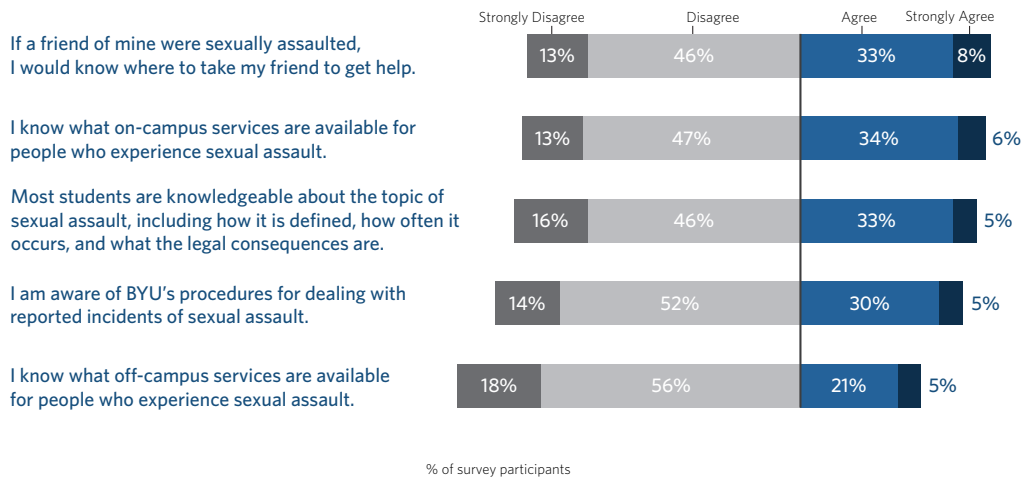
1. Fifty-seven percent of survey participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that BYU is doing a good job of educating students about sexual assault. Survey participants reported receiving very little training at BYU regarding any aspect of sexual assault or sexual assault prevention. Only 39% reported receiving some training on BYU’s sexual misconduct policy, and fewer reported receiving training regarding the reporting process, the legal definition of assault, services for individuals who are assaulted, the definition of and methods for obtaining and giving consent, or bystander intervention strategies (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Percent of survey participants who report receiving education or training on preventing sexual assault

I have received education or training on...



2. Of the survey participants, 25% did not know the function of the Title IX Office, 41% indicated that they know where to take a friend for help, and 35% were familiar with BYU’s procedures for responding to reported incidents of sexual assault. Similarly, a majority of survey participants were unaware of or unfamiliar with on-campus (60%) and off-campus (74%) resources for someone who is assaulted (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. Student awareness of services for victims of sexual assault

- The survey included one open-ended question asking students “Do you have any suggestions on how we could make BYU a safer place for everyone?” Almost 5,600 survey participants (5,598; 44%) provided a wide range of responses. The most frequent theme was the need for additional education and training about sexual assaults. Nine additional core themes were identified by a team of trained raters who read every comment.

Recommendations

The findings presented in this report highlight areas where intervention and prevention efforts may improve the likelihood that all BYU students can benefit from full and equal access to the educational process. Below are a few recommendations.

- 1. Encourage the Reporting of Sexual Misconduct.** Students need to be informed about recent changes in BYU reporting structures and policies (including the university’s new amnesty statement and the separation of the Title IX Office from the Honor Code Office) to reduce fear-based barriers to reporting. Students may also have fewer concerns about reporting sexual misconduct if they were aware of the services of the victim advocate along with the services, referrals, and accommodations that the Title IX Office can provide.
- 2. Increase Campus Awareness of the Available Resources for Victims.** To help those who experience unwanted sexual contact gain access to the support they need, the campus community needs greater awareness of the available confidential resources, including the new victim advocate, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Women’s Services and Resources, and off-campus agencies. In addition, students and faculty alike would benefit from increased awareness regarding the ways that the Title IX Office can support and assist victims.
- 3. Form a Training Committee for Sexual Misconduct Issues.** The university may benefit from a committee composed of campus professionals from academic departments and student life services, devoted exclusively to training students in sexual misconduct prevention, reporting, and support.

- 4. Provide Training about Relevant Policies and Procedures.** Students need explicit training in and easy access to information about campus policies, procedures, and the offices that provide assistance regarding sexual assault.
- 5. Provide Training about Healthy Attitudes and Beliefs Regarding Gender and Sexuality.** The BYU community could benefit from educational campaigns and targeted interventions to promote safety and reduce gender-based violence and harassment. Such programming could include topics such as sexual harassment, gender and power dynamics, victim blaming, rape myths, consent, healthy relationships, and the divine nature of sexuality as understood in Latter-day Saint doctrine.
- 6. Provide Training on Healthy Dating and Marital Relationships.** Compared to the Campus Climate Survey Validation Study (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016), incidents of unwanted sexual contact occurring while the victim was enrolled at or attending BYU are more frequently perpetrated by a current or former dating partner or spouse. This suggests the need for interventions focused specifically on consent as a process, respect for agency within healthy dating and marital partnerships, warning signs for abuse and controlling behaviors, and setting and respecting boundaries once relationships end.
- 7. Provide Training about Recognizing, Preventing, and Responding to Sexual Misconduct.** Training about various aspects of sexual misconduct could help to improve the campus climate and to prevent sexual assault.
- 8. Provide Training for Students about Supporting Victims.** Since students who experience unwanted sexual contact are most likely to tell a friend or roommate, training for students regarding what to do if they learn of an incident is essential.
- 9. Provide Training for Employees about Supporting Victims.** For those incidents of unwanted sexual contact in which the survey participants told a BYU administrator, faculty, or staff member, 36% reported that the individual was not helpful. Administrators, faculty, and staff need training for how to provide assistance in these circumstances.
- 10. Share Survey Information with Ecclesiastical Authorities.** Ecclesiastical leaders were the formal source of assistance that received the most reports of incidents of unwanted sexual contact, and victims face a variety of spiritual and ecclesiastical challenges as a result of sexual assault. It may be helpful for the university to share these survey results with its sponsoring institution to inform ecclesiastical leader training.
- 11. Repeat the Campus Climate Survey.** Repeating the campus climate survey periodically will provide an opportunity to assess progress and will help further advance university efforts to eliminate sexual assault.

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