



# CENTER FOR VICTIM ADVOCACY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

## 2023-2024 Annual Report



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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we look back on a transformative year at the Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention, we are filled with immense gratitude. We are honored by the trust survivors have placed in us, the willingness of students to learn and grow with us, and the steadfast support of our community, partners, and stakeholders. Your contributions have been instrumental in our progress, and together, we have made significant strides in supporting survivors, preventing violence, and cultivating a culture of kindness and respect at the University of South Florida.

This year has been one of remarkable progress and change. I am honored to introduce myself as the new Director of the Center, stepping into a role that had been vacant for eight years. Despite our office being short-staffed for much of the year, the incredible work of the team never wavered. This report is a testament to the team's dedication, resourcefulness, and the caring service they provide 24/7/365 to our community.

Our mission is to build a safe and supportive community through innovative primary prevention programs, trauma-informed survivor empowerment, and compassionate, confidential services. This mission is at the heart of every decision we make, guiding us to serve our community with honesty, integrity, and creative problem-solving.

Over the past year, we have launched a range of initiatives focused on addressing the root causes of violence, supporting survivors, promoting consent education, and fostering healthy relationships. Our trauma-informed approach has empowered survivors to heal and thrive, while our commitment to inclusivity helps to foster a community where belonging is celebrated, and every voice is heard.

As you review this report, you will see the tangible outcomes of our work, the data that underscores our progress, and the highlights of our most significant achievements. While we take pride in what we have accomplished, we recognize that there is still much to be done – so we have included some of our future goals. Our commitment to advocating for victims and preventing violence is stronger than ever, and we are determined to make USF a place where every student feels safe, valued, and proud to be part of this community.

Sincerely,

***Joni Bernbaum, MA, NAFC***

Director

Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention





## MISSION AND VISION

### *Empowering Survivors, Preventing Violence*

#### **Mission**

The Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention (CVAVP) fosters a safe, supportive community through innovative primary prevention programs, trauma-informed survivor empowerment, and compassionate, confidential services.

#### **Vision**

A culture that is safe, supportive, and free of violence.

# VICTIM ADVOCACY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Victim Advocacy provides trauma-informed, empowerment-based services to students, staff, and faculty who have experienced crime, violence, or victimization, either recently or in the past. Services include emotional and academic support, crisis intervention, safety planning, accompaniment, and hearing advisement. In addition to core services, advocates contribute to a culture of safety and learning through education and community collaboration.

## **Served as advisors for 10 clients throughout their Title IX and Student Conduct hearings.**

This multi-week process includes providing guidance on procedural rights; preparing questions and client statements; questioning respondents, complainants, and witnesses; and navigating the appeal process when necessary.

## **Provided 24/7 crisis response, including for confidential helpline calls and in-person response to emergency campus needs.**

Advocates provided support for survivors, witnesses, and those experiencing secondary victimization. Staff also provided follow-up support and services.

## **Developed campus and community leaders.**

Supervised an MSW intern and provided training on trauma-informed disclosure response, survivor support, and advocacy resources to diverse campus partners, including Residential Education staff, Peer Anti-Violence Educators, and academic departments.

## **Advised campus and community partners on resources and provided appropriate referrals and crisis support.**

From March to June 2024, when Victim Advocacy began tracking this comprehensive collaboration, advocates logged 26 hours of consultation.

## Service Snapshot

**285** Clients Served  
During FY 23-24

**24%** Increase in Clients  
From FY 22-23

**3891\*** Overall Client  
Interactions

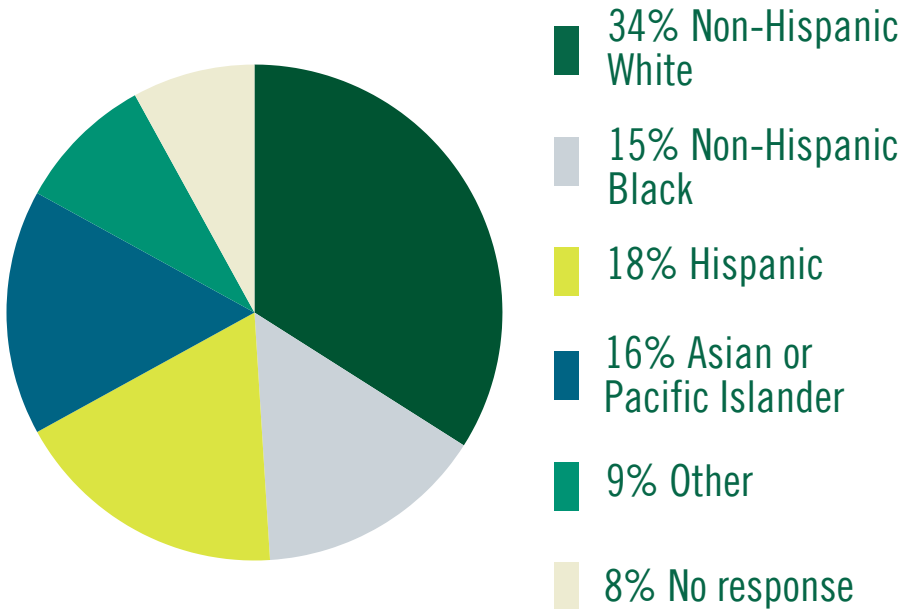
Because of a transition to a new data management platform, some advocacy data may be incomplete and not representative of the full scope of service provision. In the year ahead, Victim Advocacy will work with system providers to better capture demographics and services. For all asterisked advocacy data, please note:

*\*Information pulled exclusively from the new data system and does not reflect all clients served.*

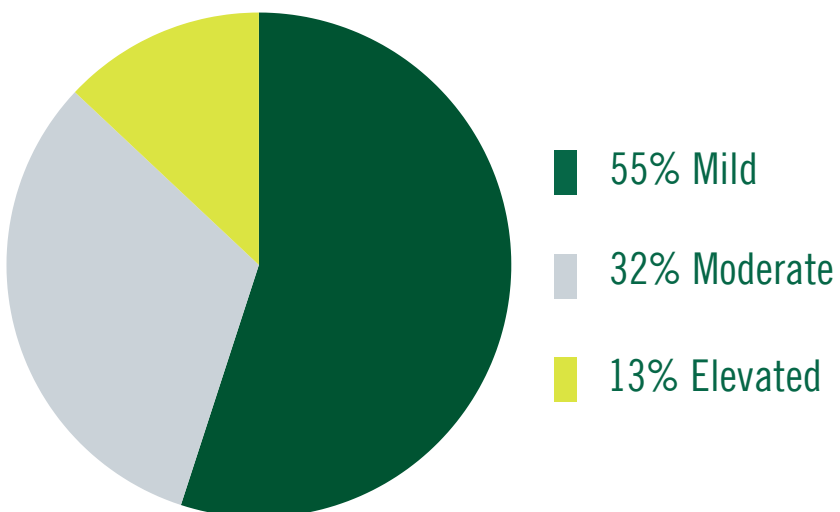


# CLIENT INSIGHTS

## Race/Ethnicity\*



## Risk Level\*

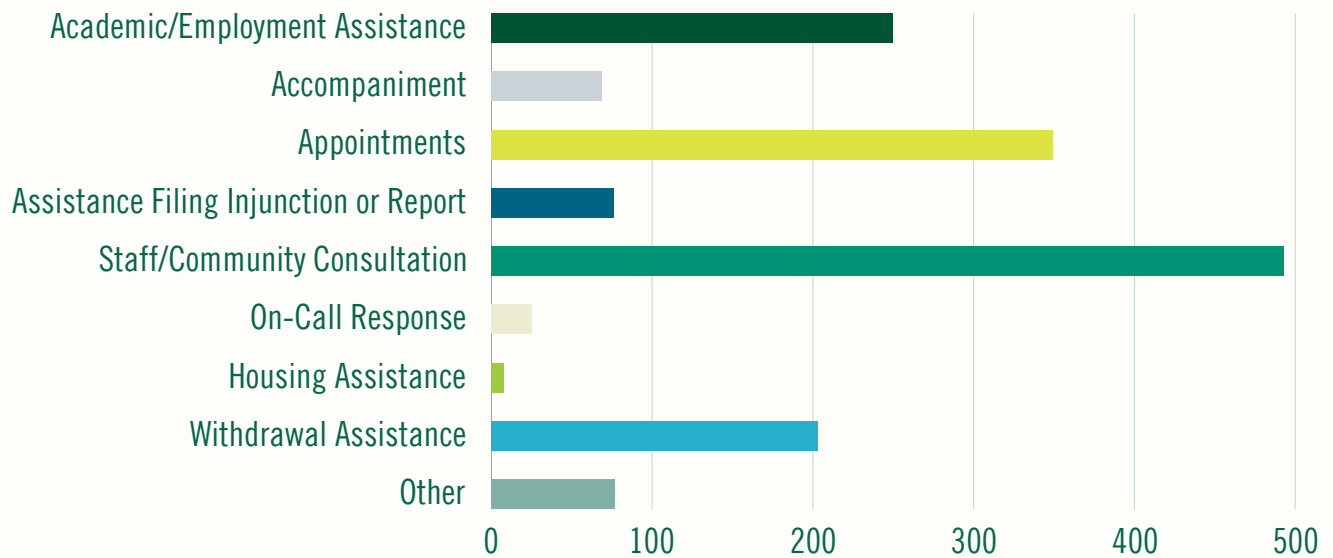


A client's risk of experiencing violence, based on behaviors exhibited by the identified person who caused harm.

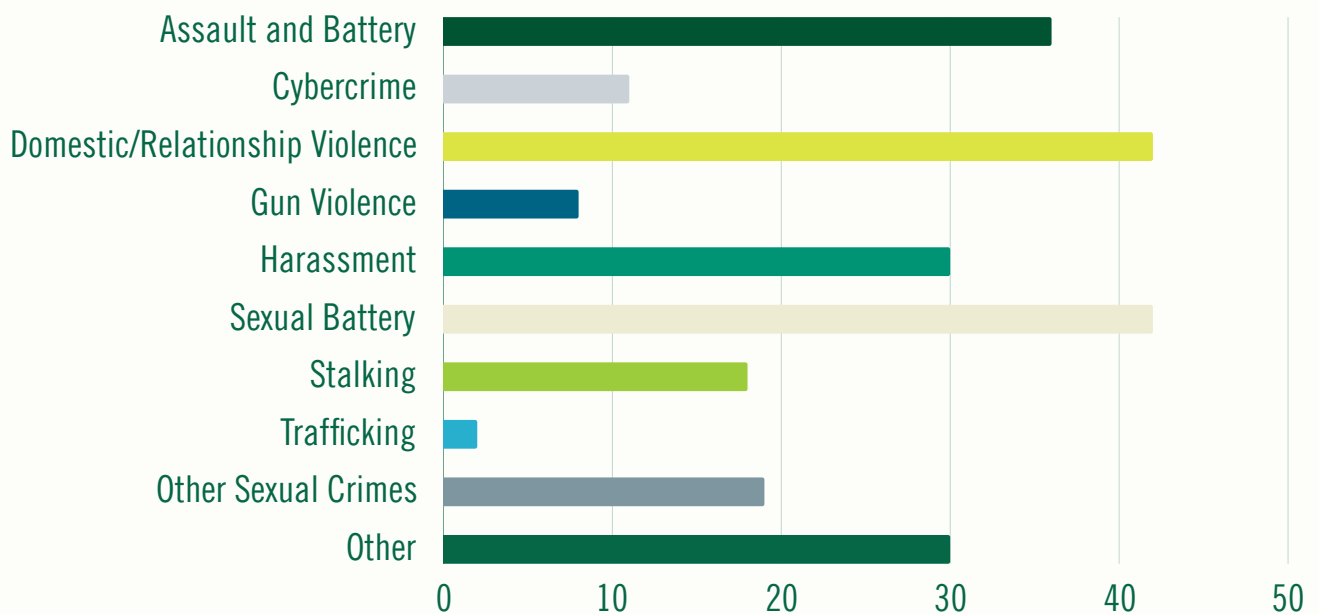


# SERVICE INSIGHTS

## Services Provided



## Types of Victimization Served\*



Clients working with Victim Advocacy are often seeking support for multiple victimizations at a time. Therefore, these numbers are higher than the total number of clients served.

# VIOLENCE PREVENTION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence Prevention develops, promotes, facilitates, and evaluates prevention education initiatives that seek to address root causes of violence. In our internship and volunteer peer education programs, staff empower student leaders to create positive change in their campus community. Through outreach, workshops, messaging campaigns, and collaborative partnerships, the Violence Prevention team engages USF community members on topics that include sexual consent, healthy relationships, dynamics of power-based violence, bystander intervention, and survivor support.

**Trained student leaders and enhanced key campus partnerships.** Violence Prevention partnered with Athletics to provide Bystander Intervention Training for 209 male athletes representing seven teams. As part of a phased Violence Prevention plan in partnership with Title IX and Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL), 68 chapter executive board members representing 26 FSL chapters attended open violence prevention workshops. CVAVP staff trained all student Residential Education staff in summer on consent, healthy relationships, and disclosure response, and provided follow-up bystander intervention training in the spring semester. To promote a survivor-supportive campus, Violence Prevention staff continued a multi-year collaboration with Tampa campus' Student Government during awareness months.

**Supported career readiness through dynamic internship opportunities.** In Fall 2023, staff supervised two undergraduate interns, who developed educational resources, supported awareness month strategic planning, and contributed to a review of AAU violence prevention program offerings.

**Launched new prevention initiatives.** Despite understaffing, Violence Prevention piloted three new events: Act for October; Bulls, BFFs & Boundaries; and Empower April.

**Disseminated Vector undergraduate and graduate Sexual Assault Prevention modules.** On average, undergraduates who completed the course improved assessment scores measuring prevention knowledge by 22%, from 68% on pre-test to 90% on post-test.

## OUTREACH SUMMARY

**4357** Total Outreach Interactions

**9%** Increase From Previous Fiscal Year (fy)

**1020** Total Workshop/Presentation Participants

**3337** Total Tabling/Event Interactions

Note: Outreach numbers were impacted by limited staffing (1 full-time Violence Prevention staff) for 7 of 12 months in fiscal year





# RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH



Throughout October, CVAVP collaborates with community partners to spread awareness about relationship violence in all its forms, educate the campus community on red flags for violence, teach positive relationship skills, and inspire community action to create change.

## Act for October

Act for October, a Relationship Violence Awareness Month (RVAM) launch event, is a new CVAVP initiative to promote positive norms and support students in developing foundational skills for healthy relationships.

At this passport-style event, participants engaged in activities facilitated by campus partners on the topics that included: navigating boundaries, recognizing red and green flags, accepting rejection, taking accountability, affirming individuality, and communicating respectfully. Participants could also connect with campus and community-based support resources and add their name to a pledge to take action in the month of October.



## RVAM Partners 2023

Center for Student Well-Being, Counseling Center, Dining, Harrell Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Omega Phi Beta, Student Conduct and Ethical Development, The Spring of Tampa Bay, Student Government, Student Health and Wellness Center, Title IX

## Clothesline Project

Every year, CVAVP hosts The Clothesline Project @ USF as part of a national initiative to raise awareness about relationship violence. Participants can add shirts to a clothesline with messages about their own experiences of violence or affirming messages for survivors.

This year, CVAVP expanded the event to include additional partners, food incentives, and self-care activities. Campus and community partners facilitated self-care activities and provided participants with information about their resources.





# SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH



During the month of April, CVAVP enlists community support for large-scale initiatives designed to enhance campus-wide survivor support and engage students, faculty, and staff in efforts to promote consent and challenge harmful myths about sexual violence.



## Empower April

Empower April, a new Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) launch initiative, brings together campus and community partners to teach participants ways they can create positive change to end sexual violence. Activity topics included bystander intervention, survivor support, boundary navigation, and self-care.

## Denim Day @ USF

As part of an international initiative to dispel victim-blaming myths, participants learned from campus and community partners about ways to build a more survivor-supportive community. Participants contributed denim squares with affirming messages for survivors, which were used to create a denim quilt of support in real time. Campus partners contributed group staff photos in denim for a corresponding social media campaign.

- 127% increase in attendance from the previous year
- 91% of attendees surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the event increased their knowledge of campus resources and their services for addressing sexual violence

## SAAM Partners 2024

Center for Student Well-Being, Counseling Center, The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, Office of Veteran Success, Residential Education, Student Accessibility Services, Student Conduct and Ethical Development, Student Government, Student Health and Wellness Center, Title IX



## Take Back the Night

Our annual survivor solidarity event featured students reading creative writing they prepared on the topics of trauma, resilience, and healing; an A cappella performance; a silent march; and an open survivor speak out.



# PEER ANTI-VIOLENCE EDUCATORS

Peer Anti-Violence Educators (PAVE) are volunteers who serve as student representatives of CVAVP. PAVE students are at the heart of violence prevention on the Tampa campus: they play a critical role in outreach, workshop facilitation, peer support, initiative design, and event planning and promotion. The PAVE program, which uses a strength-based model and Universal Design for Learning principles, aims to engage students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines and empower the next generation of community leaders.

## PAVE INSIGHTS

20 Number of PAVE Volunteers in the 23-24 Cohort

275 Total Volunteer Activity Hours

28 Average Number of Training Hours per Year for New Volunteers

10 Majors Represented

Biology, Biomedical Sciences, Criminology, Elementary Education, English, Health Sciences, Integrated Public Relations and Advertising, Political Science, Psychology, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

# PAVE

## PEER ANTI-VIOLENCE EDUCATORS

*Paving the Way to Change*



Center for Victim Advocacy  
& Violence Prevention





# WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

## Bystander Intervention Training

In this 1.5 hour workshop, students develop skills to identify potentially violent situations and safely and effectively intervene to decrease instances of violence in their communities and create a culture of collective support. During the workshop, students explore USF policy, signs and dynamics of power-based violence, barriers to intervening, and the 3D (Direct, Distract, Delegate) bystander intervention approach.

In addition to invited trainings for classes and student groups, Violence Prevention offered seven open Bystander Intervention Trainings, with both in person and virtual options.

## Consent Conversations

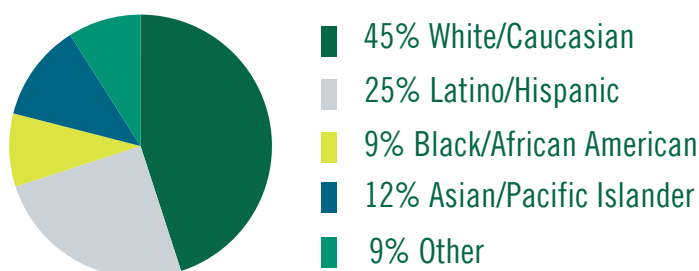
This 1.5 hour workshop supports students in developing a mutual respect framework for consent and in building skills for supporting self-advocacy. Through activity-based learning, students explore how culture and communication style impact our understanding and application of consent, and think through ways to create the emotional safety necessary for open, honest consent conversations.

Violence Prevention offered five in-person open sessions of Consent Conversations.

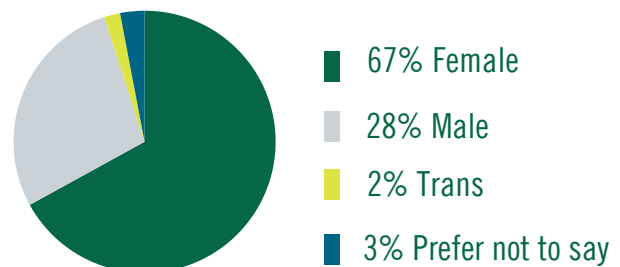
## Supporting Survivors

In a 1-hour virtual workshop, students learn best practices for supporting friends and community members who are survivors of violence. This workshop, which is featured once a semester during awareness months, focuses on relationship violence in October and sexual violence in April, exploring dynamics, statistics, disclosure response, and resources.

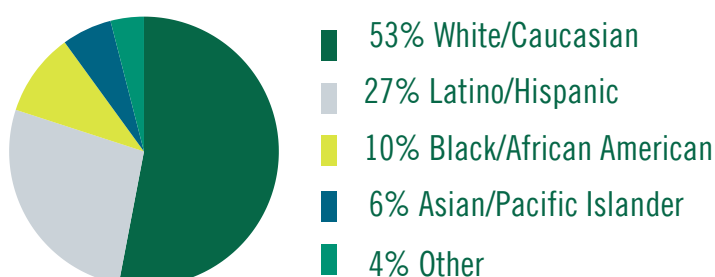
### Bystander Intervention Race/Ethnicity



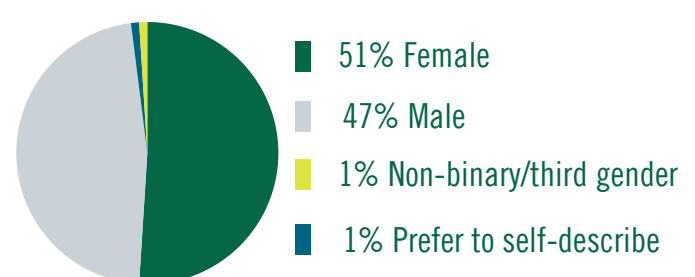
### Bystander Intervention Gender



### Consent Conversations Race/Ethnicity



### Consent Conversations Gender

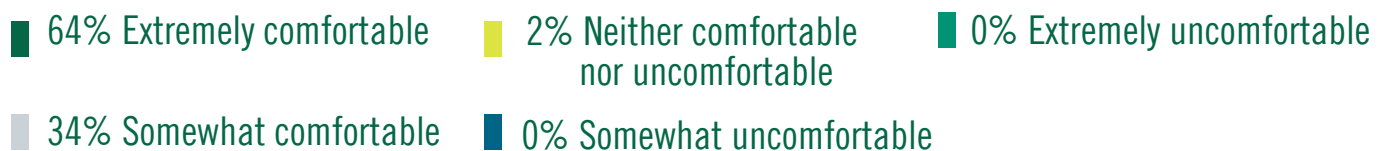
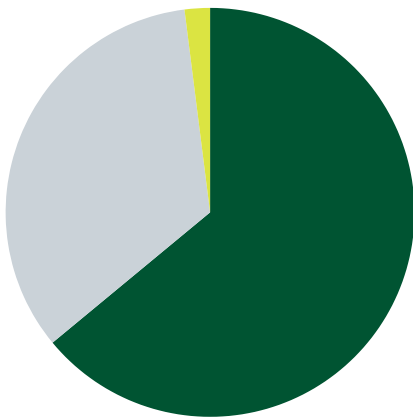


# WORKSHOP INSIGHTS

CVAVP invites workshop participants to take an optional post-survey. The data included in this report reflect a portion of workshop attendees. Insights from post-surveys are used to assess program effectiveness, inform program updates, and address population gaps.

## Bystander Intervention Training

How comfortable do you feel using the 3 Ds in everyday life?



### Participant Feedback

“Thank you! I think spreading awareness is so crucial and I appreciated the event!”

“It really opened my eyes to different types of abuse and how each one can be handled safely.”

“The speaker created a very comforting environment.”

“I found everything in this event insightful.”

“I really appreciated the open discussions.”

## Consent Conversations

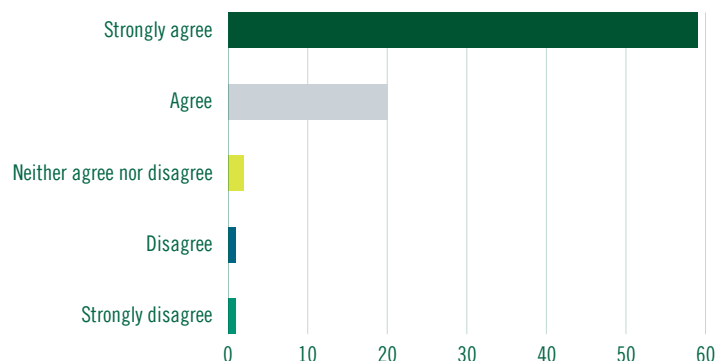
### Participant Feedback

“This was a great workshop! Very straightforward, interactive, and extremely informational.”

“I feel very informed and more secure due to this presentation.”

“I can help my brothers be freshly informed on the new ways consent can be given or not given, so that they can also be knowledgeable and able to apply it to their own lives.”

I feel confident that my consent practices would take into consideration different communication styles and cultural backgrounds of partners and friends.

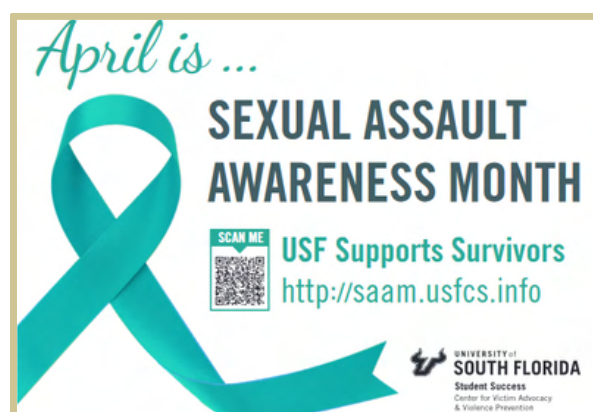


# MESSAGING CAMPAIGNS

Violence Prevention staff create multimodal messaging campaigns to promote positive norms, teach skills, amplify anti-violence voices, and build a more survivor supportive community. Below are highlights from ongoing campaigns.

## USF Supports Survivors

During October for Relationship Violence Awareness Month and April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, 20 yard signs are displayed across Tampa campus to promote community-wide survivor support and connect USF students to campus advocacy resources.



## Change Makers Series

During Heritage and Pride months, the Change Maker series highlights the vital contributions of leaders in the movement to end violence. This series included features during Black Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, LGBTQIA+ Pride Month, APIDA Heritage Month, Women's History Month, and Disability Pride Month.

## Survivor Love Letters

Survivor Love Letters is an ongoing campaign to engage USF community members in writing affirming, survivor-supportive letters for members of our community who have experienced violence. This campaign includes digital, physical, and experiential components.





## OTHER TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

**Florida Benchmarking:** Conducted a comprehensive benchmarking study across Florida universities to ensure our services are on par with leading institutions in the state.

**Enlightenment Series: Institutional Action to Prevent and Address Sexual Harassment:**

Invited participation in campus-wide discussion with guest speakers from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

**Emergency Escape Button:** Implemented an emergency escape button on our website to provide quick and discreet exit options for users in unsafe situations.

**Advocacy in Action:** Thanks to the diligent efforts of one of our advocates, a crucial arrest was made in a multi-victim case that had been dropped. Their expertise in identifying the relevant statute enabled law enforcement to re-open the case and take swift action. This is a prime example of how our team's expertise directly contributes to ensuring justice and safety for victims.

**Recognition in the American Society of Criminology's Division of Victimology Newsletter:** Proudly recognized for our outstanding programming for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

**University Police/Advocacy Staff – Shift Change Meet & Greets:** Instituted shift change meet and greets between University Police and Advocacy staff to foster collaboration and improve service delivery.

**Participation in F.B.I. Teen Summit:** Engaged with 150 students regarding USF and CVAVP's work at the First Annual Criminal Justice Teen Summit, hosted by the F.B.I. Thank you letter: "Your commitment to your profession and agency is nothing short of outstanding, and the impact you made by engaging with the next generation is immeasurable. By spending your time and opening your hearts, you provided these students with invaluable insights, mentorship, and inspiration that will undoubtedly shape their futures."

**New Resources for Victims/Survivors:** Introduced a variety of new resources, including one specifically for the University Police, to offer enhanced support and safety measures for victims and survivors.



## 2024-25 GOALS

- Enhance CVAVP awareness and brand recognition through cohesive messaging and campus & community partnerships
- Develop and enhance evaluation and assessment tools to measure advocacy services and prevention initiatives
- Initiate annual review process to update CVAVP policies and procedures, and formalize best practices
- Expand programs and services to address gaps and enhance culturally responsive care
- Empower staff growth and well-being through leadership opportunities and professional development

