

Athletes As Leaders Programme



Type of intervention



Classroom



Games



Groupwork



Mentoring



Public Education

Target group/s, level/s of prevention and sub-group/s:

Primary Prevention

Children and Young
People (Victims)

Young People | Female | Education | Classroom Setting | English

Target population

Athletes As Leaders is a programme for high school athletes on girls' sports teams. The programme aims to empower female-identified youth to take an active role in promoting healthy relationships and ending sexual violence.

Delivery organisation

The programme was originally drafted in 2015 by the Harborview Centre for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress as part of a comprehensive sexual assault prevention project at Garfield High School in Seattle, WA. The first pilot group, which included athletes from both the wrestling and basketball teams, served as an advisory board where they helped shape the development of the program.

Mode and context of delivery

Athletes As Leaders aims to target some of the subtle and normalized forms of sexual harassment and violence that girls perpetrate on other girls. This includes bullying, sexual harassment (including "slut-shaming"), rumour spreading, and female objectification, which are particularly common among youth. The programme also addresses ways that girls contribute to a climate where sexual violence is more likely to happen, such as the general tolerance of sexual violence, adherence to traditional gender role norms, and social norms related to gender inequity

According to a report on the programme: 'Athletic programs are a fitting location for both sexual assault prevention and leadership development programming. High school athletes have strong social networks. Research shows that athletes tend to have high levels of social capital. They are often popular and respected. Athletes tend to have a lot of friends and be leaders at school. Over half of all high school students play at least one sport, so if we think about all the students on an athletic team plus all of their diverse cross-sections of friends, reaching athletes has the potential to spread a positive message throughout a community.'

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

This programme is incorporated into teaching by existing school sports coaches and athletic programme co-ordinators. They choose a female 'mentor' who delivers the modules of the programme.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

The programme is held alongside sports training programmes and is delivered to groups on a weekly basis. Each session is about 20 minutes long. Each week follows a general agenda of:

- Watching a video related to that week's topic
- Discussing the topic as a group
- Creating a group expectation/team commitment related to that topic.

Description of intervention

In the program, athletes receive training on how to be leaders in their community. They will discuss situations where they can speak up about problems such as bullying, harassment, dating violence, and sexual assault. They will learn to see themselves as leaders in the school who treat others with respect, empathy, and fairness.

Programme Goals:

- Build strong teams and foster healthy relationships among athletes and their peers
- Build trust, positive team culture, and set norms for behaviour within the team, school and larger community
- Help define healthy and unhealthy behaviours in relationships
- Challenge harmful gender stereotypes and media messages

Programme Structure:

Session 1

Lesson: Introductions & Group Agreements

Video: "Athletes As Leaders ProgrammeVideo"

Session 2

Lesson: Challenging Gender Stereotypes

Video: "Always #LikeAGirl"

Session 3

Lesson: Privilege & Oppression

Video : "Sometimes You're a Caterpillar"

Session 4

Lesson: Self Image & Standards of Beauty

Video: "Slip of the Tongue by Karen Lum Womanly State of Mind"

Session 5

Lesson: Rumour Spreading

Video: "Rumour Wildfire"

Session 6

Lesson: Relationships

Video: "The Signs' Teen Dating Violence PSA Produced by Digital Bodega"

Session 7

Lesson: Consent

Video: "Consent PSA"

Session 8

Lesson: Messages About Manhood

Video: "The Mask You Live In – Trailer"

Session 9

Lesson: Promoting Positivity

Video: "Nike - Dream Further"

Session 10

Lesson: Celebrate our Successes

Post Survey

Evaluation

The programme has been evaluated with several teams at Garfield and several others nationally with promising results.

References

Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress, Seattle, WA

Contact details

<https://www.athletesleaders.org/contact>