

# TAKE ACTION

AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

A toolkit for  
preventing and  
fighting sexual  
assault in your  
community & on  
your campus.



*Toolkit cover based on a design by Shane Warden*

Dear Activists,

Everyone should have the right to live free of sexual violence, fear, dominance, and inequality. As a movement and a community, we must fight to erase and avoid the shame and silence of millions of women who have experienced sexual assault. They are survivors, not victims, and they deserve to be heard by their communities and governments.

A great place to start is in our schools and on our campuses. This toolkit will help you design a campaign for awareness and prevention of violence against women on your campus. Included is an awareness and campus resource quiz, action items, sample letters, flyers and more resources to help you take action today.

You may feel alone in taking on Sexual Assault on your campus, but let me assure you that you are not. Your campus is filled with passionate and concerned women and men; all you have to do is reach out. There is a section in this toolkit that gives ideas and strategies for gaining support and partners. Another excellent resource is – the National Organization for Women! We have over 500,000 members nationwide – including your surrounding community! Join NOW today and, if you haven't already, start a Campus Affiliate and join our Campus Action Network.

Speak out, take action, and organize now – demand your right to live in a world free of violence and abuse. Visit [www.now.org/join](http://www.now.org/join) to find more information and resources for becoming a member of the National Organization for Women and starting your own chapter.

Sincerely,

Melody Drnach  
Vice President – Action  
National Organization For Women

Ali Rodway  
Field Organizer  
National Organization For Women  
[chapfield@now.org](mailto:chapfield@now.org)

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# **GOALS:**

## **What does a successful Sexual Violence Campus Awareness and Prevention program look like?**

### **Goals:**

- End sexual assault and violence against women on your campus
- Establish a permanent sexual assault and abuse awareness program on campus
- Initiate or improve campus reporting of incidences and statistics
- Add or improve the following necessary resources for your campus:

#### **PRIMARY**

- Rape crisis center
- On campus SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner)
- Confidential reporting for victim
- Annual awareness/education workshop
- Support group for survivors of rape/sexual assault/stalking
- Well-publicized campus protocol and policy on sexual assault incidents

#### **SECONDARY**

- Hotlines for survivors of violence
- Local domestic violence shelter
- Women's resource center
- 24/7 transportation to hospitals and shelters
- 24/7 security on campus
- Alcohol/drug abuse counselors and support groups

# Campus Assessment Quiz

**Take this short quiz to identify the level of awareness and existing resources on your campus**

- Does your campus have a rape crisis center?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Is there a rape crisis center, domestic violence shelter or Family Services center in your area?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Does your campus health center or local hospital have a SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner)?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Is campus transportation to local hospital(s) and shelter(s) available 24 hours/7 days per week and free?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Does your campus have 24-hour hotlines addressing relationship abuse, sexual assault, and stalking?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Are there student organizations already addressing the above issue?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Is confidential or anonymous treatment and reporting of sexual assault available?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Is sexual assault awareness discussed during first-year/new student orientations?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Is there student government leadership on this issue?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Is there cooperation between local law enforcement and campus security?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**
- Is there a campus specialist on rape and sexual assault?  
**A. Yes B. No C. I don't know**

# Identifying Your Campus' Awareness and Resources Level

## **MOSTLY “A”s (Yes) Proceed to Step #3**

Your campus has a good deal of resources available to women who are survivors of sexual assault – so share the good news! Resources are only useful if people know about them. Educate the student body by doing some of the awareness actions. Feel free to also use Step 1, which will help you create powerful evidence of any remaining inadequacies to present to administrators.

## **MOSTLY “B”s (No) Proceed to Step #2**

Your campus is in critical need of immediate attention and awareness. Read our Suggested Responses page for steps to take to ensure your campus is ready to prevent and respond to sexual assault. Also use Step 1, it is a powerful tool to use in presenting the facts to administrators.

## **MOSTLY “C”s (I don't know) Proceed to Step #1**

It's time to get to know your campus. Even if your campus has incredible resources, if students don't know about them, they may as well not exist. Get informed about the status of your campus by using this checklist. Then you'll know where your campus stands, and you can go on to Step 2, or jump right to Step 3.

**STEP #1:**  
**Get To**  
**Know Your**  
**Campus**

# Get To Know Your Campus!

Grab a friend, a camera, a clip board and a pencil and get ready to get to know your campus! This part of the toolkit is for you and your friends to “take inventory” of what is actually available (or missing) on your campus. This will be the backbone of your actions.

Below is an extensive (yet, never complete) list of resources and safety elements that are ideal to have on your campus. Check the box if you have it, leave it blank if you do not. Those blank boxes are our trouble spots.

Have fun!

➤ **Do you have these RESOURCES on campus? (Check the box if yes.)**

- Campus Rape Crisis Center
- Campus Hotline for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, relationship abuse, stalking, harassment, etc.
- Written campus protocol and policy on incidents of sexual assault
- SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) present on campus
- Student orientations include sexual assault awareness workshops
- Campus security available 24/7
- Campus security trained to respond to sexual assault incidents
- 24/7 transportation to local hospitals and domestic violence shelters
- Campus security specialist on rape and/or sexual assault
- Campus litigation of sexual assault incidents
- Confidential reporting of sexual assault incidents
- Anonymous reporting of sexual assault incidents
- Alcohol and drug counselors

- Student AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) meetings
- Peer Education programs
- Safety Education programs
- Alcohol, Drug, Survivors of Violence, Eating Disorder, etc. support groups
- Women's Center
- Wellness Center

➤ **Do you have these RESOURCES off campus? (Check the box if yes.)**

- Rape kits available at local hospitals/clinics
- Local domestic violence shelter
- Local rape crisis center
- Local 24/7 domestic violence, stalking, etc. hotline
- Local 24/7 sexual assault/rape hotline
- Local Alcohol and Drug counseling
- SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) available at local hospitals
- Coordination between local law enforcement and campus protocol on sexual assault incidents
- College-provided maps of the area, with police stations and other safe spots designated

➤ **Are these POLICIES, PROCEDURES, FACILITIES and MECHANISMS available in your campus housing? (Check box if yes.)**

- Single-sex residence halls
- Substance-free residence halls

- Alcohol prohibited residence halls
- Drugs prohibited residence halls
- Propped-door alarms (exterior doors)
- Card swipe to enter residence halls
- Automatically locked doors
- Doors locked at night
- Doors always locked
- Guards on duty 24/7
- Guards on duty at night
- Peep hole in dorm room doors
- Deadbolt on dorm room doors
- Safety chain on dorm room doors
- Single-sex bathrooms kept locked
- Floors locked – all floors
- Secure windows – all floors
- Panic alarms in rooms
- Apartments on campus

**- For visitors, are these policies and security measures in place?  
(Check box for yes)**

- Leave ID at door/desk
- Phone/intercom at entrance
- Guest passes
- Sign in guests at door or with security guard

**- Regarding roommate conflicts, is there a quick transfer policy for the following? (Check box if yes)**

- Using illegal drugs
- Binge/underage drinking
- Noisy parties
- Hate speech
- Physical/mental abuse or violence
- Vandalism

**➤ Are the following Campus Safety elements in place on your campus? (Check box if yes)**

- Sworn police
- Security guards
- Trained volunteer students
- Arrest power
- Day Patrol Units
- Night Patrol Units
- Campus police/guards carry firearms
- Bicycle patrols
- Surveillance cameras
- Emergency phones in working condition
- Escort services 24 hours
- Campus and local police coordination when a restraining order is in place
- Shuttle services
- Personal alarm devices
- Security patrols by student/RA equivalent

**STEP #2:**

**Safety and**

**Resources**

# Safety and Resource Priorities

***Your campus is in critical need of attention – FAST. Given the severity of your campus' lack of sexual assault resources, these are our suggested top priorities for you to focus on. Once you are clear on what you need to push for, use Step 3 for ideas to get things moving. Also, most administrators respond well to facts and documentation, so consider using the Step 1 checklist to bring hard evidence to your meetings.***

- Ensure that your health center and campus are equipped to prevent and respond to sexual assault
- Campaign for a rape crisis center, an on-campus SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner), and a sexual assault counselor
- Campaign for 24/7 transportation from campus to hospitals and student housing
- Create a sexual-assault awareness program to be permanently included in new student and first-year orientation packets
- Campaign for confidential reporting of sexual assault
- Campaign for increased campus safety and sponsor a self-defense course
- Establish a campus 24/7 hotline to support survivors of sexual assault, relationship abuse, and stalking

**STEP #3:**

**Raise**

**Awareness**

# Get Active!

**The first part of this section focuses on bringing your campus' deficiencies to the attention of your school administrators. Each campus is different in the way change is enacted. You and your peers will have a better idea of how to get in contact with decision and policy makers on campus – these are only suggestions.**

**After you have made inroads with campus leadership, administration and/or officials, we encourage you to get the whole campus involved. The second part of this section contains ideas for bringing this critical issue into the lives and minds of your fellow students.**

## **Bring it to the attention of school officials:**

- Sit in on your next student government meeting – learn the process to get on the docket to get your voice heard
- Ask for a meeting with your school administrators or officials
- Talk to your professors about the best way to get in contact with campus decision makers.
- Once you have the meeting – ask what opportunities there are for students to be actively involved in keeping the campus safe and rape survivor-friendly.
- FOLLOW UP! Change has never been quick or easy, be sure to stay on the leadership to follow through with the promises they have made.

## **Provide survivors with avenues for support:**

- Establish a Women's Center or Women's Health Center as a place of support and advocacy
- Join forces with other organizations involved in sexual violence prevention, awareness, and response
- Recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month and April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month

### **Engage your fellow students on campus:**

- Start a NOW Campus Chapter or be part of the NOW Affiliate Network on campus: <http://www.now.org/chapters/campus/signup.html>
- Screen relevant films: *Palindromes*, *The Education of Shelby Knox*, *Killing Us Softly*, *The Accused*, *A Jury of Her Peers*, *Defending our Lives*, just for example.
- Kick off a letter campaign to local newspapers in school and in the community
- Host a panel discussion on violence
  - Invite professors from departments such as Sociology, Women's Studies, Political Science, Anthropology and Cultural Studies; also invite Emergency Room doctors or nurses, local rape crisis or domestic violence shelter employees, court advocates, and other professionals in the field
- Flyer your campus once a week informing students about sexual assault statistics, hotline numbers, and local resources
- Act on local/state legislation
  - Coordinate with local efforts to pass legislation or local regulations
  - Organize volunteer nights for your friends and allies
  - Set up meetings with local legislators and community leaders
  - Stage a protest of a particular inadequacy or problem
- Propose a campus radio/TV show segment on campus safety and on your campus' response to staggering sexual assault statistics
- Stage political theater or street theatre presenting situations of abusive relationships/sexual assault/rape
- Construct a Clothesline Project: <http://www.clotheslineproject.org/>
- Recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October) and Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April)
- Host a confidential circle discussion with survivors
- Organize candlelight vigils for survivors and family members
- Plan a take Back the Night event: <http://www.takebackthenight.org/>
- Organize a sexual health fair hosting local/campus organizations booths and look into whether local hospitals/clinics can provide free STI or AIDS testing
- Use creative media, such as t-shirts, shoes, or stickers, to educate peers

- Generate peer counseling/education programs on sexual assault
- Host campus workshops/conference on sexual violence
- Create college courses on sexual assault, domestic violence, etc.
- Rally to make a course on sexual assault or gender studies a graduation requirement

Stimulate community discussion about emergency contraception, HIV tests, and how to distribute information to those who need it most.

# Definitions

**Sexual Assault:** unwanted sexual contact that stops short of completed and/or attempted rape. This includes sexual touching and fondling. Some states use this term interchangeably with rape.

## **Rape:**

- A felony that consists of a person being forced to have sexual intercourse without their consent.
  - Some states use the term “aggravated sexual assault” for rape, and many states include homosexual rape, incest, and other sex offenses under this category.
- Forced sexual intercourse, including vaginal, anal, or oral penetration. Penetration may be by a body part or an object. It may be forced physically or through threats.
- Below the age of consent (which varies from state to state), sexual intercourse is always legally considered rape.
  - Capacity to consent, which depends on many factors ranging from state of inebriation, mental capacity, age and/or age difference, also varies from state to state.
- Carnal knowledge of a person against their will and without their consent.

**Acquaintance rape:** involves coercive sexual activities that occur against a person’s will by means of force, violence, duress, and/or fear of bodily injury. These sexual activities are imposed upon the victim by someone they know, whether it be a friend, date or acquaintance. Two-thirds of rape victims know their attackers, and in 73% of sexual assault cases, the attacker is not a stranger to the victim. 80%-90% of college women who are victims of rape know their attackers.

## **Stages of Acquaintance Rape:**

**1. Intrusion:** attempt to violate victim’s personal space and level of comfort

**2. Desensitization:** occurs when victim feels more comfortable with offender(s) and may regard intrusions as less threatening

**3. Isolation:** offender uses trust to isolate victim

**Partner Rape:** Sexual acts committed without a person's consent and/or against a person's will when perpetrator is the individual's current partner (married or not), previous partner, or co-habitant.

**Battering Rape:** both physical and sexual violence within relationship

**Obsessive/Sadistic Rape:** includes torture and perverse, usually violent, sexual acts

**Domestic Violence:** A pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners where the perpetrator and victim are currently or have been previously dating, cohabiting, married, or divorced.

**Stalking:** occurs when an individual follows pattern of behavior that leaves someone else afraid, distressed, nervous, harassed, or in danger. Includes repeated undesired contact, following, threats, etc. May occur in person or via electronic means such as email, personal networking sites such as Facebook, over the phone, etc.

**Sexual Harassment:** unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sex favors, catcalls, touching, fondling, etc., that affect an individual's work/school performance, or create an offensive, hostile, and intimidating environment.

**Forcible Sex Offense:** any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will, or not forcibly when the victim is incapable of giving consent.

**Non-forcible Sex Offense:** Unlawful, non-forcible sexual intercourse, generally incest or statutory rape.

**Incest:** non-forcible sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.

***Statutory rape:*** Non-forcible sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent or where the age difference between the two parties exceeds statutory limits

***Anonymous reporting:*** Victim or friend of victim may report incident without revealing their name or other identification.

***Confidential reporting:*** Victim may report incident without fear of their name being identified to the public, press, or, if they so choose, the police. Anything said during the report is confidential, allowing the victim a range of responses to the incident.

**All women should have the right to live their lives free of violence, dominance, fear, and inequality. Fight against the shame and silence of the thousands of women who have experienced sexual assault. They are survivors, not victims, and they deserve to be heard by their communities and governments.**

## **How to Write A Successful Letter to the Editor:**

- Make it relevant by responding to current issues and articles
- Make it timely
- Address the editors
- Stay on point, bring in relevant personal anecdotes
- Avoid personal attacks
- Submit multiple ways (mail, email, etc.)
- ALWAYS proofread
- Check the limitation on number of words and follow the limit
- Never submit anonymously – unsigned letters will not be published

# Sample Letter to the Editor of Campus Paper

To the Editor:

I am writing as a feminist and a student on this campus who is concerned about sexual assault and violence against women. Violence affects a woman's capacity to study, work, pursue an education, participate socially, and impacts her own self-worth. Our campus's lack of support for survivors and lack of preventive programs is reprehensible. I demand that this issue be given the attention it deserves before more women and men are hurt physically and emotionally.

According to the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN), one in four of college age women will experience sexual assault. In addition, an estimated 60% of rape cases go unreported, and of those reported only a small percentage of rapists ever serve jail time. Violence against women is a serious issue that affects entire communities. This kind of violence is about power and control, and survivors do not deserve the stigma and shame.

[Insert Call to Action – say specifically what needs to be done.] Let's solve this problem together and protect the physical and emotional well-being of the women and men of this campus community.

Sincerely,

# Example of a Blog Post

## **Say No to Sexual Assault... and to Complacency**

You can imagine my shock when, as a feminist student at a liberal college where women's health and rights should be well looked after, and a long-time volunteer at a local battered women's services center, I realized that I didn't know whether my campus had a rape crisis center. I didn't know where student survivors of sexual assault should go -- to the health center, the women's health center, or one of the two local hospitals.

I could give you a hotline number or a lecture on the cycle of power and control in abusive relationships, but I wouldn't know where to go if I were assaulted myself. After discussing this with students at other colleges, I found that in comparison I was well informed on my school's policies, even though my level of information would be useless in an actual incident. Needless to say, students must be educated on the resources available to survivors of rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and domestic violence in the college community.

Violence against women, whether the victims are young, old, living in the U.S. or abroad, attending college full-time, part-time, or not at all, is a serious problem that affects an entire community and society. It is multi-faceted and directly linked to poverty, economic inequities, limited educational opportunities, and increased mental and emotional distress. According to the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN), survivors of sexual assault are three times more likely to be depressed, six times more likely to experience PTSD, 13 times more likely to abuse alcohol, and four times more likely to commit suicide.

Let's stop the culture of violence against women now. Let's take back the night, the day, the dorms, the sidewalks, the courtrooms, our homes, and our schools. Instead of falling into the trap of complacency and ignorance, as I did, actively seek out resources and information.

**CALL ALL YOUNG FEMINISTS TO ACTION!**

**LOVE YOURSELF AND YOUR FRIENDS.**

Start a rape crisis center on your campus, or support local legislation on domestic violence. Organize to create a hotline for survivors of rape or to seek out funding for local shelters.

**TAKE ACTION NOW!**

1 in 4

college women will be

***SEXUALLY ASSAULTED***

by the end of her college career

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***What has [Enter School Name] done to  
prevent and prepare for that?***

**It might not be as much as you think... or need.**

**TAKE ACTION!**

Join us in our fight to improve campus  
resources and security to prevent and be  
prepared for SEXUAL ASSAULT!

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE

It's NOT LOVE

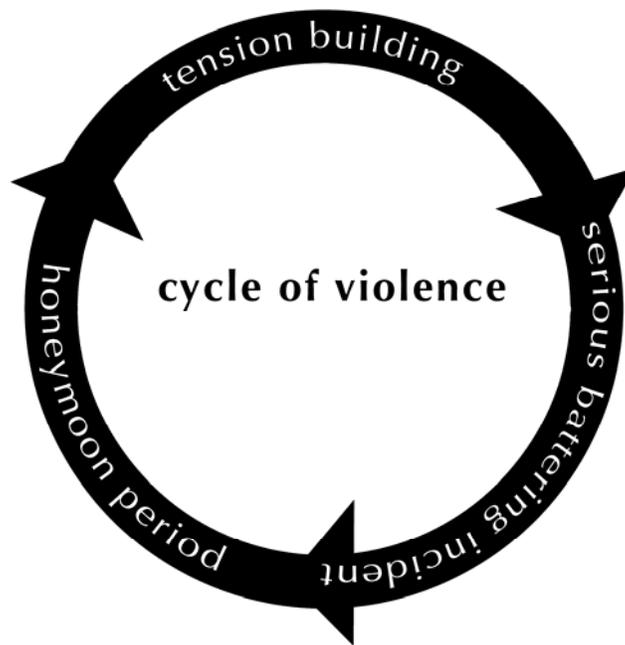
It's NOT SEX

It's NOT NORMAL

It's ABOUT POWER

It's ABOUT CONTROL

It's ABOUT DOMINATION



MAKE CAMPUS SAFE FOR ALL WOMEN AND MEN

MEETING [Enter Meeting Time, Date,  
Location]

# Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Organizations

## Hot Lines:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE or 1-800-787-3224)
- National Sexual Assault Hotline (1-800-656-HOPE (4673))

## Other Resources:

- National Organization for Women [www.now.org](http://www.now.org)
- Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN) [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)
- Incite! Women of Color Against Violence [www.incite-national.org](http://www.incite-national.org)
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)
- National Network to End Domestic Violence <http://www.nnedv.org/>
- National Sexual Assault Hotline (1-800-656-HOPE (4673))
- Planned Parenthood [www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org)
- Security on Campus [www.securityoncampus.org](http://www.securityoncampus.org)
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org)
- Family Violence Prevention Fund [www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org)
- Stalking Resource Center ( National Center for Victims of Crime)  
[www.ncvc.org/SRC/Main.aspx](http://www.ncvc.org/SRC/Main.aspx)
- V-Day [www.vday.org](http://www.vday.org)
- Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR) (1-866-END RAPE) [www.paar.net](http://www.paar.net)
- The Clothesline Project [www.clotheslineproject.org](http://www.clotheslineproject.org)
- GLBT National Help Center [www.glnh.org](http://www.glnh.org)

# Sexual Assault Related Articles

- *Sexual Assault on Campus: What Colleges And Universities Are Doing About It*  
US Dept. of Justice National Institute for Peace

[www.ncjrs.gov/polfiles1/nij/205521.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.gov/polfiles1/nij/205521.pdf)

A good source of current statistics and pattern in the problem of sexual assault on U.S. college campuses

- *Letter; Violence Against Women in War Zones*

The New York Times

[www.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CE1DC143FF931A15751C0A96E9C8B63&scp=1\\*sq=international+violence+against+women+act&st=nyt](http://www.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CE1DC143FF931A15751C0A96E9C8B63&scp=1*sq=international+violence+against+women+act&st=nyt)

Both an example of a succinct letter to the editor and of yet another facet of the problem of violence against women

- *Colleges Are Joining Together To Deal With Sexual Assaults*

The New York Times

[www.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9801E5DF1238F930A35753C1A9629C8B63](http://www.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9801E5DF1238F930A35753C1A9629C8B63)

An example of the importance of networks and coalition building

- *Rape Worn Not On a Sleeve, But Right Over the Heart*

[www.nytimes.com/2008/04/04/nyregion/04bigcity.html?scp=5&sq=college+sexual+assault&st=nyt](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/04/nyregion/04bigcity.html?scp=5&sq=college+sexual+assault&st=nyt)

An interesting example of the use of different forms of media

- *Report on the National Needs Assessment of Sexual Assault Response Teams*

[www.nsvrc.org/cms/fileUpload/OVC Approved Needs Assesment-report.pdf](http://www.nsvrc.org/cms/fileUpload/OVC%20Approved%20Needs%20Assesment-report.pdf)  
[www.NSVRC.org](http://www.NSVRC.org)

- *Five Years On: No Justice for Sexual Violence in Darfur*

Human Rights Watch

[www.hrw.org/reports/2008/darfuro408/darfuro408webwcover.pdf](http://www.hrw.org/reports/2008/darfuro408/darfuro408webwcover.pdf)

A report on the well-publicized issues of international violence against women in the Darfur desert region of Sudan

- *Men Wear Heels to Raise Awareness of Violence*  
[www.postcrescent.com/apps/bbcs.d11/article/AID=/20080602/APC0101/806020460/1979/APCbuisness](http://www.postcrescent.com/apps/bbcs.d11/article/AID=/20080602/APC0101/806020460/1979/APCbuisness)

An example of grassroots organizing

- *Jefferson Awards: Students empower other young women against sexual assault* [www.post-gazette.com/pg/08004/846512-51.stm](http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08004/846512-51.stm)

Good example of young feminists grassroots organizing