Risk Reduction Tips

Policy Content

If you find yourself in the position of being the initiator of sexual behavior, you must respect to your potential partner(s). These suggestions may help you to reduce your risk for being accused of sexual misconduct:

- Clearly communicate your intentions to your sexual partner and give them a chance to clearly relate their intentions to you.
- Understand and respect personal boundaries.
- DO NOT MAKE ASSUMPTIONS about consent; about someone’s sexual availability; about whether they are attracted to you; about how far you can go; or about whether they are physically and/or mentally able to consent. If there are any questions or ambiguity then you should assume you DO NOT have consent.
- MIXED MESSAGES FROM YOUR PARTNER ARE A CLEAR INDICATION THAT YOU SHOULD STOP, defuse any sexual tension and communicate better. You may be misreading your potential partner. They may not have figured out how far they want to go with you yet. You must respect their decisions.
- Don’t take advantage of someone’s drunkenness or drugged state, even if they voluntarily consumed alcohol or drugs, as this may lead to an allegation that they were incapacitated and unable to give consent.
- Realize that your potential partner could be intimidated by you or fearful. You may have a power advantage simply because of your gender, size, position or status within the University, or other factors. Don’t abuse that power.
- Understand that consent to some form of sexual behavior does not imply consent to any other form of sexual behavior. You must have consent for all forms of sexual activity.
- Silence and passivity are not consent. Make sure you have consent for all sexual behavior.
- Read your potential partner carefully, paying attention to verbal and non-verbal communication and body language. If you are unsure or in doubt, assume you do not have consent and stop. Communicate and make sure of your partner’s wishes.

Risk reduction tips can often take a victim-blaming tone, even unintentionally. With no intention to victim-blame, and with recognition that only those who commit sexual violence are responsible for those actions, these suggestions may nevertheless help you to reduce your risk of experiencing a non-consensual sexual act.

- If you have limits, make them known as early and as clearly and explicitly as possible.
- Tell a sexual aggressor “NO” directly, clearly, and firmly.
- Try to physically remove yourself from the physical presence of a sexual aggressor.
- Find someone nearby and ask for help.
• Take affirmative responsibility for your alcohol intake and drug use and acknowledge that alcohol and drugs lower your inhibitions, including sexual inhibitions. Acknowledge that your alcohol intake and drug use may make you vulnerable to someone who views an impaired person as a sexual opportunity.

• Take care of your friends and ask that they take care of you. A real friend will challenge you if you are about to make a mistake. Respect them when they do.

Requirements

Approvals:
VP for Finance and Administration

Revision Management

Revision History Log:

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