

# Activism Basics

How to Advocate, Influence,  
Communicate, Organize

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**SASH  
CLUB**

**Students Against  
Sexual Harassment**



# Content Warning

**\*\*SASH Club Power Topics may include sensitive content that may be difficult to present and may possibly be triggering to some participants.\*\***

**You may want to seek the support of an ally during this presentation, especially if you're a survivor of sexual violence.**

# What's Ahead:

- What is activism?
- Identifying the problem
- Organizing for action
- Influencing others
- Getting started
- What can I do if I am sexually assaulted?
- What can I do if I experience or witness sexual harassment?

# What is Activism?

- > Activism is the policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change.
  - SASH Club activism relies upon interpersonal relationships.
  - Changing cultural conversations about sexual harassment and assault is activism.
- > Activism is about bettering the community.
- > Activism requires listening to what the diverse stakeholders in your specific community want and need.
- > Activism is the process of building power to make change.



# Step 1: Identifying the Problem

# Ask yourself the following questions

- ① What is the purpose of our work?
- ② Who is the audience we are trying to motivate?
- ③ How do we reach our audience, keep them engaged, and move them to action?

# Research

- > Every community is different and you want to determine the approach that best suits yours.
- > Strategic questions – **What** does the change look like:
  - What needs to change?
  - Who are we influencing?
  - What does change look like?
  - What is our timeline?
- > Tactical questions – **How** will the change happen:
  - What are the levers to effect change?
  - What is the sequence of events that will bring about the best results?
  - Who holds the power?
  - Who can help?

# Construct a mission statement

- > Keep everyone on the same page through the use of a mission statement.
- > Construct the mission statement keeping five elements in mind:
  - **Value** – What is the value of your activism to the community?
  - **Inspiration** – Why should people care about your cause?
  - **Plausibility** – Make it sound reasonable.
  - **Specificity** – Tie it back to the big picture issue.
  - **Audience** – Consider with whom the message will resonate.



# Construct a mission statement

- > The SASH Club national project mission statement:
  - “SASH Club brings together and empowers youth to end sexual harassment and assault.”
  
- > What kind of mission statement would you envision for your local chapter?
  - Think about the five elements of a mission statement on the previous slide.
  - Be mindful of inclusivity.



# Step 2: Organizing for Action

# Listen

- > Sexual harassment and assault are issues that affect everyone regardless of gender, race, or identity.
- > To ensure your activism is inclusive, identify the perspectives not represented by the group in the room and consider them:
  - For example, how do issues of sexual harassment and assault affect people of color, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and other under-represented groups?
- > Hold space for ideas that you do not agree with and use compromise to find a middle ground.

# Set Goals

- > Use the **SMART Goals technique** to organize your club's goals.
- > SMART Goals:
  - **S**pecific - What do you want to accomplish?
  - **M**easurable - How will you know the goal is accomplished?
  - **A**ttainable - How realistic is the goal?
  - **R**elevant - Does this match the community's wants/needs?
  - **T**ime-based - Can you achieve it in the time you have?
- > Answer these questions when framing each goal.

# Delegate Tasks

- Delegating tasks will help ensure no one feels overwhelmed and everyone is working on something they are passionate about.
- Create groups that will help you achieve your SMART goals most efficiently.
- Some examples of task delegation could be:
  - Running social media
  - Organizing a presentation for the school or community
  - Organizing an activity to educate the school or community
  - Writing articles for the school paper or local media



# Step 3: Influencing Others

# Constructive Dialogue

- > For sensitive topics, a casual approach to the conversation helps others to feel comfortable and engaged.
- > Keeping your activism focused on open conversation encourages others to ask questions.
  - Lecturing doesn't help engage people in activism.
  - Young people are more likely to engage if they feel like they're part of an open conversation.
  - The most important thing you can do is **start the conversation**.
  - The more you engage in dialogue, the more skilled you will become in persuading others.

# Confidence

- > Relay information, present your mission, and convey your goals with confidence:
  - You've done the research and preparation.
  - You know your material so trust your ability to engage credibly.
- > When trying to make change on something that people are resistant to talk about, you *will* receive pushback:
  - In these moments, always remember what motivates you.
  - Use facts and the research about your own community to back you up in the face of resistance.
  - Know when to walk away from an unproductive conversation. Changing culture is a gradual process and you will have many opportunities to make progress.



# Get Started!

- > As a member of SASH Club, know what your organization stands for so you can speak intelligently about it.
- > Start a conversation today about sexual harassment and assault:
  - It is never too early to start the dialogue and exchange ideas.
  - And while you're at it, invite others to support SASH Club with their participation, guidance, or experience.

# Talk About It



- Which elements of the club's mission statement are most important to you?
- What ideas do you have to reach our audience?
- Why is deep research so important?
- Does starting a conversation feel like something you would do? Why or why not?
- What forms of activism do you feel would be impactful in your school or organization?

# Do More:

- Role play with other members of your SASH Club to gain confidence in responding to questions and meeting resistance.
- Delegate research topics and share your findings.
- Make a list of people in power and brainstorm who in the club would be best to speak with each of them.
- Share one thing you learned today and something you will commit to doing to move forward.

# Sources & Acknowledgments

Thank you, SSAIS Advisory Board member Minnah Stein for creating this presentation.

# To Do Immediately if Sexually Assaulted

- > Get away from the attacker to a safe place as fast as you can.
- > Then call 911 or the police.
- > Call a friend or family member you trust.
- > You can call a crisis center or hotline to talk with a counselor.
- > One 24/7 option, for all genders, is the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE(4673).
- > RAINN will connect you with a rape crisis center in your area.
- > Visit the [Survivor Support page](#) for more helpline options and details.

# To Do Immediately if Sexually Assaulted

- > **Preserve the evidence, even if you are unsure you will report.**
- > **Do not:**
  - Wash, comb your hair, or clean any part of your body
  - Brush your teeth
  - Change clothes, if possible, so the hospital nurse can collect evidence
  - Touch or change anything at the scene of the assault
- > **Seek medical attention ASAP at your nearest hospital ER:**
  - You need to be examined, treated for any injuries, checked for possible sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or pregnancy, and can receive preventative medicine.
  - The nurse or doctor will collect evidence the attacker may have left behind.
- > **Ask hospital staff to connect you with a local rape crisis center.**

# If You are Sexually Harassed

**It isn't your fault... and you can get help to make it stop.**

- Reach out ASAP to a friend, school counselor or trusted adult for immediate safety & support to bring the issue to your Dean of Students, Principal, or Title IX Coordinator.
- Confidential National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673  
[www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)
- Learn about your rights and how to take action on the [Stop Sexual Assault in Schools website](#)

# Feedback & Suggestions:

SASH Club welcomes your feedback and suggestions on the content of this presentation. Contact us via:

Web: [www.sashclub.org](http://www.sashclub.org)

Email: [sashclub@ssais.org](mailto:sashclub@ssais.org)

Instagram: [@sashclubs](https://www.instagram.com/sashclubs)

Facebook: [@sashclubs](https://www.facebook.com/sashclubs)

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> Contact an adult advisor with your questions or concerns about local issues.





# THANK YOU

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