

Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force



Testimony in support of HB2657-2 House Judiciary Committee Submitted by: Megan Foster, Prevention Program Coordinator at the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force March 29, 2019

Chair Williamson, Vice Chairs Gorsek and Sprenger, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Megan Foster and I am the Prevention Program Coordinator at the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force (AGSATF) and I am pleased to speak in strong support of HB2657-2.

The Sexual Assault Task Force is a private, non-profit, non-governmental statewide agency with over 100 multi-disciplinary members appointed by Attorney General Rosenblum. Members serve as advisors on 1 of 8 subcommittees including: Advocacy Response, Campus, Criminal Justice, Legislative & Public Policy, Medical-Forensic, Men's Engagement, Offender Management, and Prevention Education.

Our mission is to advance a multi-disciplinary, survivor-centered approach to the prevention of and response to sexual violence in Oregon. Our goal is to prevent sexual violence from happening in the first place, while simultaneously improving our response efforts to mitigate trauma and ensure the safety and security of all victims.

Sexual and other forms of violence are preventable. Sexual violence, as well as abuse, neglect, stalking, bullying, and other forms of violence, do not need to be, and should not be, something we accept as normal in our communities throughout Oregon. There is extensive research and evidence both nationally, and specific to Oregon, that demonstrates effective strategies to prevent violence for Oregon youth, adults, seniors, and other populations. We need Oregon to invest in these efforts by supporting HB 2657-2.

As the Prevention Coordinator at AGSATF, I currently provide training and technical assistance to preventionists across Oregon (in Domestic and Sexual Violence Agencies, Child Abuse Intervention and Family Support Centers, in other local nonprofit organizations and foundations, in K-12 Schools, in Colleges and Universities, and in State and Local Government agencies, among others). This includes providing around 22 different training opportunities per year, training over 1,100 statewide and national advocates, educators, and other preventionists in 2018 alone. I support the statewide Prevention and Education Committee, who also submitted written testimony on this bill; and in collaboration with the Oregon Health Authority, I administer Oregon's *Rape Prevention and Education* (RPE) Grant Program.

3625 River Rd N, Suite 275, Keizer, OR 97303-5985 • Phone: (503) 990-6541 • Fax: (503) 990-6547 Email: <u>taskforce@oregonsatf.org</u> • Web: <u>www.oregonsatf.org</u> Currently, the RPE program funds four local organizations across Oregon, many of whom you will hear from today, including El Programa Hispano Catolico, Haven from Domestic and Sexual Violence, Women's Crisis Support Team, and Clackamas Women's Services. These programs currently serve: Wasco, Gilliam, Wheeler, Sherman, Josephine, Clackamas, and Multnomah - specifically East, counties). These four programs provide community-informed, research-based violence prevention programming in local schools in their area, and the broader counties they work with and within. For more information about each of these programs, please refer to the attached program spotlights.

In the 2017-2018 school year, these programs provided dynamic prevention programming aligned to national and statewide best-practices, and in partnership with schools and community leaders, to over 9,000 youth in Oregon's K-12 schools (elementary through high school). They also provided prevention programming to over 400 different community leaders in various roles, including: college and university students, faculty, and staff, teachers and administrators in K-12 settings, parents, professionals in healthcare and other industries in their communities, as well as local community-based coalitions and collaborations. Already, in the first half of the 2018-2019 school year, these programs have provided around 900 classroom sessions in schools (K-12 and College) throughout the seven counties they serve, reaching over 7,000 students.

In order to implement the most effective prevention programming, we advocate for prevention efforts that are rooted in evidence, culturally-specific expertise, and theories of effective prevention. For this reason, we focus on the ongoing implementation of dynamic and effective evaluation. For some examples of data on the outcomes achieved by RPE-specific prevention programs, please see the attached costs/benefits <u>analysis</u> of prevention.

Current RPE funded prevention programs are aligned with national level evidence and theory (including the public-health approach, the nine principles of effective prevention, and the socio-ecological model for prevention). This includes understanding factors that increase or decrease the likelihood that someone may perpetrate or become a victim of sexual and other forms of violence. It is because of the specific research into these factors that we can clearly understand the links between the impacts of effective sexual violence prevention work and child abuse and neglect prevention, suicide prevention, and youth violence prevention (like bullying prevention), along with the prevention of many others forms of violence.

These programs have also aligned their K-12 work with Oregon Health Education Standards, as well as Erin's Law (the child sex abuse prevention law) and the Healthy Teen Relationship Act. It is also critical that our prevention work is informed by the communities we work with and within. This helps us understand that effective prevention efforts happening in Salem-Keizer schools may need to look different than effective prevention work happening in Dufur, Oregon in Wasco County.

As a result of receiving consistent RPE prevention funding, programs have seen increased community capacity for preventing violence in multiple settings. The programs have been able to leverage RPE funds to make private funding, and financial investment by their local communities, not only possible, but more likely, building better and more dynamic public and private partnerships to prevent sexual (and other forms of) violence in schools, workplaces, community centers, and other settings. This funding has also increased the capacity of these communities to better respond to and intervene in violence that is occurring in their counties.

Despite the many great strides that RPE funded programs have made, RPE funds are extremely limited in that they can only fund 4 programs at around \$53,000/year. This has left most domestic and sexual violence organizations without the funds to implement or even establish effective community-led, research-informed prevention efforts. HB 2657-2 will directly support more prevention efforts like these RPE programs.

There are many examples of great prevention efforts happening throughout Oregon, but these programs consistently face concerns about sustaining funding for their prevention efforts from year to year; and the work is often interrupted and/or limited based on the goals of varying and inconsistent funding sources. Many times this work is not comprehensive across a county, school-district, or community, because of a lack of funds. Most of these other programs are located in Washington and Multnomah Counties.

For all of these reasons and many more, I urge you to support HB 2657-2. We have the opportunity to invest in preventing violence and abuse before it ever happens in the first place, and if we don't start investing in prevention, the violence in our schools, workplaces, community centers, and other places, will never be reduced. **Oregonians need our legislators to invest \$3 million in dedicated violence prevention funding.** Together, we can invest in and work towards an Oregon that is healthier and safer for all people in our state.

Respectfully,

Megan Foster Prevention Program Coordinator The Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force





Women's Crisis Support Team WINGS Prevention Program

(Where Individuals Navigate Growth and Safety)

WCST's prevention program aims to strengthen knowledge, attitudes and skills of youth to enhance their capacity for preventing violence and promoting safety. WCST prevention education builds skills necessary to develop healthy and equitable relationships, safely interrupt behavior such as sexist and homophobic harassment, and appropriately address social norms supportive of sexual violence. They focus on youth engagement as leaders in their communities and schools. WCST provides multiple approaches to violence prevention and healthy relationships education in schools, specifically a three tier program called WINGS (Where Individuals Navigate Growth and Safety).

"I enjoyed learning new things in Freshman Sucess. I especially liked the lesson on vulnerability. I learned that it isn't a weakness to be vulnerable." - HS Student

"In Freshman Success I learned a lot about body image and unhealthy relationships. I was able to help a friends see how unhealthy her relationship was with her boyfriend and she is a lot happier now that she isn't in it. I wish the class periods were longer." - HS Student

The first tier of WCST's WINGS Prevention Program is called Freshman Success; a 9-16 week healthy relationships and violence prevention curriculum implemented in health classrooms that complements existing health programming. This tier includes weekly sessions on topics such as: Gender and Societal Stereotypes, Body Image, Self-Destructive Behaviors, Substance Use, Misuse, and Abuse, Communication, Cyber Safety, Digital Dating Abuse, Power and Control, Power vs. Privilege, Cycle of Violence, Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships and Consent.

The second tier of the WINGS Prevention Program is Young Men's and Young Women's WINGS classes. These classes are for students who are looking for an opportunity to go more in-depth on the topics started in Freshman Success classes, including topics like, healthy relationships, identity and self-value, as well as violence prevention and healthy breakups. Young Men's and Young Women's WINGS classes are optional classes and available for students who choose to take them. They meet once weekly during regular school hours. These classes also include a mentorship model to support youth leadership and peer education. Mentors even develop and implement their own lesson plans for their peers on topics that they identify as important to their lives.

WINGS Action Team

The third tier of the WINGS Prevention Program is the Youth Action Team (YAT). Students who join the Youth Action Team, come together to reduce violence and build community. YAT members participate in youth generated, community wide education and prevention activities that promote positive social norms and challenge victim blaming. The Youth Action Team develops and implements projects to enhance community involvement and investment in violence prevention. The team is currently continuing their campaign of STAND/SPEAK/ACT that they developed previously and implemented with events, public awareness banners, shirts, signs, and presentations to the city council, to the local radio station and TV network, and in other venues. The Action Team represents a broad spectrum of high school youth leaders who are committed to finding meaningful ways of challenging social norms that allow violence to be so prevalent.



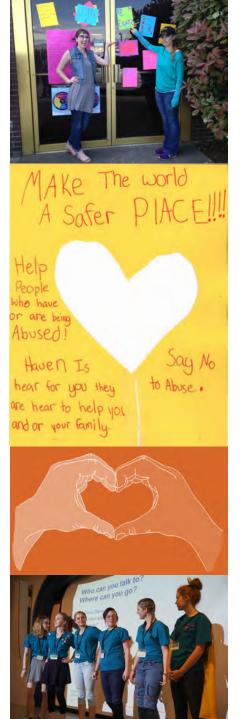
Youth are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors and succeed academically when they feel connected to school. Second to family, school connectedness is the strongest protective factor for youth to decrease substance use, school absenteeism, early sexual initiation, violence, and unintentional injury. WCST's school-based prevention program is designed to help youth navigate their environment and connect with others. The program provides interactive activities, engages students in peer to peer conversations and empowers students to make healthy life decisions.

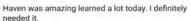
"I come to WINGS class not only for the extremely valuable lessons, but for the sense of community and family. WINGS creates a safe and comfortable space for us. I have learned many things from this class. My favorite lessons were on sexual assault, substance abuse and toxic relationships. I have learned to be more confident and comfortable with my decisions and feel I have become a better person and a better support for others." - High School Student in Young Women's WINGS

"I choose to attend WINGS class because we address issues that I question daily, and the time in the class is valued more to me than any other class. I can make up work from any class but every day in YM group is its own special experience. We talk about racism, bullying, relationships etc. I can turn that into my personal decisions and memories and I better myself by understanding the best thing to do in a situation before it happens. It betters my future and thought processes. In WINGS class it is easier to connect and share. There is confidentiality and complete respect towards one another." - High School Student in Young Men's WINGS









Mackenzie Smith

Facebook





HAVEN from Domestic and Sexual Violence HAVEN Primary Prevention Program

HAVEN From Domestic & Sexual Violence (HAVEN) is a nonprofit organization serving Wasco, Gilliam, Wheeler, and Sherman counties in north central Oregon. HAVEN believes that all people have the right to violence-free lives. Domestic violence, teen dating violence, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking, and child abuse should never be tolerated or condoned. These acts have a devastating effect on survivors, their families, and society as a whole. They believe that ultimately, a healthy community is ours to create. "Through culturally sensitive awareness, creative solutions, education, and communicating proactive behaviors that establish intolerance of violence with those around us, we make our community safer. The more people that take action, the closer we get to that goal."

HAVEN's Prevention Program goals include having youth understand and engage in behaviors that promote healthy relationships and prevent sexual violence and teen dating violence. Their program aims to change knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors among youth that would encourage or allow dating violence or sexual assault to be allowed. This includes increasing students' confidence in bystander intervention.

HAVEN's Prevention Team provides programming in elementary, middle, and high schools in Wasco, Gilliam, Sherman, and Wheeler counties. Their unique programming reflects the suburban, rural, and frontier communities they serve. HAVEN's prevention curricula cover a variety of topics, including: the Dynamics of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking; Healthy Relationships and CERTS; the Bridge of Consent; Bystander Intervention; Media Literacy; Privilege & Oppression; Identity; Self Esteem; Gender Roles; Power & Control; Personal Space; Safety Planning & Resilience; and Victim Empathy (In Their Shoes). Their multi-session programming was designed to be age appropriate, align with Oregon's health education standards and performance indicators (including the updated standards approved in 2016), and can help meet state policy requirements around violence prevention and health promotion education in K-12 schools (which includes Erin's Law and the Healthy Teen Relationships Act).

"I would like to thank you. I would like to thank you for educating people and ending stereotypes that reinforce victim blaming and rape culture. Thank you for teaching and reinforcing the ideas of consent, healthy relationships, and the right to a violence free life. Most of my life, the idea has been enforced to me that if I am assaulted, it's because I was wearing too little, I drank too much, I did something wrong, that I somehow caused it. Thank you for helping to change our culture and making everyone, women especially, to feel safer. Thank you for educating us when we're young, and raising a new generation of people who are kind and considerate, who know how to help their friends, who don't find gender or rape jokes funny. But most of all, I want to thank you for your work at HAVEN, and for being the positive change our generation needs." - Middle School Student



HAVEN from Domestic & Sexual Violence Teen Troupe & Healthy Teen Relationships Summit



HAVEN also facilitates the HAVEN Teen Troupe, which is made up of a team of high school students, primarily located in The Dalles. This group was initially created to be a peer education group, providing bystander intervention education using theater. The Troupe has grown into much more over the years. Their main project each year is planning the Healthy Teen Relationships Summit which brings together youth from around the four county area and often around the state as well, to learn from each other, and support healthier and safer lives for young people. The Summit is one of the few opportunities in our state for young people to take leadership in organizing, facilitating, and leading learning opportunities that reflect the needs and voices of Oregon's young people.



"First of all, I would just like to say thank you to HAVEN for really opening my eyes about all of these topics. I have learned a lot in these 10 or so sessions. One of the things I learned was how to respond to people being made fun of, for who they are. Before HAVEN, I was more afraid to be myself because of society's image of what a woman should be. I have many 'male' characteristics. I love hunting, fishing, shooting, trucks, and I don't mind getting my hands dirty. But now, because of HAVEN, I have been myself more lately. So for that, I really appreciate them teaching me that. I also learned about relationships. I know that I may not use this now, but in future relationships this will really help me. I have learned that it is okay to say no. I have been pressured many times to do things just because other people are doing them. But, I know that you shouldn't have to do anything you don't want to. I have liked so many things about this class. First off, I love their personalities. Seeing how outgoing and true to themselves they are, is really inspirational to me. I think it is really important and beneficial for everyone to take this class. Honestly, the only thing I didn't like was HAVEN not being able to come more often. I will use all of my skills to help people through school and my entire life. I will try and stand up more for people I see at school, and myself. Before I really understood about people being able to be themselves, I would tell my brother to man up. Now I understand and encourage him to be himself as he is only 6. Thank you so much, HAVEN!" - Middle School Student











El Programa Hispano Catolico

P.A.S. Culturally Specific Prevention Program

El Programa Hispano Catolico (EPHC) has been a member of the Tri-County Latinx community for more than 35 years. Originally begun as a small, culturally specific program inside of Catholic Charities of Oregon in 1982, when the Latinx community made up just 2.5% of the area population, EPHC has recently evolved into a stand-alone 501c3 with over 60 bilingual/bicultural staff members, an independent and majority-Latinx Board of Directors and more than 20 different culturally specific programs that address the unique needs of the Latinx community. The mission of El Programa Hispano Catolico is three-fold:

Goal I: Increase access to autonomy and self-determination for the Latinx community,

Goal 2: Provide support to community members as they identify and define their own empowerment

Goal 3: Promote understanding of the enormous diversity within the Latinx community

Proyecto UNICA, the domestic and sexual violence branch of EPHC was developed in direct response to needs identified by the Latinx community. Proyecto UNICA uses a bicultural, bilingual, and popular education model to prevent violence and support survivors, families, and communities who have been impacted by violence.



They understand that the root of all violence is power, control, and oppression, and believe that we cannot end domestic and sexual violence without addressing the root causes of racism, colonialism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, and ableism. In order for all people to live free from violence and control, it is critical to cultivate a culture of safety, care, and empathy within our communities.

The goal of EPHC's Prevention Program is to deliver a culturally-specific violence prevention and healthy relationships 9-session curriculum called PAS, to Latinx students and families in Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties. The PAS Curriculum (Prevención de Agresión Sexual – Sexual Violence Prevention) aims to engage the Latinx community in culturally- and linguistically-specific sexual violence prevention.

"Muchas gracias por compartir su conocimiento y la ayuda a nuestra comunidad." - Middle School Student



P.A.S. Culturally Specific Prevention Program







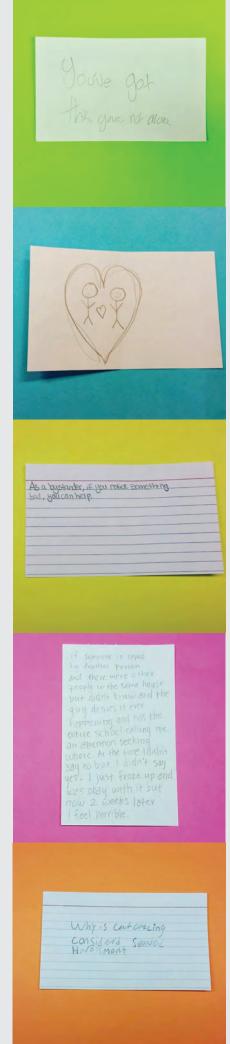
UNICA's prevention team partners with the SUN (Schools Uniting Neighborhoods) Service System and other schools/school-based programs to provide primary prevention classes to youth of all ages. What makes their classes unique in the field of primary prevention is their curriculum developed in concert with their culturally specific mission. They pride themselves on their emphasis on cultural identity development specific to the Latinx community which creates a safe and culturally affirming space for the youth they serve. In each class they also dedicate half of their time to artistic creation based in ancestral roots as an invitation to encounter self and community as well as to develop self-care practices. The reason for this is that the Black, Indigenous and Brown Latinx students that EPHC serves, along with their families and communities, experience an alarmingly disproportionate rate of racism, sexual assault, and sexism.

The PAS Prevention Program focuses on a combination of primary prevention strategies including:

Implementation of the PAS curriculum in a school setting with Latinx middle and high school youth. The curriculum addresses topics including consent, gender roles and expression, oppression, power and control, healthy relationships, victim blaming, media analysis, substance use, bystander intervention, rights and consequences, and enacting community change; Engaging the community through the use of youth-led activities, including bystander intervention projects, video projects, intergenerational talks with community elders, and community outreach; and Increasing organizational and community prevention capacity by participating in community coalitions and training EPHC and Catholic Charities staff and volunteers to co-facilitate the PAS curriculum and to integrate prevention perspectives and activities in their work, while also training and providing support for practitioners outside of their organization to be more culturally responsive for the Latinx community.



The PAS program has been created by and for Latinx communities. It includes, student, parent, and community components to help address needs identified by community members. Parents involved in their program have had really great discussions around identity and the complexities in distinguishing unhealthy versus abusive relationships. Youth have identified that they feel represented in their schools through the PAS prevention program, and that they want to become more active in advocating for change. EPHC tries to address this by supporting opportunities for youth to apply what they learn in PAS in places outside of school. Through these efforts, students are able to take on leadership roles with their peers as well as within their communities.





Clackamas Women's Services Violence Prevention Program

Since 2013, the CWS Violence Prevention Program has dedicated a majority of their prevention efforts to addressing individual attitudes and belief systems that lead to violence by working directly with students to provide the 10-session See it. End it. curriculum in middle and high school health classrooms throughout Clackamas County. To complement this curriculum, CWS is in the early stages of implementing two additional components to this program, including implementing Coaching Boys into Men with athletics teams in Clackamas County as well as a Social Emotional Learning program to support youth/parent relationships both in and outside of their organization. Since 2013, CWS has reached thousands of students throughout the county, and just since August 2017, they have provided programming to 20 different schools reaching 3,447 students. Their programming is designed to reflect the ever-changing needs and experiences of students. One way they do this is by collecting and responding to anonymous comments and questions from high schoolers throughout the program. Some examples of these are along the left.

Goal I: Promote social norms (knowledge, acceptance, and skills) that protect youth against dating and sexual violence.

Goal 2: Engage men as allies in violence prevention and promote social norms and environments that protect against sexual violence to those at heightened risk of perpetration.

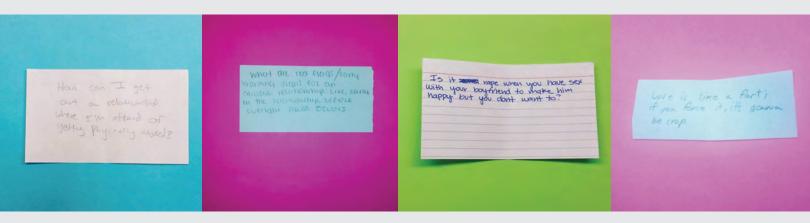
Goal 3: Foster healthy caregiver/child relationships through development of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programming.

See it. End it. Curriculum

CWS's See it. End it. curriculum includes lessons on: Bystander Intervention, Sexual and Dating Violence, Anti-Oppression, Gender Socialization, Healthy Relationships, Media Literacy, and the Harms of Pornography. Both middle and high school programming cover the same topics, but activities and lessons are different based on age levels, developmental appropriateness, and topics outlined in Oregon's Health Education Standards and Performance Indicators.



Clackamas Women's Services Violence Prevention Program



What students have to say about the program:

"I think this new information will help me to find better ways to communicate my feelings and needs with a friend or anybody."

- High School Student

"I now understand I deserve respect and should be able to say "no" without being guilt tripped." - High School Student

"I will make sure to intervene when I see bullying."
- Junior High School Student

"It was important to learn about because it's not something that's openly talked about a lot"
- Junior High School Student

"I have my first boyfriend so I will really think about how I should be treated and treat him." - High School Student





@AnonymousQuestionBox goal: To provide a fun way for youth to continue to connect with CWS, a venue for answering common questions from our Anonymous Question Box, and a voice for youth about issues concerning their relationships. Please see the above pictures for some examples of the questions and comments youth share and how CWS may respond.





Support Prevention Efforts in Oregon

Fund Comprehensive Violence Prevention Education Programs

"I have learned what consent is and that if someone does not give their consent, it is not okay to pressure

Someone..."

- Josephine County HS
Student

"I learned a lot and it was relevant because now I can see if others are feeling bad or want help and try to help/offer support." - Wasco County HS Student

"I have my first boyfriend so I will really think about how I should be treated and treat him."

> - Clackamas County HS Student

"I am brought to [prevention] because I want to be part of a cultural change on our campus - replacing coercion culture with consent culture."

- Southern Oregon University Student Rape Prevention & Education funds provide \$212,705 total annually to local prevention efforts in Oregon. With those funds, four organizations reached **9,144 Students** in 7 counties in Oregon during the 17-18 School Year.² Invest \$3 million in dedicated funding to community-based non-profits, culturally specific, and tribal programs to implement violence prevention education in K-12 and other community settings.

76%

Students reported increased knowledge regarding signs of an unhealthy relationship.³

64%

Students Less Likely to Commit Sexual Violence¹

59%

Students report increased knowledge of healthy communication skills and awareness of how they communicate with others.³

54%

Students Less Likely to Experience Victimization by a Dating Partner¹ 86%

Students understand that oppression increases vulnerability to experiencing violence ⁶

86%

Students are able to identify ways to support and show respect for people of all gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations.9

Effective Violence Prevention Strategies¹



3625 River Rd N, Suite 275, Keizer, OR 97303-5985 I Phone: (503) 990-6541 Email: taskforce@oregonsatf.org I Web: www.oregonsatf.org



The Cost of Violence in Oregon

A Benefit Analysis of Comprehensive Prevention Efforts

22% Females 12% Males 37% Nonbinary

Oregon 11th
graders identify
having
considered
suicide during the
last year

* Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

Oregon students report believing there is not an atmosphere of trust and respect at school

42%

* Oregon Student Voice Report

Youth said they were not discouraged by negativity from other people, but that they do need more support from the adults in their lives, they feel that they are not taken seriously enough and that their voices often go unheard.

* El Programa Hispano Catolico

33%

Oregon 11th grade students identify having fair/poor emotional and mental health

* Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

20% Females 3% Males 15% Nonbinary

Oregon 11th graders identify having given in to sex because of pressure

* Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

Estimated lifetime costs of violence in the USA:

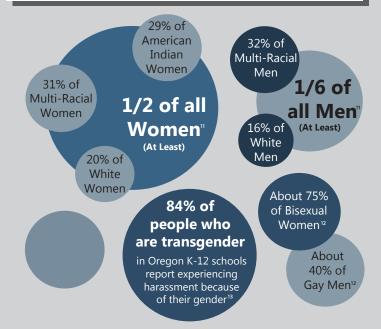
Intimate Partner ⁷	Rape ⁵	
\$2.1 Trillion	\$1.2 Trillion	Medical Costs
\$1.3 Trillion	\$1.6 Trillion	Lost Productivity (Victims & Perpetrators)
\$73 Billion	\$234 Billion	Criminal Justice Activities
\$62 Billion	\$36 Billion	Other Costs
\$3.6	\$3.1 Trillion	TOTAL





Nearly

Who Experiences Sexual Violence in Oregon?



75% of students who complete only "some college" have debt exceeding \$10,000.6 Survivors who leave during a semester because of violence can incur costs of up to \$30,000 in lost tuition on top of student loan interest.7



Increase in number of students choosing to report on Oregon college and university campuses since passage of victim/advocate privilege in 2015.8

3625 River Rd N, Suite 275, Keizer, OR 97303-5985 I Phone: (503) 990-6541 Email: taskforce@oregonsatf.org I Web: www.oregonsatf.org