

BLOW THE WHISTLE ON RAPE

NCVAN Miniplan

JOMC 130
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The Client: NCVAN

The North Carolina Victim Assistance Network, also known as NCVAN, is a guidance and support group for victims of violent crime available to all North Carolina residents. The non-profit organization works to inform victims of their rights. NCVAN acts as a liaison between victims and other services. The organization links victims and their families with the district attorney's office, advocacy groups, law enforcement, and support groups. Numerous North Carolinians, however, are not familiar with NCVAN and the resources it offers. Public relations can help NCVAN find ways to communicate with potential and current victims by building mutually beneficial relationships with key publics.

The Problem: Rape on College Campuses

In researching issues impacting NCVAN, we found that an alarmingly high number of college females fall victim to rape, date rape, and sexual assault every year. Statistics show that about twenty percent of college age females become the victims of rape or sexual assault. Additionally, a rape occurs every 21 hours on each college campuses in the United States, yet less than fifteen percent of rapes are reported to law enforcement. Research also shows that a woman is most likely to be raped during the first two months of her college career. (Appendix 1). Furthermore, many victims choose not to report instances of rape or sexual assault because they are embarrassed, uncertain of whom to turn to, or worried that the police will blame them.

How NCVAN Can Solve the Problem

As an organization dedicated to promoting the rights of victims, NCVAN can assist victims of sexual abuse and help victims and their families seek support and information, as well as recognize their rights. Although there are a variety of support groups and organizations dedicated to assisting rape victims, NCVAN has the advantage of being able to provide victims with an extensive network of resources. NCVAN can focus on cultivating an awareness of its resources for rape victims among those publics most at risk. By informing collegiate women of their services, NCVAN can build a mutually beneficial relationship with UNC female students. The campaign will also enable NCVAN to increase their visibility among the college students and get their name out to more people. While not every college female will become a rape victim, NCVAN can ensure that those who do become victims know where to turn for help.

Publics

Reaching out to UNC sororities and freshman females

NCVAN can help solve the problem of rape on college campuses by reaching out to those groups who are most at risk. Rather than target all UNC female students with the “Blow the Whistle on Rape” campaign, the client should concentrate its resources and time on a smaller demographic. We feel that the campaign should focus on reaching out to incoming freshman females and UNC sororities. These two key publics would be the most effective way for an organization with limited time, budget, and staff, to reach a substantial segment of UNC females. Freshmen females and members of sororities represent non-traditional publics for NCVAN. NCVAN should reach out to these two groups because as non-traditional publics they would most likely be relatively unfamiliar with the organization. The campaign will enable NCVAN to establish an ongoing relationship with these publics. Freshmen females and girls in sororities are for the most part latent publics in relation to NCVAN. Most of the females are probably unaware of NCVAN and its mission.

Educating Freshman Females

As research points out, the first two months of a female’s college career is when a woman is most susceptible to sexual assault and rape. NCVAN can therefore make a large and lasting impact by targeting incoming freshmen females. By reaching out to females at summer orientation, NCVAN can hopefully prepare and inform women about the presence of sexual assault and rape on campus. Since everyone who attends UNC has to participate in the orientation program, this is a good way to ensure that females will receive important information before having to adjust to college life. By integrating the “Blow the Whistle on Rape” campaign with Carolina’s orientation, we hope that freshman females will retain the information presented during their entire college career.

Educating Sororities

Sororities are the second key public NCVAN should target with the campaign. Sororities are a good public because they encompass a significant number of at-risk female students. Furthermore, sororities represent a well-organized, existing network, which NCVAN can use to its advantage. NCVAN can easily target females through sororities, because these groups hold consistent chapter meetings, usually weekly. Sororities of the Panhellenic Council also

hold occasional grand chapters, in which members of all the nine sororities meet. Collaborating with sororities is an affordable and effective way for NCVAN to educate a substantial female population about their resources. UNC currently has approximately 1,500 female students active in its sorority system, which is composed of nine Panhellenic Sororities, a Christian social sorority, and four National Pan-Hellenic Council sororities.

Taking Action

We propose that NCVAN should pilot a campaign reaching out to college females, since they are most at risk of becoming victims of rape. More specifically, NCVAN should start small and test a pilot program targeting college females at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The program should be implemented at the beginning of the 2004 school year. The organization should also collaborate with existing programs, such as orientation to save time and money. NCVAN should employ an unpaid intern to help out at the pit sits or organize guest speakers when staff members do not have the time. If the UNC “Blow the Whistle on Rape” campaign proves successful, then NCVAN could extend the program to other UNC system schools and private universities.

The Campaign Goal

The overarching goal of the “Blow the Whistle on Rape” campaign is to educate female students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill about the resources NCVAN offers to victims of rape and sexual assault.

The Campaign Objectives

Informational Objectives

Objective #1:

To increase student awareness of rape on college campuses by 30 percent by December 2004.

Strategy #1: To educate using an uncontrolled media campaign

Tactics:

- Submitting pitch information about rape statistics in conjunction with NCVAN to campus media like the Daily Tar Heel. The Daily Tar Heel is a student-run newspaper that targets all UNC students. By including

rape statistics and NCVAN's contact information, it would make freshmen females and sorority women aware of the frequency of this crime.

- Sending information for feature articles to other student-run media such as the Blue and White and Carolina Week, approximately two weeks later.

Strategy #2: To use written communication and informational kits targeted towards sororities and freshman.

Tactics:

- Producing a brochure (Appendix 2) that contains statistics about rape and information about NCVAN. These brochures will be distributed in freshman dorms, to sorority houses, and to Student Health Services. To reach freshmen females, these brochures will be included in the Freshmen Folders (of females) at Carolina's Orientation Program.
- Creating an informational kit, called the "Stop Box" (Appendix 3) that will be distributed to the sororities on UNC's campus. NCVAN should include a letter with the box, encouraging sororities to utilize the resources contained. In the "Stop Box" will be a copy of a PowerPoint Presentation, whistles for safety, brochures, and red ribbons to symbolize the campaign. The PowerPoint Presentation shows statistics about the prevalence of rape; the brochure also includes statistics, as well as preventative tips and NCVAN's contact information. The kit would give visibility to NVCAN without requiring personal contact. If the "Stop Boxes" prove to be successful in sororities, we will distribute them to other organizations on campus.

Objective #2:

To increase awareness of NCVAN and its resources among females by 30 percent by December 2004.

Strategy #1: To build relationships with freshmen females and sorority women through face-to-face communication.

Tactics:

- Implementing Pit Sits at UNC's campus would be effective in targeting females at the university. The Pit Sits could occur during orientation programs. NCVAN could set-up a table in the Pit and communicate one-on-one and face-to-face with the individuals that stop by the

booth. At these Pit Sits, NCVAN can distribute brochures and whistles to the females and be available to answer any questions.

Strategy #2: To send out written information to key publics.

Tactics:

- Produce and distribute posters with simple information pertaining to NCVAN on them. The poster can include the slogan “Blow the Whistle on Rape” as well as NCVAN’s contact information. These posters will be distributed to freshmen females to display in their dorms, as well as to sorority houses where they can be displayed a prominent place in the house. We will offer an incentive program for the women displaying the posters in their rooms. The NCVAN intern will randomly knock on a female’s door, and if she has the poster displayed, she will be entered into a drawing to win a gift certificate to the Streets at Southpoint. With these posters, NCVAN’s information will be readily available for freshmen and sorority women if they need to contact NCVAN, thus eliminating the search for a phone number.
- Distribute brochures (mentioned previously) in all freshmen folders that they receive on “move-in day.” When freshmen read the information in their packets, they will be immediately familiarized with NCVAN and their services.

Strategy #3: Use promotional tools to increase NCVAN’s name recognition.

Tactics:

- Distribute whistles printed with NCVAN’s name on them. By doing this, freshmen females and sorority women will associate the campaign with NCVAN.

Attitudinal Objective

To decrease the negative stigma surrounding rape victims by 25 percent by communicating the message to college females that being raped is not the victim’s fault by December 2004.

Strategy #1: Using face-to-face communication with opinion leaders to reach sororities.

Tactics:

- Organize and sponsor special events where guest speakers, such as rape victims, come and speak to sororities during chapter or grand chapter meetings. The presidents of sororities would publicize the lecture to their members.
- Publicize the special event by sending a press release to campus media, such as The Daily Tar Heel, approximately a week prior to the event.

Strategy #2: Use face-to-face communication and collaborate with UNC's orientation program

Tactics:

- Organize small group meetings led by Orientation Leaders, who can relay information from NCVAN about rape. Orientation leaders are important opinion leaders for incoming freshman and can share information about rape provided to them by NCVAN.
- Collaborate with orientation skits, which present prominent issues to freshmen students. NCVAN can play a role in this program by meeting with Orientation Leaders during their training, assisting in the writing of the skits, and in the facilitation of discussions after the skits have been presented.

Behavioral Objectives

Objective #1:

To encourage 50 percent of female students to say they would go to NCVAN for help and support if they were raped by December 2004.

Strategy #1: To use written materials to emphasize the slogan or key message.

Tactics:

- Incorporate our slogan "Blow the Whistle on Rape" onto posters, brochures, and whistles, so that college females will be reminded to take action against rape and to seek help.
- Distribute brochures, which contain rape statistics, preventative tips, and contact information for NCVAN. These brochures will encourage victims of rape to report the crime to police and then seek other resources by contacting NCVAN, to find out about their rights as a victim of sexual assault.

Objective #2:

To persuade 75% of college females to take preventative measures against sexual assault by December 2004.

Strategy #1: To use a promotional tool in order to increase safety among females.

Tactics:

- Distribute whistles with NCVAN displayed on the side for females to use for safety and to symbolize the message behind the campaign. These whistles will be distributed in the “Stop Boxes” and at the freshmen orientation program.

Strategy #2: To use face-to-face communication to demonstrate ways to remain safe.

Tactics:

- Organize skits during orientation in which Orientation Leaders will demonstrate how college females can prevent rape and sexual assault. These skits will encourage females to be aware of their surroundings while stressing the importance of safety.

Theme and Key Message

“Blow the Whistle on Rape”

Our campaign theme, “Blow the Whistle on Rape,” encourages women who become rape victims or have friends who are victims to seek support and guidance from NCVAN. By using “Blow the Whistle on Rape” as the slogan and theme we hope to present an active message telling victims to report rape and turn to NCVAN for information and support.

Essential to the success of our campaign is a coherent and consistent message. In addition to the theme, “Blow the Whistle on Rape,” another important element of creating a theme is the red whistle logo. This visual image is meant to reinforce the campaign slogan and hopefully making the message memorable visually. The consistent use of the red whistle logo on printed materials should help to reinforce the importance of the message--encouraging women to speak out against rape and sexual assault. Also, we used black and red as consistent colors in all of our written information, such as posters and brochures. By consistently using the whistle, slogan and two

colors on all information we are able to give our campaign a distinct and memorable look. We also plan to distribute actual whistles displaying NCVAN's name and contact information to coordinate with all the visual whistle imagery. These whistles reinforce the theme of the campaign while also serving as a functional safety tool for our publics.

Evaluation

In order to determine if our Public Relations plan met our objectives, we intend to utilize surveys and focus groups for evaluation.

1. Surveys to test Informational Objectives

In order to judge whether our informational objectives were successful, we plan to organize a variety of surveys. The first survey will be used to test how much females know about rape on college campuses and if females are familiar with NCVAN before the campaign. These initial surveys will target both publics. For freshmen, we would distribute written surveys at the beginning of orientation. For sororities, the surveys would be emailed at the beginning of the school year.

Questions would include having participants rank the severity of rape on campus. Other questions would ask whether participants know about NCVAN and what the organization does.

Then in order to see if we were able to increase awareness of rape and NCVAN, we will conduct a post-campaign survey. We plan to send out surveys over email to all freshmen females and sorority members in December 2004, after their first semester of college. Females received brochures, participated in discussions, and watched skits about NCVAN at C-TOPS; in addition, throughout the semester they hopefully have seen information in student-run media, communicated with the NCVAN representative during a Pit Sit, and been to guest speaker seminars. We would also want to test the use and recall of this information about NCVAN. Some sample questions will include

In order to insure that a significant percentage of freshmen females complete the survey, we plan to offer an incentive. Every student that completes and returns the online survey will be entered into a raffle to be randomly selected to win a gift certificate to the Streets at Southpoint.

2. Focus Groups to Test Attitudinal and Behavioral Objectives

We will randomly select freshmen females and sorority women to participate in a focus group in December 2004. These participants will be contacted through email. In each group, we will have 8-12 participants and in total, we will conduct 3 focus groups. A member of NCVAN's board of directors will serve as the mediator, since he has no emotional ties with the participant. In order to test our behavioral and attitudinal objectives, we will pose questions that ask our key publics whether their views and habits have changed. We will ask participants if they would contact NCVAN if they were raped or if they were raped, did they contact NCVAN. Additionally, we will ask participants if they have begun to take precautionary safety measures to protect themselves against sexual assault. This will include seeing whether females actually carried whistles we distributed to them. In order to test our attitudinal objective, we would ask participants questions about whether they thought there exists a negative stigma associated with reporting rape. We will also ask participants if they believe rape is often the victims' fault.

In order to insure that all the chosen participants attend the focus group, we have developed an incentive program. Each person that comes will be entered in a raffle to win a gift certificate to the Streets at Southpoint.

Although our evaluation is meant to judge whether the campaign was successful after just one semester, we would also employ the same evaluation plan after the school year (May 2005) to see whether the campaign continued to make progress in meeting its objectives.