

PREVENTION 101!

A Sexual Violence Prevention Toolkit



Everyone can work toward creating a world free from sexual violence. This toolkit is intended to be a starting point for those who want to begin prevention programming in their communities.

FOUR PREVENTION ACTION STEPS

Everyone plays an integral role in the prevention of sexual assault. Here are some things we can all do that, together, will have a huge impact:

- **BE LOUD.** One of the things that allows sexual violence to continue is the silence that often surrounds it. All of us can have conversations with our friends, families, and communities.
- **Talk with the young people in your life.** In partnership with King County youth, KCSARC has worked to develop [100Conversations](#), a tool to help parents, caregivers, and educators talk with youth about healthy relationships, boundaries, and consent. For younger children, [he told me not to tell](#) is an excellent resource.
- **Call attention to sexually violent jokes and comments; discuss victim-blaming statements and attitudes.** Sexual violence occurs on a spectrum and it is important that we work to shift the culture which allows it to continue.
- **Encourage schools and youth programs in your community to offer in sexual assault prevention** and to incorporate these conversations into their environments.

WHAT IS PRIMARY PREVENTION?

Primary prevention of sexual assault is work aimed at stopping sexual assault perpetration before it occurs. One helpful way to think about primary prevention is through the often-used river analogy.

The river story tells of two people fishing along a river when they spot a person in the water struggling to swim. They jump into the river to save the person, and before they can return safely to the bank they see more people in the water struggling to swim.

The fisher-people spend many hours saving people from the river one after another before deciding to move upstream to determine why people are falling into the river to begin with.

KCSARC is working to “move upstream” by addressing the root causes of sexual assault perpetration.

An important framework for thinking about primary prevention is the **Social-Ecological Model** developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (Dalhburg & Krug 2002). The social-ecological model is a helpful framework for looking at the complex interplay between factors that influence sexual violence.

This framework shows us that no person exists in a vacuum. Rather, individuals have their own beliefs and behaviors, but individuals exist in relationship to other people, those relationships then exist in communities, and those communities exist within the larger society.



The Social-Ecological Model

Research shows that there are risk and protective factors along each level of the social-ecological model that increase or decrease the likelihood that someone will perpetrate sexual violence.

Risk factors along each of these levels include things like inability for individuals to empathize with others, relationships characterized by physical or emotional abuse, communities that tolerate violence and societal norms that hold women as inferior.

All of these factors contribute to the perpetration of sexual assault, and they can all be impacted by meaningful prevention efforts. To learn more about risk and protective factors, [visit the Centers for Disease Control website](#).

WHY FOCUS ON ENDING PERPETRATION?

Risk reduction focused strategies are different from primary prevention in that they attempt to teach potential victims personal safety techniques. While personal safety is incredibly important, KCSARC knows that sexual assault will only end when perpetration stops.

WHAT DOES KCSARC PREVENTION LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?

At KCSARC we keep our prevention work grounded in the Centers for Disease Control's [research on risk and protective factors](#) and utilize the social-ecological framework to keep a focus on addressing these factors at each level of the model. KCSARC also works to ensure that all prevention programming adheres to the [Nine Principles of Effective Prevention Programming](#) and operates from a community-development perspective.

KCSARC currently engages in prevention work in both schools and youth-serving organizations under the umbrella of Project **360**. KCSARC facilitates prevention sessions with young people that focus on the risk and protective factors of sexual assault perpetration; we have conversations with youth about consent, boundaries, healthy relationships, gender stereotypes, and more.