Rape Crisis Center Professionals' Perception of Sexual Violence Policy: A Qualitative Analysis

Stephanie Manieri
Dominican University of California

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Background
Females ages 18-24
highest rate of rape and sexual assault victimizations [1]

1 in 5 men & 1 in 2 women
have experienced sexual violence other than rape [2]

In California
programs to address the issue exist, but there is little standardization [3]

Rape crisis centers
act as first-responders
Methods
Results
“Laws surrounding the age of consent for minors in California makes it so no one under the age of 18 can consent to any sex act regardless of the age of participants which can make many cases of consensual sex between minors a crime or ‘up to clinical judgment’.” - (Participant 1)
“Model policy is really reinforcing having all these agencies collaborate and cross-train one another... But our agency being trained on it doesn’t help if the first people responding are law enforcement and the medical staff if we’re not getting called.” - (Participant 2)
“Prevention education can be very helpful in decreasing future sexual violence crimes. I also think public awareness of the reality of rape culture and how victims are treated can help people create an expectation of appropriate behavior instead of directly or subconsciously supporting perpetrators.” - (Participant 4)
Discussion
Rape crisis center professionals experience poor collaboration

Interagency collaboration & cross-training are important, but not occurring

Prevention education is perceived to be a positive policy that may not be working as intended
Conclusion & Recommendations
CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Flaws in the system that lead to ineffective statutory rape laws
- Performing minimum level of operation for a rape crisis center has been difficult
- Prevention education is a positive policy that is not regulated
- Training for judges who make clinical judgements
- Representation at oversight meetings and better mechanisms for interagency collaboration
- Collaboration with schools’ admin to include prevention education in comprehensive sex ed
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Any questions?
You can find me at
stephanie.manieri@students.dominican.edu