

Preventing Sexual Violence in Florida

Empowering Bystanders to Stop Sexual Violence BEFORE it Occurs



The Florida Department of Health is using an innovative approach to prevent rape and other forms of sexual violence across the state. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **Rape Prevention and Education (RPE)** program, Florida is working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders to **stop sexual violence BEFORE it occurs**. These collaborations have strengthened the state's sexual violence prevention efforts by building partnerships that support a statewide approach to the prevention of sexual violence.

WHAT IS FLORIDA DOING TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

All states, including Florida, use various programs and strategies to implement and sustain prevention efforts that ultimately decrease the number of individuals who **perpetrate sexual violence** and the number of individuals who are **victims of sexual violence**. Florida is maximizing the impact of its work by supporting the statewide implementation of **Green Dot**, an evidence-based, comprehensive social change strategy that encourages individuals to incorporate violence prevention behaviors into everyday life. The model engages community members, particularly influential peer leaders, in a bystander training program aimed at **educating individuals to establish an intolerance for violence as a norm** and teaching bystanders the skills to **assess high-risk situations** and **intervene in a safe and effective manner**. The Florida Department of Health awards funding to providers who agree to implement Green Dot as a way to empower individuals in high schools, colleges, and communities throughout Florida to **end sexual violence through social change, advocacy, education, and training**.

The CDC RPE program has been strengthening our communities and striving to reduce the burden of sexual violence since 1994. CDC provides RPE funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

WHY IS FLORIDA WORKING TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Among Florida adults:

17%

of women have been raped at some point in their life

42%

of women have been victims of sexual violence other than rape

20%

of men have been victims of sexual violence other than rape

WHAT IMPACT IS THE RPE PROGRAM INTENDED TO HAVE IN FLORIDA?

The Florida RPE program aims to prevent sexual violence by promoting **non-violent social norms, attitudes, beliefs, policies, and practices**.



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WHAT IF YOU COULD EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES TO TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

That's exactly what Florida is doing by supporting the statewide implementation of Green Dot with **CDC's RPE program funding**. As a bystander training and intervention initiative, Green Dot recognizes many people are concerned about the high prevalence of sexual violence but don't have the confidence, skills, or tools to be part of the solution. Green Dot is predicated on the belief that individual safety is a **community responsibility** and shifts the primary focus of violence prevention activities away from victims/perpetrators and onto bystanders. The overarching goal of Green Dot is **to change the social norms around violence in the community** by training and mobilizing a force of **engaged and proactive potential bystanders** who can recognize a situation that could lead to sexual violence and effectively intervene to prevent such an episode from occurring.

The initiative uses the concept of green dots and red dots on a map. A red dot represents an episode of power-based personal violence, including sexual violence, domestic or intimate partner violence, stalking, bullying, child abuse, or elder abuse. A green dot represents any action or choice that shows **intolerance for power-based personal violence**, such as removing a friend from a situation that puts him or her at risk for being a victim, talking to friends about violence prevention, or showing support for violence prevention initiatives by displaying posters or other materials. The goal is to have a community map that shows many green dots and no red dots.

Does Green Dot work? In a study comparing students attending a college that implemented Green Dot with students attending two colleges that did not implement the program, researchers found that the college that implemented the Green Dot program experienced:¹



These results are encouraging because they indicate that social change strategies, bystander training, and intervention programs, such as Green Dot, have the potential to reduce sexual violence, domestic or intimate partner violence, stalking, and bullying among college students.

What does this mean for Florida? Thanks to funding from the CDC RPE program, efforts are underway across the state to:



For additional information or to locate contact information for the state RPE program, please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/rpe/states.html>

¹ Coker AL, Fisher BS, Bush HM, Swan SC, Williams CM, Clear ER, DeGue S. (2014). Evaluation of the Green Dot Bystander Intervention to Reduce Interpersonal Violence Among College Students Across Three Campuses. *Violence against Women*. 21(12): 1507-1527.