

# Student-Athlete Engagement

An essential part of positive culture change is student-athlete involvement.

A successful sexual assault prevention program requires student-athlete commitment to ensuring all students are treated with respect, dignity and concern for their welfare. It is critical that student-athletes are fully engaged in planning and implementing sexual violence prevention efforts. They must be integrally involved in program planning and implementation, and receive information and life-skills training

that empower them to address emerging concerns and intervene appropriately with their peers.

Additionally, student-athletes must be active, visible participants in the broader campus and societal efforts to prevent sexual violence. Most campuses sponsor many activities that afford opportunities for student-athlete involvement with their non-athlete campus peers.

## ‘It’s On Us’

Through the NCAA’s partnership with the “It’s On Us” campaign ([www.itsonus.org](http://www.itsonus.org)), student-athletes have been both collaborators and active participants. This campaign is part of the partnership between the NCAA and the White House, and has been embraced by many athletics conferences. The campaign has resulted in the production of public service announcements developed by student-athletes that feature them accepting responsibility for stopping sexual violence. These videos reach both campus student populations and the public at large. Examples of acclaimed public service announcements can be found at [www.NCAA.org/violenceprevention](http://www.NCAA.org/violenceprevention).

Additionally, NCAA student-athletes have participated in It’s On Us campus events across the country and several student-athletes were selected to serve on the national It’s On Us Student Advisory Committee. To date, It’s On Us has hosted 1,400 events on 534 campuses. Student-athletes looking to engage their campus and join an It’s On Us regional team can sign up at <http://tinyurl.com/IOURegionalTeam>.

## STUDENT-ATHLETE ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST

### When student-athletes are involved in prevention efforts in meaningful ways:

- ❑ Athletics administrators invite student affairs staff to meet with student-athletes to identify opportunities for student-athlete involvement in campus life and student organizations.
- ❑ Leadership training for student-athletes [Student-Athlete Advisory Committee members, Student-Athlete Mentors, team captains and others] includes education regarding their roles in creating and maintaining a culture free from sexual violence.
- ❑ Student-athletes are expected to participate in campus-wide programming, such as the “Red Flag Campaign” ([www.theredflagcampaign.org](http://www.theredflagcampaign.org)), “Take Back the Night” ([www.takebackthenight.org](http://www.takebackthenight.org)), the “Clothesline Project” ([www.clotheslineproject.org](http://www.clotheslineproject.org)) and others, to support safe and healthy campus life.
- ❑ Coaches and other athletics staff encourage and support student-athlete involvement in campuswide prevention efforts, as well as athletics conferences and NCAA efforts to prevent sexual violence (e.g., APPLE Training Institutes, myPlaybook).
- ❑ Student-athlete involvement is measured by:
  - » The nature of their involvement – as in, are they leaders, facilitators, learners or contributors?
  - » The type of activity in which they are involved. For instance, is the activity an information session, skill development session, collaboration or other type of programming?
  - » The extent of their involvement – how many individuals are participating, how many teams are represented and what is the length of their commitment?

## STUDENT-ATHLETE ENGAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

- **Student-Athlete Mentor:** This APPLE Institute resource trains student-athletes to be active supporters for their peers. [www.appleathletics.org](http://www.appleathletics.org)
- **BACCHUS Initiatives of NASPA:** This student affairs initiative offers a Certified Peer Educator training resource to help students develop peer intervention and leadership skills to successfully create and implement peer wellness programs. [www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/bacchus-initiatives/initiatives/certified-peer-educator-training](http://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/bacchus-initiatives/initiatives/certified-peer-educator-training)
- **Step UP! Bystander Intervention Training:** This bystander intervention program, developed in partnership with the University of Arizona and the NCAA, trains student-athletes and other students to practice pro-social behavior, overcome the bystander effect and safely and effectively intervene when a friend or teammate is in distress, in danger or heading for trouble. All training materials are free. [www.stepupprogram.org](http://www.stepupprogram.org)
- **It’s On Us Campaign:** [www.itsonus.org](http://www.itsonus.org) (See sidebar on page 12.)
- **Photovoice Kit:** This web-based toolkit instructs students in creating a photovoice project that combines photography, dialogue, photo exhibits and social action to address student life issues. [www.photovoicekit.org](http://www.photovoicekit.org)