

Student, Staff and Faculty Perspectives of Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence on Three Public University Campuses: The UC Speaks Up Protocol

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Abstract

Background: Intimate partner and sexual violence are pervasive public health issues on college and university campuses in the United States. Research is recommended for creating and maintaining effective, relevant and acceptable prevention programs and response services for student survivors.

Objective: The UC Speaks Up study aims to examine factors contributing to intimate partner and sexual violence on three University of California (UC) campuses and use findings to develop and test interventions and policies to prevent violence, promote health, and lay the groundwork for subsequent, large-scale quantitative research.

Methods: A mixed-methods study at UC Los Angeles, UC San Diego and UC Santa Barbara. Phase I (2017-2020) involved (1) a resource audit; (2) cultural consensus modeling of students' perceptions of sexual consent; (3) in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with students to understand perceptions of campus environment related to experiences and prevention of, and responses to violence; and (4) IDIs with faculty, staff and community stakeholders to investigate institutional and community arrangements influencing students' lives and experiences. Phase II (2020-ongoing) involves IDIs with student survivors to assess use and perceptions of campus/community services. Qualitative content analysis is used to generate substantive codes and sub-themes that emerge, using a thematic analysis approach.

Results: In January 2019 we conducted 149 free-listing interviews and 214 online surveys with undergraduate and graduate/professional students for the cultural consensus modeling. Between February and June 2019: 179 IDIs were conducted with 86 undergraduate students, 21 graduate and professional students, 34 staff members, 27 faculty members, and 11 community stakeholders; and 35 FGDs (27 with undergraduate and 8 with graduate/professional students) were conducted with 201 participants. Since September 2020, 8 of 30 planned student-survivor interviews have been conducted. Recruitment is ongoing.

Conclusions: Data analysis and phase II data collection is ongoing. Findings will be used to develop and test interventions for preventing violence and promoting health and well-being, and ensuring survivor services are relevant, acceptable to and meet the needs of all individuals in the campus community, including those who are typically understudied. Findings will also be used to prepare for rigorous, UC system-wide public health prevention research.

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Original Manuscript



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Keywords: Campus-based violence prevention; intimate partner violence; sexual violence; mixed methods research; public health approach; prevention; student-led; trauma-informed research; University of California.

Introduction

The Public Health Problem of Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence on College Campuses

Intimate partner violence and sexual violence are pervasive public health issues on college and university campuses in the United States (U.S.).[1,2] Intimate partner violence (IPV) is defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as “physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner (i.e., spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, dating partner, or ongoing sexual partner).”[3] It is estimated that one-third of all college students in the U.S. have experienced some form of IPV[4] and 20% of female and 6% of male students[1] have experienced sexual violence while in college. [1,2] Sexual violence, defined by the CDC as “a sexual act that is committed or attempted by another person without freely given consent of the victim or against someone who is unable to consent or refuse,” includes sexual assault, rape and sexual coercion. [5] While most commonly perpetrated by individuals known to the victim/survivor, including and oftentimes an intimate partner, sexual violence also includes unwanted acts used by persons who are not intimate partners (e.g., a professor, colleague or co-worker) and by persons not known to the victim/survivor (e.g., strangers).[5]

College and university students exposed to IPV and/or sexual violence experience worse physical and mental wellbeing compared to students who have not directly experienced IPV. IPV and sexual violence have been associated with increased risk for anxiety and depression, suicidal ideation, migraines, unprotected sex, alcohol and substance use, and HIV and other sexually transmitted infections; and survivors experience reduced access to reproductive health services and unintended pregnancy.[2,6] Exposure to interpersonal violence during college can also negatively impact a survivor’s lifelong education and career goals. Compared to students unexposed to violence, college survivors of sexual assault are significantly more likely to have reduced grade point averages, slower time to completion of their degree and increased likelihood for leaving the college/university altogether.[7]

Students from racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual minority populations are disproportionately more likely to experience violence and its adverse outcomes on college campuses, as do students who are disabled. Data from 71,421 undergraduates found higher odds of sexual assault among cisgender women (vs. cisgender men); transgender people (vs. cisgender men); gay (vs. heterosexual) men, and bisexual (vs. heterosexual) students. Race interactively increased the risk for sexual assault in transgender persons, with the odds of sexual assault more than eight times higher in Black (vs. White) transgender students.[8] Another study at a Hispanic-Serving Institution found sexual and/or gender minority undergraduate students who experienced past year violence were more than twice as likely to report some type of interference with their academic lives (e.g., getting poor grades, missing class or work), compared to heterosexual, cisgender students who experienced past year violence.[9] Studies have consistently found that violence is perpetrated at higher rates against students with (vs. without) disabilities, both during[10–12] and before enrolling in college/university.[12] This body of research highlights need for culturally, racially, socially and gender relevant services for survivors of sexual and/or relationship violence.

White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault

To address the national epidemic of campus-based violence in the U.S., President Barack Obama established the *White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* (hereinafter referred

to as the “White House Task Force”) in January 2014. The *White House Task Force* aimed to strengthen federal enforcement efforts and provide recommendations and tools that colleges and universities could use to address sexual assault on their campuses. Its first report, “Not Alone,” was released in April 2014 to provide schools with recommendations and action steps for assessing and responding to sexual assault on their campuses.[13]

Since the establishment of the *White House Task Force*, U.S. institutions of higher education have increasingly adopted approaches to address campus-based violence. Many schools receive(d) funding through the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) “Campus Program,” created by Congress to provide grants to develop and strengthen trauma-informed victim services and strategies to prevent, investigate, and respond to sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.[14] Other schools have used institutional funding to establish and support violence prevention programs, including the University of California (UC), a public university system of ten campuses that identifies preventing and responding to sexual violence and sexual harassment (SVSH) as top priorities.

University of California Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

In June 2014, in response to the *White House Task Force*, UC President Janet Napolitano formed the “President’s Task Force on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence and Sexual Assault” to establish the UC as a national leader in preventing and combating SVSH, improve current UC sexual violence prevention processes and develop recommendations for implementing strategies to improve prevention, response and reporting procedures.[15]

Between June 2014 and January 2016, UC implemented seven components of an intended “comprehensive” system-wide model for addressing campus SVSH. These include: (1) creation of a system-wide website for access to campus resources and important information; (2) mandatory education and training on sexual violence issues and prevention; (3) establishing a “CARE: Advocate Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct” on each campus; (4) designating individuals on each campus to help respondents (i.e., perpetrators) understand their rights and UC’s investigation and adjudication processes; (5) strengthening UC policy against sexual and domestic violence, stalking and harassment as part of ongoing compliance with the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA); (6) following a standardized two-team response model at each campus (including one team for case management, to review sexual misconduct reports and a second team, focused on policies, community relations, prevention and intervention using a campus collaborative approach); and (7) system-wide procedures for investigating, adjudicating and imposing sanctions in student cases of SVSH.[15]

While the UC’s development and implementation of a multicomponent approach to addressing SVSH has established a strong foundation for cultivating a system-wide culture of respect and safety, it is not “comprehensive” per the definition used by the *White House Task Force*. Their recommended model for comprehensively assessing and responding to campus violence includes four action steps: (1) identifying the prevalence and determinants of sexual assault on campus through climate surveys; (2) developing evidence-based prevention strategies to prevent sexual assault; (3) establishing investigation and adjudication procedures to respond to reports of sexual violence; and (4) improving federal enforcement efforts.[13] Missing from the UC’s approach is a campus climate survey and developing evidence-based prevention strategies, the key action steps recommended by the *White House Task Force*.

Campus climate surveys have been recommended for assessing the scope and context of violence on

campuses in order to create and maintain effective, relevant violence prevention and response programs that are acceptable to the students and meet the needs of student survivors. Campus climate surveys are used to measure prevalence, dynamics, determinants and outcomes of sexual violence and IPV.[13,16] To date, however, UC Berkeley is the only UC campus that has conducted a climate survey focused on sexual violence and other forms of sexual, dating and/or relationship harm. Thus, gaps remain in our collective knowledge of the scope and nature of SVSH across the other campuses, precluding our ability to tailor programs to meet the needs of each campus and their specific populations.

Objectives

The aim of this paper is to describe the protocol for mixed-methods research conducted between 2017 and 2021 at UC Los Angeles (UCLA), UC San Diego (UCSD) and UC Santa Barbara (UCSB). The goal was to prepare for the implementation of a quantitative climate survey or an alternative research design that would allow for systematic, in-depth assessment of the prevalence, determinants and nature of campus-based violence. We had six research aims that are shown in Table 1.

Aim 1:	Assess students' perceptions of sexual consent.
Aim 2:	Understand students' perceptions of the campus environment related to sexual assault, sexual harassment and dating violence.
Aim 3:	Investigate institutional and community arrangements influencing students' lives and experiences.
Aim 4:	Examine how campus prevention, education and response efforts can be tailored to meet the unique needs of diverse individuals and communities.
Aim 5:	Learn about student survivors' use and perceptions of campus- and community-based violence and mental health services.
Aim 6:	Lay the groundwork for subsequent quantitative research and effective prevention programs coupled with healing-centered comprehensive response services at each campus.

The design of this project was informed by guidelines from the comprehensive campus sexual assault climate assessment model developed by Rutgers University's Center on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) [18, 19] and the MyVoice Working Group's implementation overview and lessons learned report.[17] In 2014, VAWC began collaborating with the *White House Task Force* to test and assess a campus climate survey model developed by the U.S. Department of Justice's OVW.

Methods

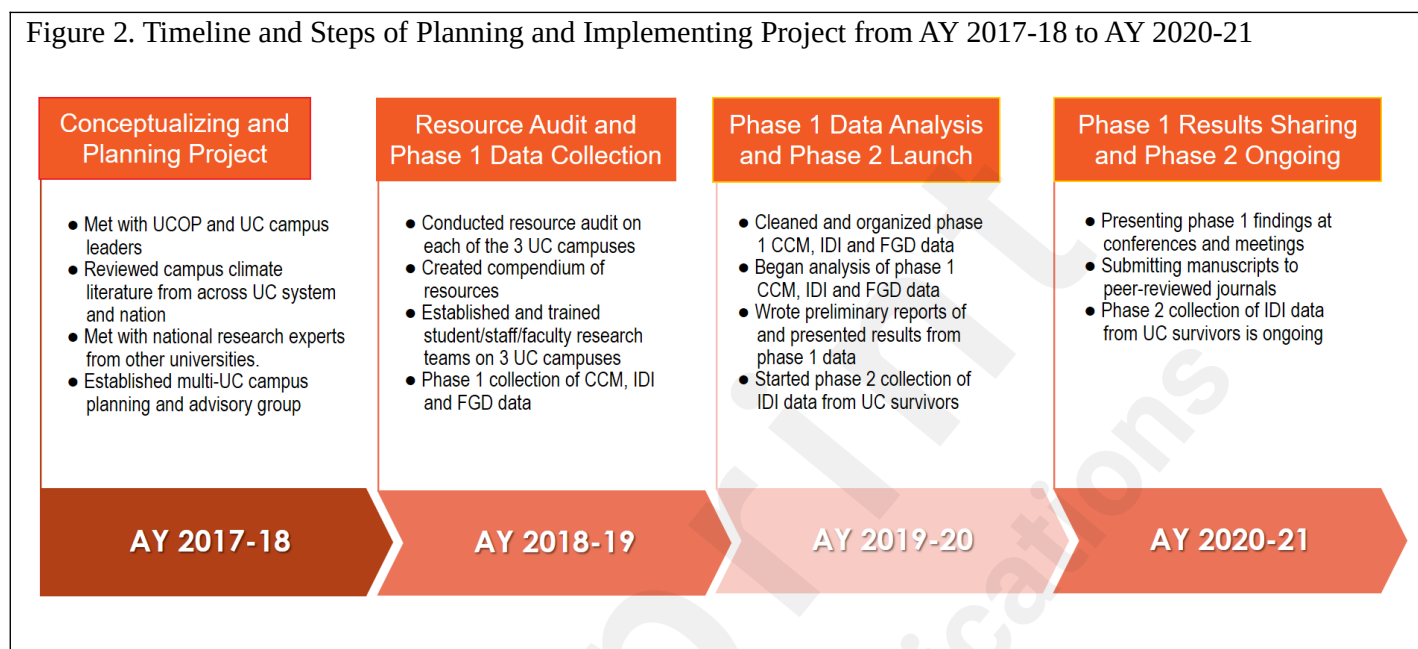
Study Setting and Timeline

There are ten campuses in the UC system and this project was conducted on three of the five campuses in Southern California: UC Los Angeles, UC San Diego and UC Santa Barbara (Figure 1). Project conceptualization and planning took place during the 2017-18 academic year (AY). A resource audit to examine publicly available program information, gather input from stakeholders and develop relationships with campus community members was done in AY 2018-19. The first and main phase of data collection was done in the second half of AY 2018-19, during which

Figure 1. Map of California, showing the 10 UC campuses and highlighting the 3 UC campuses involved in this study.



time student enrollment by campus was as follows: UCLA (undergraduate: 30,873/graduate: 14,074), UCSD (undergraduate: 30,285/graduate: 8,513) and UCSB (undergraduate: 23,070 graduate: 2,906) [20-22]. In AY 2019-20, data analysis, writing and results dissemination was initiated, and a second sub-phase of data collection began. The full timeline is shown in Figure 2.



Project Conceptualization and Planning (September 2017-June 2018)

Project conceptualization began with a visioning and prioritization workshop at a meeting of faculty, staff and students involved with the Women’s Health, Gender and Empowerment Center of Expertise (WHGE-COE) of the UC Global Health Institute (UCGHI). WHGE-COE participants from all ten UC campuses identified strengthening prevention of campus-based sexual violence as a high-priority for system-wide mobilization and collaboration. Official project planning began with reviewing the scientific and grey literature on campus-based violence prevention research from the UC and other U.S. colleges and universities. Concurrently, we began iteratively reaching out to, meeting with and gathering input from leaders and key stakeholders from the UC Office of the President (UCOP), UC Berkeley’s PATH to Care Center (which conducted the MyVoice Survey) and multiple UC campuses. A planning and advisory group was established and included faculty, staff and student members from UC Berkeley (UCB), UC Irvine (UCI), UCLA, UCSD, UCSB, UCOP, the WHGE-COE of UCGHI and the UCSD Center on Gender Equity and Health (GEH). All planning and advisory group participants are shown in Table 2.

Campus / Office / Center	Position
UCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violence Prevention Counselors and Advocates from UC Berkeley’s PATH to Care Center MyVoice Survey Research Team Members
UCI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of UCI CARE Office

UCLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, and Epidemiology* • Doctoral student of Community Health Sciences
UCSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Professor of Medicine** • Graduate Student Ambassador to WHGE-COE • Director of UCSD CARE Office
UCSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor and Chair of Feminist Studies • Undergraduate Student Ambassador to WHGE-COE
UCOP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice President of Student Affairs • System-wide Title IX Director • System-wide Title IX Coordinator
Women's Health, Gender and Empowerment COE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Director from UC Berkeley • Co-Director and UCLA Associate Professor* • Deputy Director of Research from UC San Francisco • Deputy Director of Education from UCSB • Deputy Director of Violence Prevention Research and UCSD Assistant Professor**
UCSD Center on GEH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-Director and Professor of Medicine • Staff Research Associate • Doctoral Fellow
<p>*These two positions are held by the same person. **These two positions are held by the same person.</p>	

To learn from experts in campus-based violence prevention research and shape decisions about the study goals, we invited leaders from four experienced teams to conduct consultations with our group. Two half-day learning sessions were led by Rutgers University's Center on VAWC (drawing on experiences with the #iSPEAK Campus Climate Survey) and UC Berkeley's PATH to Care Center (drawing on experiences with the MyVoice Survey). Two full-day consultations were led by researchers from Columbia University (drawing on experiences from the Sexual Health Initiative to Foster Transformation (SHIFT) study[19] and from University of Oregon's Division of Student Life (drawing on their Crisis Intervention and Sexual Violence Support Services). Participants in all four sessions included the faculty leads from each campus, the WHGE-COE Directors, the UCSD GEH Staff Research Associate, the UCOP team, and the CARE Directors from the UCI and UCSD Advocate Offices for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct.

Resource Audit to Prepare for Research (September – December 2018)

To prepare for the research process of data collection, we conducted a resource audit on each campus to examine available information on responding to and preventing sexual and intimate partner violence, gather input from key informants and stakeholders, develop relationships with campus community members and introduce them to the project and establish the project's infrastructure. This process was informed by guidelines from Rutgers University's Center on VAWC.[23] The assessment was coordinated by the study's faculty investigators at UCLA, UCSD, and UCSB who led all activities, with assistance from their own respective research teams and from undergraduate and graduate WHGE-COE Student Ambassadors on each campus. The resource audit involved three main steps.

First, we gathered information through online searches, phone calls, and in-person office visits. This was done to explore UC-wide and campus-specific SVSH policies, investigative and adjudicative protocols, campus and community-based support services for student sexual assault survivors, and on-campus prevention programs to reduce sexual and relationship violence.

Second, we identified key stakeholders and invited them to speak with us to ensure our audit captured the full range of resources available on each campus. At each campus, we spoke with the CARE Director and/or advocate, the Title IX Coordinator and/or Title IX officer, a residential housing administrator, providers from student health services and Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), the Director of Student Affairs, a director or administrator from athletics, and representatives from the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, campus police or security, the campus Panhellenic Council, the International Student Center, the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) Resource Center, the Undocumented Student Center, and the Black/African American Student Center. Conversations were held in-person or via telephone. Each stakeholder was invited to review and provide feedback on the list of resources gathered, suggest others we should talk with, and make recommendations for the study.

Third, the information gathered during this process was used to compile a compendium of resources for each campus, using data gathered during the audit. Findings were also used to tailor study design, decide on research methods and inform development of some research questions. The contacts made during the audit contributed to long-term partnerships and strategic collaborations and introduced us to some folks who became members of the research team.

Setting up the Research Team and Branding the Project (November – December 2018)

The full research team was established in November 2019 and included six faculty investigators, three staff coordinators and sixteen student investigators (10 undergraduate and 6 graduate students) from across the three UC campuses. In December 2019, all team members participated in a 3-day, in-person training at the UCSD School of Medicine campus. Training modules focused on (1) Research ethics and how to conduct safe and trauma-informed research on SVSH; (2) How to provide short-term mechanisms of support to any participant triggered or distressed by the topics addressed in the study (3) How to practice ‘self-care,’ given the potentially traumatic nature of the research and (4) Where to refer participants for additional, comprehensive services on each UC campus.

In addition to capacity building, time during the training was devoted to discussion of how to best identify upstream approaches for preventing campus violence. Group perspectives were sought on the institutional and community arrangements that influenced students’ lives and experiences of violence and discrimination across the UC. There was shared interest in conducting a student-centered project, guided by principles of community-based participatory research, and that used methods that would center undergraduate and graduate students’ perceptions, needs, and unique circumstances. Collectively, we named our study the **UC Speaks Up** project and decided on the following guiding values: Student-centered, Evidence-based, Healing-centered, Intersectional, Inclusive, Trauma-informed, Ethical.

Data Collection Procedures by Method and Phase

UC Speaks Up uses three research methodologies: cultural consensus modeling, in-depth qualitative interviews and focus group discussions. The first and main phase of data collection was conducted between January and June 2019. All three methodologies were used, and data were gathered from students, staff and faculty from the three UC campuses and from local stakeholders from communities surrounding each campus. Phase II of data collection, a smaller sub-investigation with sexual violence survivors, began in September 2020 and is ongoing. Methods are described in detail below, by phase.

Cultural Consensus Modeling with Students (Phase I: January 2019)

Cultural consensus modeling (CCM) is a technique for estimating the extent to which people share common beliefs and understandings about a topic. CCM is grounded in the assumption that culture can be represented as a set of knowledge that is shared within a given group. Individuals who answer questions about their culture in a similar pattern are assumed to be giving the “culturally correct” answer.[24,25] We used CCM to understand: (1) if there was a culture of sexual consent on campus - in other words, if students had a common frame of reference for consent which they could reasonably expect their partners to share, (2) if that culture of consent varied by gender or other demographics, and (3) what knowledge (rules) constituted the culture of consent. CCM allowed us to identify ‘answer keys’ of the culturally correct meaning of sexual consent by identifying clusters of similar informant responses. It also allowed us to identify cultural experts, i.e., individuals who provided a large number of “culturally correct” answers (according to the identified answer key) and were presumed to likely have a large amount of expertise on the topic. The CCM process was done in three steps, using two types of data collection: free-listing interviews and an online survey to rate the importance of items identified during free-listing interviews.

CCM **Step** **1:** **Free-Listing** **CCM** **Interviews**
The CCM process began with using free listing, a technique for gathering data about a specific cognitive domain by asking people to list all the items they can think of that fall into that category. At

each of the three campuses, student researchers approached fellow students in public spaces, such as the quad or the library, introduced themselves and the topics of sexual relationships and sexual consent, explained the purpose of the study and invited them to participate. Interested students were asked by the researcher to disclose their age, gender identity, and student status (undergraduate, graduate, or professional student). Eligibility criteria included self-reporting as a current student of the UC campus where data collection was being done, being between the ages of 18 and 26 years and providing verbal consent. After obtaining verbal consent, student participants were asked the following three questions: (1) How do students in your campus community know their partner is signaling sexual consent? (2) How do students in your campus community signal their own sexual consent? (3) What words would students in your campus community use to describe a sexual encounter that feels good? Up to 10 responses for each question were recorded by the researcher. Refreshments (e.g., drinks and candy bars) were provided to all participants.

CCM Step 2: CCM Survey Development

To create the online survey, we analyzed the free listing responses to the three CCM questions using Microsoft Excel and the software package, *AnthroTools*. [26] We reviewed all responses to each question, then tallied the number of “unique responses” to each question (i.e., if three students provided the same response for one question, one item – reflecting that response – was included in the list of possible items). Item salience was calculated using Smith’s S scores to rank averages across all samples, separately by gender. Items were weighted by the order in which they were given. Average Smith’s S score was ranked to determine the top 20-30 items by gender. We then created an online survey in REDCap by including items with high Smith’s S scores, as well as some items of interest (based on our literature review and resource audit) with lower salience, such as “sober” and “not resisting.”

CCM Step 3: Online Survey

Undergraduate, graduate and professional student survey participants were recruited using a convenience sample approach across all three campuses. The study was advertised via email, social media, and both online and printed out flyers that were displayed in public spaces on campus. All recruitment materials provided information about the study, details of participation, contact information for the investigators and a link to follow to be screened for eligibility for completing the online survey. Eligibility criteria included being a current student at UCLA, UCSD or UCSB, aged 18-26 years and providing electronic informed consent. A two-step recruitment and enrollment process was used. First, to ensure enrollment at UCLA, UCSD or UCSB, students were required to enter their campus email address. Second, students with authentic UCLA, UCSD and UCSB email addresses were sent a unique link to access the online survey. Clicking the link brought the participant to a page with a complete consent form and contact information for the principal investigator and research contact person. After reading the form, participants were prompted to provide their digital signature, if they consented to participate, which would enable them to proceed to the survey. Participants were enrolled until the target sample size of 250 was achieved. All participants were given a \$5 e-gift card as compensation for their time.

The online instrument collected demographic information (campus, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, level in school [e.g., undergraduate, graduate, professional], field/discipline/major, residency and housing status, group membership [e.g., part of sports/athletics, student government, etc.]) and then asked participants to rate the importance of items identified during the freelisting phase. For each domain (How do students in your campus community know their partner is signaling sexual consent?, How do students in your campus community signal their own sexual consent, What words would students in your campus community use to describe a sexual encounter that feels good?) participants were presented with approximately 20 items derived from the freelisting phase and asked to rate the item from 1-7 to describe how important that item was as a strategy to

recognize consent, signal consent, or as a way of describing a positive sexual encounter. Participants were prompted to rank the level of importance of 24 options for question 1, 28 options for question 2 and 21 options for question 3. The complete survey is included in Appendix 1.

In-Depth Interviews (IDI) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Recruitment of IDI and FGD Participants

Related to phase I participant recruitment, additional eligibility criteria for students included self-reported enrollment in an undergraduate, graduate or professional program at UCLA, UCSD or UCSB. UC faculty and staff were only eligible if they were currently employed by the UC and had been in that position for at least six months. Additional eligibility criteria for community stakeholders were currently working at a sexual violence/sexual harassment/domestic violence-related service agency, having been in that position for at least six months, and having experience of helping students seeking violence-related services or support within the Los Angeles, San Diego or Santa Barbara region. A subset of eligible UC students, staff and faculty participants was selected based on key demographics (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, year in program, type of program, academic department) to attempt achieving representation at the group (i.e., student, staff, faculty) and campus-level. Related to phase II participant recruitment, additional eligibility criteria for student survivors included being currently enrolled at one of the three UC campuses or having graduated within the last three years, self-reporting experience of sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking and/or dating violence while enrolled as a UC student. Participants selected for inclusion were connected with a trained UC Speaks Up student, staff, or faculty researcher to schedule an IDI or FGD.

Structure of IDIs and FGDs and Compensation of Participants

IDI and FGD data were gathered using semi-structured guides with open-ended questions that allowed for conversational inquiry on the research topics described above. The interviewer/moderator used the guide to ensure all research areas were covered and could be flexible about the order of inquiry. Probes were used to elicit additional information or clarify responses. Phase I data collection occurred on campus in accessible and convenient locations where privacy could be ensured, such as booked study rooms in the campus library. In-person IDIs and FGDs during phase I were audio recorded, and participants received a \$25 Visa gift card in compensation for their time. Remote interviews conducted with survivors during phase II have been done via the Zoom platform on a day and at a time agreed upon by both the researcher and participant. Participants in remote interviews are invited to use both audio and video features during interviews but are ensured the video is voluntary. Remote IDI participants receive a \$50 electronic gift card in compensation for their time. Compensation is higher in phase II than phase I because we estimated that (1) interviews might last longer and (2) the interviews may be more taxing, due to the highly sensitive nature of sexual violence and the potential for increased risk of participants feeling distressed or triggered by discussing past experiences. All IDI and FGD participants throughout the study are provided a resource sheet unique to their campus, with comprehensive details of on-campus and community-based services (based on information collected during the resource audit).

Phase I (February – June 2019) IDIs with Students, Staff, Faculty and Community Stakeholders

IDIs were conducted with students, staff, faculty, and community stakeholders. IDIs with (undergraduate, graduate and professional) students aimed to explore their attitudes about relationships and sex, their definitions of sexual violence, sexual harassment and healthy relationships, and their awareness of available services, prevention programs, and/or policies addressing sexual violence at the university. We sought students' opinions on how they can become

more involved in making the campus an environment that does not tolerate sexual or gender-based violence. IDIs with faculty, staff members and university administrators examined how they perceive their role and their office's role in prevention, education, and response services addressing sexual violence. They also aimed to learn about the process they/their office takes when a student discloses. IDIs with community stakeholders were structured to explore their relationship with their university counterpart and assess services and programs they offer to UC students and the larger community. Interviews lasted on average between 60 and 90 minutes.

Phase I (April - June 2019) FGDs with Students

FGDs were conducted with undergraduate, graduate and professional students and aimed to understand group norms surrounding the campus environment and how students felt about campus safety, healthy socializing and acceptance/rejection of relationship violence. We explored students' definitions of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships and sex; as well as sexual assault and sexual harassment. Each discussion was facilitated by a trained moderator and note-taker. FGDs allowed for discussion of general themes, including awareness of services and education activities, challenges in accessing care and services and ideas for prevention messaging that resonate with them. FGDs lasted on average between 90 and 120 minutes.

Phase II (September 2020 - ongoing) IDIs with Student Survivors

To expand on findings from phase I, we are conducting IDIs with current and recently graduated (i.e., within the past 3 years) undergraduate students who experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment and/or dating violence while enrolled at UCLA, UCSD, or UCSB. We plan to conduct approximately 30 IDIs, with 10 survivors from each campus. To date, 8 interviews have been completed and recruitment will continue through the 2021-22 academic year. These interviews aim to learn what services and programs student survivors use on their UC campus or in the surrounding community, hear their perspectives on what was most or least helpful when dealing with experiences of violence, and seek recommendations for how the UC system can improve in terms of both preventing and responding to violence, harassment and discrimination. We planned to begin these interviews in March 2020, after completing analysis of phase I data. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not start until September 2020 because of the need to revise our research protocol – from doing in-person to remote IDIs - and receive institutional review board (IRB) clearance. All of the phase II survivor interviews are conducted via the online teleconferencing software, Zoom, using a secure link and password protected meeting space.

Data Management and Quality Assurance

All interviews and focus group discussions were/will be transcribed verbatim from audio-recordings, either directly into a Word document or using a transcription platform like Trint (<https://trint.com/>). Transcripts were/will be redacted to remove personal identifying information, and stored in a shared, encrypted file. All data files were/will be reviewed and cleaned (as needed) by a data manager to ensure they are properly labeled and complete. If details were/are missing from a file (e.g., a participant's demographics), the data manager tried/will try to locate this information to complete the file.

Although the study's procedures are minimally invasive and present low risks to participants, we established numerous safeguards and followed several precautions to protect participants and ensure data confidentiality. Participants are assigned a numeric personal identification number that is used as a reference to the participant, instead of their name, on all study data. This number delinks personal identifying information from study databases. Names of participants are kept in separate secure files. All paper data collection tools are stored in secure, locked facilities at UCLA and only a

small number of designated staff members have access to these records. All electronic data are stored in encrypted, password protected files that are only accessible to the study's principal investigators.

Safe and Ethical Conduct of Human Subjects Research Approval

The study protocol for phase I was approved by the UCSD Human Research Protection Program (HRPP). The IRBs at UCLA and UCSB approved reliance agreements from the UCSD HRPP. In July 2019, the UC Speaks Up Principal Investigator (the first author) relocated from UCSD to UCLA. Thus, the study protocol for phase II was submitted to and approved by the UCLA HRPP and the IRBs at UCSD and UCSB approved reliance agreements from the UCLA HRPP. Before working with the UC Speaks Up Study, all research staff received training on the safe and ethical conduct of research on violence against women, based on recommendations developed for the World Health Organization Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence.[27] Staff also received training on the ethical conduct of human subjects research, compliance, and data management via a collaborative institutional training initiative for biomedical research. Students who took part in CCM freelisting provided verbal consent before participating. CCM survey participants consented online before starting the questionnaire. Phase I IDI and FGD participants provided written consent to participate in data collection and have the session audio recorded. Phase II IDI participants provided oral consent to participate in data collection and have the session audio recorded. A certificate of confidentiality was obtained from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), to protect identifiable, sensitive research information from compulsory legal disclosure (e.g., sexual assault).

Analysis

In September 2019, we started analyzing phase I data. This process, together with data interpretation, report and manuscript development and results dissemination (through workshops, meetings and conferences) is ongoing. Analysis of phase II data with survivors has not yet started. Descriptive analyses have been/will be done for demographic variables gathered for all participants. Simple frequency distribution statistics (e.g., mean, proportion) will be done using Stata version 15.1.

Aim 1: Assess Students' Perceptions of Sexual Consent

Analysis of Cultural Consensus Modeling Survey Data

CCM survey data were entered into R software [28] and analyzed by gender, age, and housing status, using AnthroTools to determine (1) whether there were cluster of similar item ratings (i.e., cultural consensus models) either across the full group of students or by gender, age, or housing status and if so (2) what the culturally "correct" rating, or importance of each item was. Consistent with Romney and Weller's methods,[24] we considered a cluster of similar answer ratings to represent a distinct cultural consensus model if the group's eigenvalue was >3.0 .

Interview and Focus Group Data Analysis

All qualitative IDI and FGD data have been/will be analyzed using Dedoose, a mixed-methods web-based analysis platform. Qualitative content analysis is used to generate substantive codes and sub-themes that emerge(d) from the data for all domains we are examining. Primary domains are predetermined based on the semi-structured interview and focus group guides and sub-theme code identification was/will be informed by using a thematic analysis approach. A coding tree for was/will be developed by the team for each aim after iterative rounds of discussion around substantive codes that evolved into tangible themes. The codes produced were/will be organized into broad conceptual codes (i.e., parent codes) and more refined sub-codes (i.e., child codes). Discrepancies in codes are

resolved through group discussion. At least two reviewers code(d) each transcript to ensure inter-rater reliability.

Aim 2: Understand Students' Perceptions of the Campus Environment Related to Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment and Dating Violence

To achieve this aim, we analyze IDI and FGD data from undergraduate, graduate and professional student participants, starting with an exploration of students' definitions of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships; sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking and dating violence. FGD is examined to understand group norms surrounding the campus environment for safety, opportunities for healthy socializing and sexual and relationship violence. All data analysis assesses perceptions of whether violence is a problem on campus; how students think the university handles and responds to violence and what levels of awareness are about sexual violence services and programs. Data from IDIs and FGDs with graduate students further examines how power relations with faculty and trust or distrust of university processes contribute to graduate students' decisions about seeking services. The data also captures graduate students' recommendations for improving campus climate and SVHS resources to meet graduate students' needs.

Aim 3: Investigate institutional and community arrangements influencing students' lives and experiences.

To achieve this aim, we analyze IDI data from staff, faculty and community stakeholders to gain a full picture of the services, protocols and policies related to sexual and dating violence that are available on the campuses and surrounding communities. Data has been explored to assess how faculty and key university administrators perceive their and their office's roles in supporting survivors who disclose abuse, harassment or discrimination and/or who want to report an incident to a professional, such as a Title IX coordinator or law enforcement officer. We are interested in learning how UC faculty and staff perceive their preparedness to contribute to both prevention and response efforts and where they feel gaps remain, so recommendations can be made on where additional training and/or supports are required. Another key component of this aim is analysis of data from community stakeholders to assess relationships between local violence prevention advocates and the University and explore perceptions of how UC-community relationships can be strengthened and enhanced to improve prevention of sexual violence in and around each campus.

Aim 4: Examine how campus prevention, education and response efforts can be tailored to meet the unique needs of diverse individuals and communities.

Although survey data on SVSH have not been collected at UCLA, UCSD, and UCSB, a growing body of literature suggests students from racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual minority populations, and students with disabilities are disproportionately burdened by these experiences [8-12]. Despite this, the SVSH services and prevention programs on the UC campuses have not been tailored to address the unique needs and preferences of these groups. To achieve Aim 4, we analyze IDI and FGD data from students, staff, and faculty with an intersectional lens to discern the needs and preferences for SVSH prevention and response among both the general population, as well as historically marginalized groups. We explore unique cultural and contextual configurations that emerge in conversations about SVSH in these populations. We also assess potential SVSH-related stressors associated with unique identities, and barriers in accessing or continuing use of physical and mental health, psychosocial and other SVSH services. Findings are being generated to facilitate the development of tailored programs for subgroups.

Aim 5: Learn about student survivors' use and perceptions of campus- and community-based

violence and mental health services.

Transcripts from in-progress interviews with survivors will be transcribed and coded as described above. Data will be analyzed to explore survivors' experiences of sexual assault, harassment, stalking, dating violence and other relationship misconduct while enrolled as a UC student. Codes will be developed to assess number, frequency, type(s) of and overlap between different forms of harm; and to examine what impact these experiences had on survivors' lives. We will examine what actions survivors took after the incident(s), including disclosure, use of services, legal actions, pursuit of criminal justice, etc., and what their perceptions were of these experiences/interactions. Recommendations provided by survivors (e.g., how the UC response and prevention systems could be changed to become safer and/or better equipped to handle SVSH situations) will be recorded and distributed to service providers and administrators. Findings will be assessed overall, by campus and by specific sub-groups by race, ethnicity and gender/sexual identity.

Results

Free-Listing and Online Survey Participants

Free-listing interviews were conducted with 149 students across three campuses. Data were analyzed from 122 participants (input from 27 students was excluded for lack of data on age or because the participant was older than 26 years). Unique item responses were tallied for partners' signals of consent (n=149), students' own signals of consent (n=209), and students' descriptions of a 'good' sexual encounter (n=277). The majority (80%) of students who participated in freelisting were undergraduates and 20% were graduate or professional students. Ages ranged from 18 to 26 years and the mean age was 21 years. Sixty percent identified as female gender and 40% as male gender.

Online surveys were completed by 214 students (83% undergraduate and 17% graduate/professional) from UCLA (20%), UCSD (36%) and UCSB (44%). Participants identified their race/ethnicity as Asian (42%), White (33%), Hispanic/Latinx (14%), Black/African American (4%), Native Hawaiian (2%), and Indigenous/Native American (1%). In terms of gender and sexual identity, 61% identified as male, 38% as female and 1% as non-binary; 76% identified as heterosexual/straight and 24% as LGBTQIA+ (LGBT, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and "+" for all other sexualities, sexes, and genders).

Interview Participants Enrolled in Phase I

A total of 179 IDIs were conducted across the three campuses with 86 undergraduate students, 21 graduate and professional students, 34 staff and administrative members, 27 faculty members, and 11 community stakeholders (Table 3).

	UCLA		UCSD		UCSB		TOTAL
	n=56		n=62		n=61		n=179
Participant Type	N	% (row)	N	% (row)	N	% (row)	N
Undergraduate students	26	30%	30	35%	30	35%	86
Graduate students	8	38%	6	29%	7	33%	21
Staff	11	32%	13	38%	10	29%	34
Faculty	8	30%	9	33%	10	37%	27
Community stakeholders	3	27%	4	36%	4	36%	11

Eighty-six undergraduate student IDI participants were recruited from UCLA (30%), UCSD (35%) and UCSB (35%) and included first (24%), second (23%), third (23%), fourth (24%), and fifth (6%) year students. Participants were drawn from majors in the humanities, social sciences and arts (37%) and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM, 63%). Slightly more than half (55%) identified as cisgender women, 39% as cisgender men and 6% as agender, nonbinary or transgender. A majority (72%) identified as heterosexual, 11% as bisexual, 8% as lesbian or gay, 4% as pansexual, 3% as nonconforming and 3% as asexual or mostly heterosexual. Participants identified as White (35%), Asian (23%), Latinx/Spanish/Hispanic (16%), Black or African American (12%), South Asian/Indian (3%), Middle Eastern (5%), and more than one race (5%). Only 3% of participants reported living with a disability.

Twenty-one graduate and professional student IDI participants were recruited from UCLA (38%), UCSD (29%) and UCSB (33%) and included students enrolled in master's degree programs (38%) and doctoral degree programs, including doctor of philosophy (PhD, 43%), doctor of medicine (MD, 14%) and juris doctor (JD, 5%). Graduate and professional students were from the fields of bioengineering, bioinformatics, biology, communications, economics education, engineering, fine arts, law, materials, medicine, public health, and sociology. A majority (62%) identified as cisgender women, 28% as cisgender men, 5% as agender, and 5% as nonbinary; 57% identified as heterosexual, 24% as bisexual, 9% as lesbian or gay, 5% as asexual and 5% as non-conforming. By race/ethnicity, participants identified as White (43%), Asian (33%), Latinx/Spanish/Hispanic (14%), Black or African American (5%), and more than one race (5%). Ten percent were living with a disability.

Thirty-four staff members were recruited from UCLA (32%), UCSD (38%), and UCSB (29%) and included health and well-being service providers (20%), athletic department staff (26%), staff from student affairs (17%), academic departments (9%) and student resources (29%). Health and well-being service providers included clinicians, therapists from CAPS and sexual violence service providers from CARE. Athletic department staff included directors, coaches and administrators. Student affairs staff were in positions such as Dean of Student Affairs and Student Life Development Specialist. Student resources staff were in positions such as Director of the Undocumented Student Services Center. Most staff (68%) identified as cisgender women, 26% as cisgender men, and 6% as nonbinary; 58% identified as heterosexual, 21% as lesbian or gay, 16% as gender non-conforming, and 5% as asexual. Staff identified as White (52%), Asian (5%), Latinx/Spanish/Hispanic (16%), Black or African American (16%), Middle Eastern (5%) and more than one race (5%). Eleven percent were living with a disability.

Twenty-seven faculty members were recruited from UCLA (30%), UCSD (33%), and UCSB (37%) and included people from public health (12%), STEM (38%), and the humanities, social sciences and arts (50%). A range of disciplines were represented, such as Epidemiology, Psychiatry, World Arts and Cultures, Asian American Studies, English, Biology, Pharmacy, Engineering, Literature, Cognitive Science, and Philosophy. Most faculty interviewed were full professors (65%), followed by associate professors (23%) and assistant professors (12%). Most chose not to disclose their race/ethnicity, their gender identity and/or their sexual orientation. Thus, we do not report these statistics for this group.

Eleven stakeholders were recruited from the communities surrounding UCLA (3 participants), UCSD (4 participants) and UCSB (4 participants). In Los Angeles, we interviewed stakeholders from the Rape Treatment Center at the UCLA Medical Center in Santa Monica, the Center for the Pacific Asian Family and Peace Over Violence. In San Diego we interviewed stakeholders from the Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma, Alliance for Hope International, Love on a Leash and the Center for Community Solutions. In Santa Barbara we interviewed stakeholders from the office of the Santa

Barbara District Attorney Victim-Witness Assistance Program, Stand Together to End Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence Solutions and an independent trauma therapist who frequently serves students at UCSB.

Focus Group Discussion Participants

A total of 35 focus group discussions (10 at UCLA, 13 at UCSD and 12 at UCSB) were conducted with 201 total participants. Twenty-seven FGDs (77%) were completed with undergraduate students and 8 FGDs (23%) with graduate and professional students. Table 4 shows the breakdown of FGDs conducted across the three campuses, by participant type.

	UCLA	UCSD	UCSB	TOTAL
	10 FGDs	13 FGDs	12 FGDs	35 FGDs
Participant Type	No. of FGDs	No. of FGDs	No. of FGDs	No. of FGDs
Undergraduate Students	8	9	10	27
Sorority/fraternity members	1	2	2	5
NCAA athletes	2	3	2	7
LGBTIA+ students	1	1	1	3
Student leaders	1	1	1	3
Black students	0	1	1	2
Latinx students	0	1	1	2
Engineering students	0	0	2	2
SVSH prevention leaders	2	0	0	2
General population	1	0	0	1
Graduate + Professional Students	2	4	2	8
LGBTIA+ students	0	1	1	2
Liberal arts students	1	1	0	2
Health professions students	0	1	0	1
Male graduate students	0	0	1	1
STEM students	1	1	0	2

Twenty-seven FGDs were conducted with undergraduate students recruited from UCLA (r=8), UCSD (r=9) and UCSB (r=10). A total of 158 students were involved in these FGDs (36 from UCLA, 61 from UCSD, 61 from UCSB). Groups with members of sororities and fraternities, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) athletes and engineering students were done separately by gender identity. Groups of undergraduate “student leaders” included participants involved in student government (e.g., the Undergraduate Students Association Council) and other campus-based leadership positions (e.g., the Student Leadership Council). One undergraduate FGD was conducted on the UCLA campus with SVSH prevention leaders, including student interns from the CARE Office, members of the Bruin Consent Coalition and a Title IX policy special interest group. On average, undergraduate student focus groups had between 6 and 10 participants.

Eight FGDs were conducted with graduate and professional students recruited from UCLA (r=2), UCSD (r=4) and UCSB (r=2). A total of 43 students were involved in these FGDs (12 from UCLA, 22 from UCSD, 9 from UCSB). Groups conducted with FGD participants from the liberal arts included masters and doctoral level students from the natural sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities. Health professions students were drawn from graduate programs in medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy and public health. On average, graduate and professional student FGDs groups

had 6-7 participants.

Student Survivor Interview Participants Enrolled in Phase II (ongoing)

To date, 8 participants have been enrolled and interviewed from UCLA (n=2), UCSD (n=3) and UCSB (n=3). Recruitment is ongoing. However, because the COVID pandemic shifted the climate in which survivors are experiencing and responding to sexual and other forms of relationship misconduct, we made revisions to our research materials (requiring additional IRB approvals and delays) to be more salient to survivors' current lived experiences.

Discussion

Intimate partner and sexual violence remain important public health and social justice issues on college and university campuses across the U.S. and globe. The mission of the UC Speaks Up research is to understand the factors shaping intimate relationships and sexual and interpersonal violence among students at UCLA, UCSD and UCSB; and use findings to develop and test prevention and response interventions (including policy updates) to improve the health, safety and well-being of all members of the UCLA, UCSD and UCSB communities. Access to evidence from each campus will leverage our ability to make specific recommendations for tailoring response systems (e.g., advocacy offices for survivors) and primary prevention approaches to ensure they are relevant, acceptable to and meet the needs of all individuals in the campus community, including those who are typically understudied.

Findings will also be used to prepare for rigorous public health prevention research on SVSH across the entire UC system. As the most comprehensive and advanced postsecondary educational system in the world [18], representative survey research is warranted across all ten UC campuses. However, UC Berkeley's MyVoice Survey is the only SVSH climate study that has been conducted on any UC campus, to date. The survey was administered in 2018 to undergraduate students, graduate and professional students, staff and faculty members, and included behaviorally specific measures of sexual assault, harassment, dating violence and misconduct. To help other UC campuses adapt and field a campus-specific version of the same survey tool, the UC Berkeley MyVoice Working Group prepared an implementation overview to facilitate the process of refining the instrument for other campuses, socializing the initiative with campus stakeholders, and marketing it effectively.[17] Implementation of the same survey instrument across the UC system would allow for within and between campus comparisons and would contribute to campus-specific and system-wide policy development.

We already know sexual violence and misconduct are important, ongoing problems at institutions of higher education in the U.S. The COVID-19 pandemic creates new challenges, pertaining to violence prevention and survivor support, but we do *not* know what the social climate will be as students return to their campuses in the fall of 2021, after a year of remote learning. Epidemiological and social science research is currently more important than ever, to ensure SVSH prevention programs and support services can be tailored to meet the changing needs of survivors and their allies.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors contributed to this paper. JW, DS, RFM, JS, and SB had lead roles in the study design. JW led the writing of all sections of the manuscript. CA, SS and EE led the implementation of the study and were major contributors to writing the manuscript, specifically the Methods and Results sections and with development of the tables. JW, CA, SS, EE, and MS all contributed to data collection. LO, CA, SS, DS, and RFM reviewed and substantially edited the manuscript. All authors contributed to the refinement of the protocol and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Abbreviations

AY:	Academic year
CAPS:	Counseling and Psychological Services
CCM:	Cultural consensus modeling
CDC:	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
FGD:	Focus group discussion
GEH:	Center on Gender Equity and Health
HRPP:	Human Research Protection Program
IDI:	In-depth interview
IPV:	Intimate partner violence
IRB:	Institutional review board
LGBTQIA+:	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and “+” for all other sexualities, sexes, and genders
OVW:	Office on Violence Against Women
NCAA:	National Collegiate Athletic Association
NIH:	National Institutes of Health
SVSH:	Sexual violence and sexual harassment
UC:	University of California
UCGHI:	University of California Global Health Institute
UCI:	University of California, Irvine
UCLA:	University of California, Los Angeles
UCOP:	University of California Office of the President
UCSB:	University of California Santa Barbara
UCSD:	University of California, San Diego
US:	United States
VAWC:	Violence against women and children
WHGE-COE:	Women’s Health, Gender and Empowerment Center of Expertise

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Supplementary Files

