



“Don’t be that guy” campaign

BACKGROUND

May 19, 2011—Ottawa’s “Don’t be that guy” campaign was launched in conjunction with the *Building Prevention: Sexual Violence, Youth and Drinking* conference and Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The posters take a refreshing and new approach to tackling sexual violence among youth aged 19 to 25. Instead of placing responsibility for preventing sexual assault in the hands of victims, the posters appeal to potential offenders—speaking directly to them in their language. The posters will be placed in men’s washrooms in participating bars in the city, as well as other places where young people go.

Sexual assault and drinking research

In March 2010, Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO) put out a call for proposals for research on the prevention of sexual assault with a focus on youth and alcohol. Alcohol is by far the most common drug used in drug-facilitated sexual assaults. The contract was awarded to the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre, the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women and University of Ottawa Criminology Professor Holly Johnson.

The resulting research, *Building Prevention: Sexual Violence, Youth and Drinking*, is an insightful look at a critical problem. It found that young people have mixed understanding about the issue, and there are almost no prevention programs that address alcohol-related sexual violence. Alcohol-related community services focus on addiction and drunk driving, but don’t integrate a sexual violence component.

Origins of “Don’t be that guy”

Researchers identified this Edmonton campaign as being particularly innovative. In 2009, police statistics for sexual assault were up about 30% from the previous year and half were alcohol-related.

A coalition of community partners and the Edmonton Police Services decided to do something about it. Known as SAVE – Sexual Assault Voices of Edmonton – they worked with a research firm to develop a public education campaign and tested the messages with 100 young men. The comments from many young men were, “Yeah, I’ve had friends who’ve done that” or “I’ve done that myself.”

For years we’ve been telling young women that it’s up to them to avoid sexual assault. This campaign breaks the mold by speaking directly to young men. The images are intentionally graphic to emphasize the bottom line, which is that sex without consent is sexual assault. And being drunk is no excuse for committing a violent crime.

The message is clear: Don't be that guy. Don't be that guy who doesn't take responsibility. Don't be that guy who doesn't make sure his partner is consenting. Don't be that guy who sexually assaults a young woman too drunk to consent to sex. Don't be that guy who uses alcohol as a tool to sexually assault. Don't be that guy who believes it is not rape.

Ottawa-Edmonton partnership

Crime Prevention Ottawa gratefully acknowledges SAVE for agreeing to share the campaign materials. Their generosity and creativity will help educate a generation of young men in Ottawa about alcohol-related sexual assault. In exchange, we have translated the campaign into French and will feature the SAVE brand and website on all campaign posters.

As a next step, CPO and our partners will work to build relationships with colleges and universities in Ottawa in order to spread the campaign to our local campuses.

To download and share the "Don't be that guy" posters, please visit www.CrimePreventionOttawa.ca.