

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR CCR TEAMS

Addressing Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking on Campus



Creating a solid communication strategy is vital for the effectiveness and sustainability of your Coordinated Community Response (CCR) Team to address Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking (DVSAS) on campus. This guide will help you identify and reach various audiences, focus your message, and foster engagement with your campus community.

Internal vs. External Communications

As a first step in developing a strategy, it will be necessary for you to identify your already-existing channels of communication.

- **Internal communications** focus on how CCR Team members communicate with one another, including content like meeting agendas and notes, CCR Team policies and onboarding manuals, data collection, and strategic planning documents.
- **External communications** engage the broader campus community through social media, websites, brochures, newsletters, blogs, podcasts, videos, and more.

Consider: How does your department, center, and/or CCR Team already communicate with your communities (both on- and off- campus)? Are some channels more successful (i.e. higher engagement) than others? What new channels are you excited to explore?

Audience Identification on Campus

Identifying and understanding your audience will support your CCR Team in creating effective communication:

- **Segmenting Audiences:** Organize your campus community into specific groups (i.e. first-year students, first responders, student athletes, etc.), identifying the particular underserved communities that you would like to connect to (i.e. BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, immigrant, commuter, etc.).
- **Outreach & Research:** Understanding the unique needs, preferences, and communication habits of each group is vital—if you don't already have this information, you can hold focus groups, partner with your communication and marketing department, or draft a student survey!
- **Tailored Messages:** Based on data gathered, customize your messages to resonate with each audience, ensuring relevance and impact. You want communication about your tools, trainings, and supportive offerings not only to reach your audiences, but to connect with their specific needs.

Leveraging Communications to Address Roadblocks & Strengthen Relationships

Addressing DVSA issues on your campus can be challenging—from cultural stigmas around discussing harm to unclear information surrounding reporting processes and/or support services to distrustful or broken relationships with response personnel —you and your CCR Team may be struggling to find ways to break down roadblocks and build the relationships needed to communicate effectively.

Building consistent communications channels, nurturing relationships, and tailoring vital resources can largely dictate how your desired audiences receive the information they need and how effective your CCR Team can be in shifting the campus culture.



(Re)Building Relationships

Cultivating relationships is key to effectively reaching your audience and creating authentic connections between survivors, allies, and those who serve them, such as prevention and response staff and community partners. It's crucial to gather critical information during the planning and drafting stages. **Emphasizing the disability rights movement principle, “Nothing about us, without us,” creating direct communication channels** like open forums, roundtables, and surveys allows you to gather baseline information on roadblocks and successes. This approach fosters relationships and enables tailored responses.

Roles & the CCR Team

The CCR Team plays a key role in your communication plan! CCR Team members can:

- Facilitate communication between departments and community partners
- Ensure consistent messaging to avoid student confusion
- Collaboratively develop and support the overall communications strategy to maximize campus engagement

Lean on the expertise and relationships that your CCR Team holds, and collectively work to identify members that can help hold some of the labor in any action steps (audits, outreach, and data collection, drafting, etc.). Make these choices clear in your strategic plan.

Leveraging Institutional Power

Program efforts benefit from support from institutional leadership, both for visibility and buy-in. You should:

- Request regular meetings with leadership to share data & the program scope
- Request to have program activities shared in institutional-level communications (i.e. presidential newsletters).





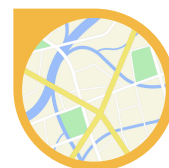
Let's take a look at some of the strategic ways you and your CCR Team can engage in communication.

Tailoring Your Communications

Now that you have the “how” and “who” you’ll need the “what.” It’s important to recognize that not everyone needs all of the same information at once, and that targeted communications will support you in getting the right details to the right audience(s).

For example...

- Perhaps you find out through student interviews that LGBTQIA+ student survivors aren’t reporting because they aren’t sure of queer-friendly spaces.
 - You could create a resource that identifies campus offices and/or community partners that offer culturally relevant care.
- Perhaps commuter students share they are less familiar with where the program activities are held.
 - You could develop a resource that includes a map, noting relevant offices and gathering spaces where survivors can receive support and allies can receive training, etc.



It will be tempting to start drafting all of your communications at once, but after you detail the offerings you’d like to develop, it’s important to scale and time your projects for both CCR Team sustainability (conscious of workload), and to avoid overwhelming your audiences with more information than they can easily process. **As always, you want to ensure that your messaging is focused on appropriate program activities and survivor-centered DVSA information.**



Sample Tailored Questions

In the following example, we will highlight tailored questions for LGBTQIA+ students:

- What are some current needs LGBTQIA+ students and survivors on my campus have around DVSAS issues?
- What relationships already exist between prevention and response personnel, staff, faculty, and LGBTQIA+ students?
- Where is there space for deepening or developing relationships?
- Where do they express feeling most safe?
- What spaces and/or processes feel less secure or unknown?

You can use tailored questions like these for any campus community. Answering them helps your CCR Team develop resources that genuinely meet your audience's needs by involving them directly rather than relying on staff and faculty, and grounds communications in the collective work of the CCR Team.

Co-Creation, Collaboration, & Connection

The success of your CCR Team communication depends on breaking down silos and leveraging the strengths of both individuals and departments to address DVSAS issues.

For example, engage a Title IX representative who is connected with institutional leaders for data sharing around CCR Team activities. Do you have an advocate who is beloved to survivors seeking support navigating the reporting process? Partner with them to draft or revise communications highlighting the language, realities, and details they use in their conversations with survivors! Is there a campus security officer who has good relationships with an underserved community on campus? Ask them to co-facilitate an informal discussion with other officers about culturally responsive engagement! **Engaging your team members strengthens internal bonds and enhances external communication.**



Feedback Loops & Adaptations

Experimenting with Delivery

Don't be afraid to **experiment with new mediums, platforms, and delivery methods** in your communications! Videos, virtual or in person town halls, events, zines and other creative methods can help you reach and connect with new audiences.

Often, we focus so much on the programs our CCR Teams lead that we overlook the importance of feedback systems in our communication strategies. Remember communications coming in are just as important as those that we share out.

Consider how you gather data on your projects—How do you collect and act on feedback from your target communities to measure success? What metrics do you use to evaluate projects, and how do they align with your CCR Team's mission? How will you engage stakeholders to ensure feedback reflects lived experience and drives improvement?

Considerations: What systems already exist for student and community feedback? How might you incorporate both formal and informal feedback methods (i.e. roundtables and surveys). How are you collecting data on how your audiences are connecting to your communications offerings (i.e. keeping track of trifold picked up from the Health center or having sign in sheets at events that ask "How did you hear about this?")?

Adjustments: You will need to make necessary changes based on evaluation results to improve engagement and impact. Building a successful communication strategy takes time, collaboration, relationship-building, and data. Stale communication can lead to misunderstanding, messaging fatigue, and inattention, so revisiting and adjusting your messaging (not reinventing the wheel!) will be a key to your communication success.

Practical Implementation

Now it's time to take actionable steps to execute your communication strategy! You will:

1. **Assess Communication Channels:** Identify effective channels for your audience.
2. **Define Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly assign communication tasks. Remember: Project Directors shouldn't be working on this in a silo! Lean on the expertise and connection of your CCR Team to delegate and co-create!
3. **Craft Clear, Tailored Messages:** Develop concise and mission-aligned messages that address the most pressing DV/SAS needs for your identified audiences (both general and targeted).
4. **Evaluate and Adapt:** Regularly assess and refine your strategy.

For additional training & technical assistance,
email CampusTA@trynova.org

