

## Yale University 2019 AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Misconduct: Introduction and Key Findings

STEPHANIE SPANGLER

*Vice Provost for Health Affairs and Academic Integrity*

*University Title IX Coordinator*

I am writing to provide the Yale community with an overview of the Yale-specific findings from the 2019 AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct (the Survey). Like its 2015 predecessor, the Survey was organized by the Association of American Universities (AAU) and conducted by Westat, a nationally recognized research organization. The Survey, which was offered to undergraduate, graduate and professional students at Yale and 32 peer colleges and universities during the spring of 2019, collected information about students' experiences of sexual misconduct and their perceptions of the campus sexual climate. It also included questions about community engagement, bystander intervention behavior, and students' use of campus resources.

Our goals in offering the Survey were to expand our information about the prevalence of sexual misconduct on our campus; to assess the impact of our efforts since the 2015 survey; and to use the Survey data to inform our ongoing initiatives to combat sexual misconduct and foster a campus culture in which all students feel safe, respected, and supported. We are extremely grateful to the students who participated in the Survey. Thanks to their generosity we now have a deeper understanding of what is happening on our campus and a powerful guide for future action.

In reviewing the findings in the 2019 survey alongside Yale's 2015 survey results, we see some signs of progress in addressing sexual misconduct at Yale. For example, in 2019 students reported higher levels of awareness and increased use of Yale's resources to address sexual misconduct. They also reported experiencing lower rates of harassing behaviors and intimate partner violence. That said, there are also a number of areas where signs of progress are lacking. Notably, survey-estimated rates of sexual assault – a term that encompasses a broad range of experiences-- were somewhat higher than in 2015.

While the 2019 survey has added invaluable to our growing fund of information about the sexual climate at Yale, this introduction and the Yale-Westat report that follows reflect only a preliminary analysis of the Survey data. At the time of this publication, we have only just received Westat's complete analysis of Yale's data. When coupled with information collected through the 2015 survey and through our local activities, such as the semi-annual reports of sexual misconduct, our Office of Institutional Research will be able to conduct additional analyses to help us better understand correlations and trends among the experiences and perceptions of our students. Additionally, the findings from the 2019 survey will be used to help schools and departments develop follow-on projects to better understand their local climates. Finally, the public release of the aggregate data by the AAU will help us to continue

conversations and comparisons with peer institutions to identify additional promising practices.

Most importantly, it is my hope that the Survey findings will fortify the community engagement that has shaped so many of our programs and resources and advanced our efforts to create a campus culture where all can thrive. Toward that end, I encourage you to read the report, invite you to provide [comments and suggestions](#) to my office, and ask you to consider attending one of the venues we will create for community conversation – not only about the report itself but also about ways we can continue to work together to address sexual misconduct at Yale.

## A Note About Westat’s Methodology

The methodology that Westat used in creating the Survey and analyzing the data is described in detail in the Yale-Westat report. However, I would like to draw your attention to two aspects of Westat’s methodology, namely the type of statistics generated via the survey results and the use of the acronym TGQN.

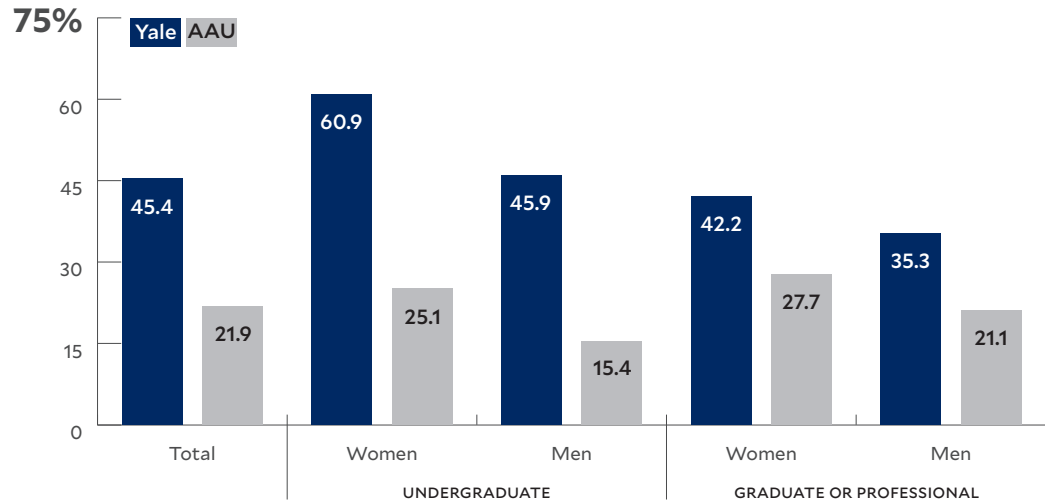
Throughout this introduction and the Yale-Westat report, we discuss estimated percentages derived from the survey responses completed by Yale students, or by students across all 33 participating institutions. These estimates have been weighted so that our survey results might be a more accurate reflection of the experiences of all students who were invited to take the Survey.

Most of the discussion and tables presented in this introduction and throughout the Yale-Westat report differentiate estimates of students’ experiences by gender and student affiliation (undergraduate or graduate and professional status). With regard to gender, the Survey instrument asked students to self-identify into one of eight categories. Based on each student’s response, Westat classified the student into one of three groups: 1) woman, 2) man, or the additional genders of 3) trans man, trans woman, nonbinary or genderqueer, questioning, or not listed (TGQN). The acronym TGQN is used throughout the Yale-Westat report to refer to this third group. While we use other terminology, e.g. “additional genders,” to refer to this group in conversations and presentations on our campus, in this introduction and in graphs or tables created by Yale we will use the acronym TGQN so that readers can easily move between our materials and the Yale-Westat report and data tables.

## Response Rates

At Yale, the Survey was made available to all enrolled students over the age of 18 (n=13,916). The overall response rate was 45.4%, which was significantly higher than the AAU aggregate response rate of 21.9% (see Intro Figure 1). Yale’s consistently high response rates (45.4% in 2019 and 51.8% in 2015) underscore the importance of the Survey and the issues it examines to our students.

At Yale and in the AAU aggregate data set, response rates differed by gender and student affiliation. Within Yale, the school-specific response rates for Yale College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the twelve professional schools ranged from 25% to 66%.



**Intro Figure 1** 2019 AAU Campus Sexual Climate Survey response rates: Percent of all enrolled students who completed the survey ([show data](#))

### Sexual Assault

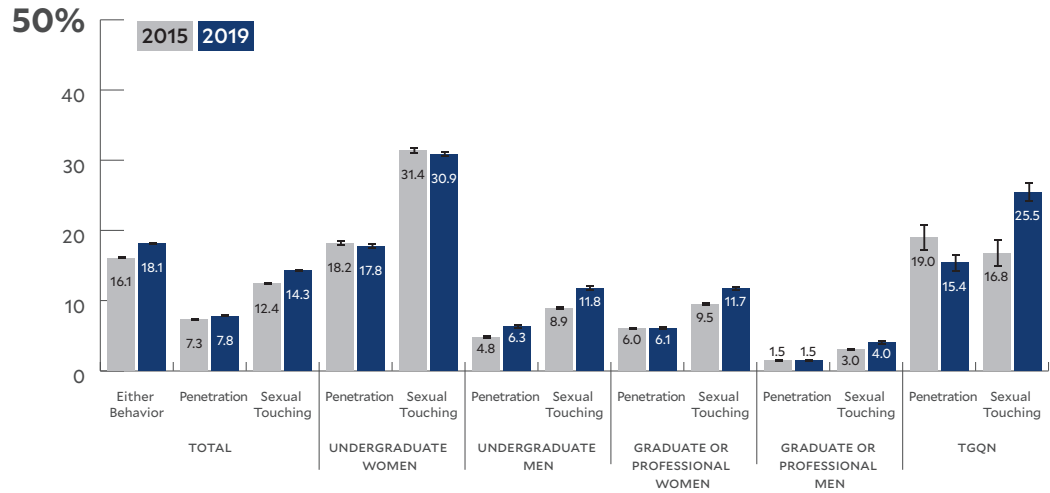
The core sexual assault questions in the Survey were the same as those asked in the 2015 survey. In both surveys, students were asked about their non-consensual experiences of two behaviors – *penetration* (defined to include oral sex) and *sexual touching* – via any of four tactics – *force*, *incapacitation*<sup>1</sup>, *coercion*, and the *absence of affirmative consent*. Under Yale’s definition, this broad range of experiences constitutes sexual assault.

Based upon students’ survey responses, the 2019 survey estimated that 18.1% of students have experienced an attempted or completed sexual assault by one of the four tactics since coming to Yale, an increase from the 2015 estimate of 16.1%. The overall increase appears to be driven largely by increases in non-consensual sexual touching experienced by men, graduate and professional women, and TGQN students; the estimated percentage for undergraduate women is statistically unchanged from 2015 (see Intro Figure 2). As in 2015, the Yale estimate is somewhat higher than that of the AAU aggregate, which also has risen, growing from 14.8% in 2015 to 16.5% in 2019.

As with other forms of sexual misconduct, patterns of Survey-estimated rates of sexual assault varied significantly by gender and student affiliation as well as by type of sexual assault. Additional information about estimated rates of student experiences of sexual assault across tactics, genders, and student affiliation is presented in Intro Figure 2.1. In both the Yale and the AAU aggregate data, estimates indicate that undergraduate women and TGQN students are more likely to experience these behaviors.

Students who indicated that they experienced either of these behaviors by any of the four tactics were presented with follow-up questions in which they could share additional

<sup>1</sup> Westat is using the phrase “Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening” as a fuller description of what we refer to as “incapacitation.”



**Intro Figure 2** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual assault by tactic, student population, gender, and survey year ([show data](#))

Survey Item Response	TOTAL		UNDERGRADUATE				GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL				TGQN	
			WOMEN		MEN		WOMEN		MEN			
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Sexual contact by physical force or inability to consent or stop what was happening; or attempted penetration using physical force	11.1	12.8	28.1	28.4	8.2	10.4	8.2	9.7	2.5	3.7	20.6	23.3
Penetration	5.0	5.0	13.2	12.1	3.1	3.9	3.6	3.6	0.8	0.9	16.7	8.7
Sexual touching	8.2	9.9	21.5	22.3	5.7	7.8	5.6	7.5	2.1	2.9	11.2	18.3
Sexual contact by physical force, incapacitation, coercion, or without voluntary agreement; or attempted penetration using physical force	16.1	18.1	38.8	38.7	11.7	15.4	13.3	14.9	3.9	5.0	28.4	28.6
Penetration	7.3	7.8	18.2	17.8	4.8	6.3	6.0	6.1	1.5	1.5	19.0	15.4
Sexual touching	12.4	14.3	31.4	30.9	8.9	11.8	9.5	11.7	3.0	4.0	16.8	25.5

**Intro Figure 2.1** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual assault by tactic, year, and student population

information about the impacts of the assault, the people and contexts involved in the incident, and also the people and resources to whom they turned for support.

While we will do further analysis to achieve a better understanding of how these experiences occur and the range of strategies that can be employed to address them, some patterns are already clear. Consistently, across the full range of behaviors and student communities, a large percentage of students who indicated they had experienced sexual assault behaviors of any kind said the behavior had involved another Yale student, with a small percentage (ranging from the single digits to the teens) indicating involvement of people unaffiliated with

Yale, or people whose affiliation was unknown. Asked to describe their relationship to “the person who did this,” Yale students frequently selected “someone I was involved or intimate with at the time” or “friend.” For example, of women reporting penetration by force or incapacitation, an estimated 35.6% selected the description “someone I was involved or intimate with at the time.” In general, these findings echo the broader research literature on campus sexual assault, as well as the AAU aggregate statistics, in which stranger assault is rare.

The Survey data provides some additional descriptive detail about students’ Survey-reported experiences of sexual assault committed by force or incapacitation. Women students reporting penetrative assaults indicated they occurred mostly in private spaces: largely in dorm rooms (51.1%) and in other residential housing (17.3%). Women students indicated that non-consensual sexual touching, in contrast, takes place in both private and public spaces: fraternity houses (25.2%), dorm rooms (22.2%), and restaurants/bars/clubs (20.9%) were the most commonly reported locations. The Survey estimates about the consequences of assault indicate that 87.2% of women and 74.8% of men experience at least one emotional, academic/professional, or physical consequence. One positive note, discussed below, is that more students are reaching out to campus resources for support following an experience.

Nonetheless, we take very seriously the finding that students on our campus continue to experience sexual assault. We must continue to expand our prevention strategies, while simultaneously working to enhance individual and community support for students who report these experiences.

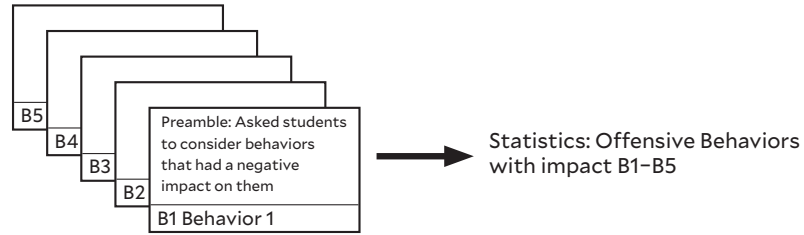
## Sexual Harassment

The questions regarding sexual harassment in the 2019 survey were modified from those asked in the 2015 survey. More specifically, while both surveys asked students about their experiences of the same set of five offensive behaviors, in the 2015 survey students were prompted to indicate only those behaviors that had interfered with or limited their academic experience at Yale. Feedback received by AAU and at Yale after the 2015 survey suggested that some students had not taken the impacts of the behaviors into account when answering the sexual harassment questions. Therefore, the 2019 survey was modified to first ask about each behavior alone (see Part 1 in Intro Figure 3), after which a single follow-up question asked students if any of those experiences had interfered with their academic experience at Yale by impacting academic performance, limiting their ability to participate in an academic program, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive social, academic or work environment (see Part 2 in Intro Figure 3).<sup>2</sup>

As a consequence of this change in methods, the 2015 and 2019 surveys generated statistics of a different nature. This means that direct comparisons between the harassment statistics in

<sup>2</sup> This is the Westat definition of sexual harassment used for the 2019 survey. The Yale definition of sexual harassment is: “Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature on or off campus, when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of an individual’s employment or academic standing; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions or for academic evaluation, grades, or advancement; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance or creating an intimidating or hostile academic or work environment. Sexual harassment may be found in a single episode, as well as in persistent behavior.”

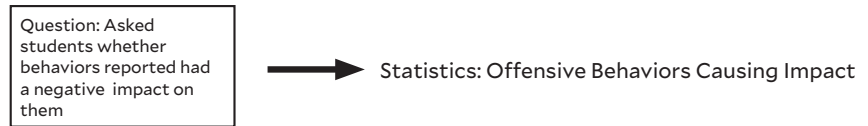
**2015: Offensive Behaviors and Impacts Combined**



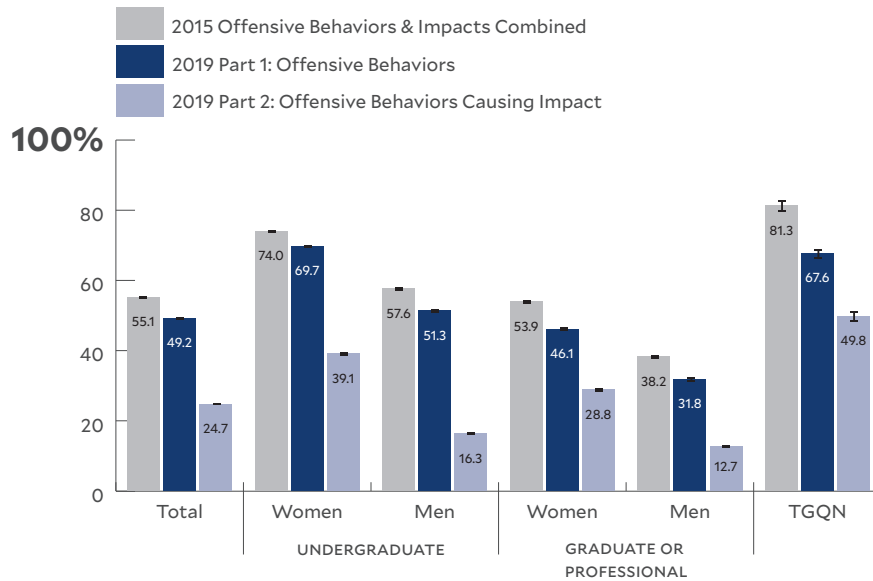
**2019, Part 1: Offensive Behaviors**



**2019, Part 2: Offensive Behaviors Causing Impacts**



**Intro Figure 3** Change in Westat Methodology for Measuring Sexually Harassing Behaviors and Impacts

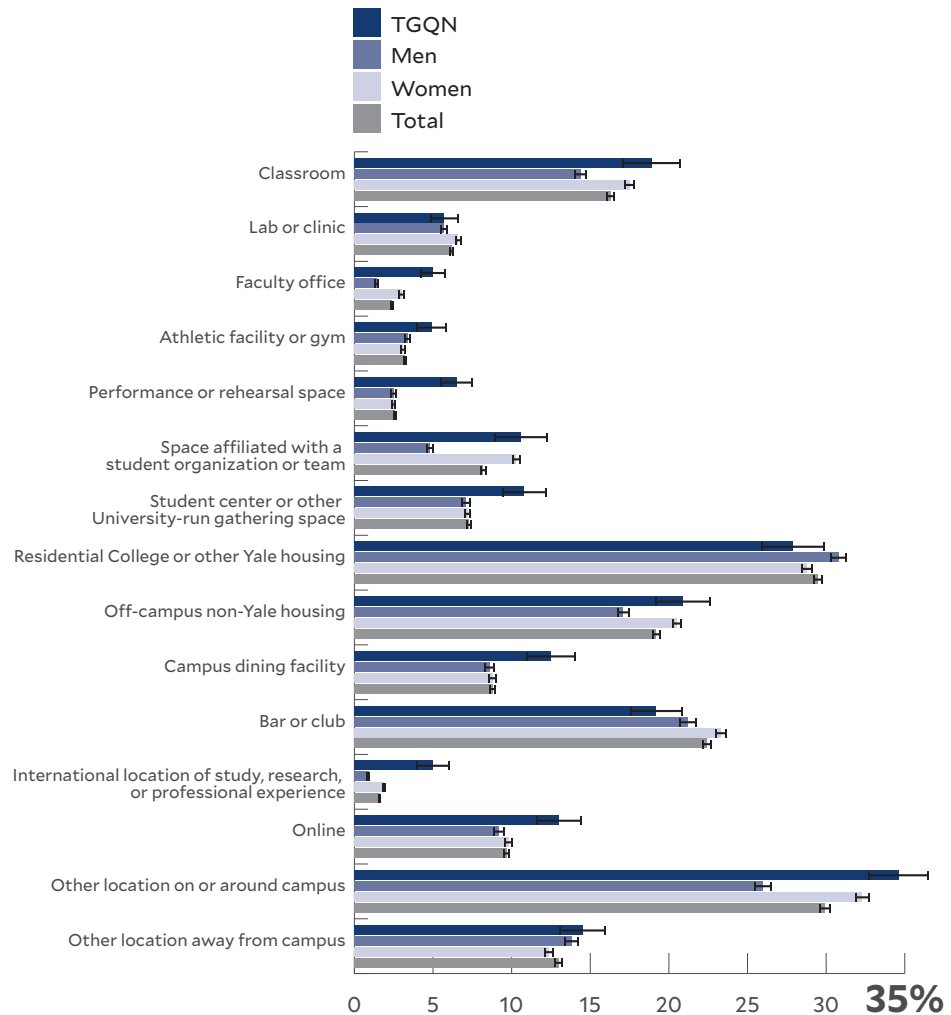


**Intro Figure 4** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexually harassing behavior since arriving at Yale ([show data](#))

the two surveys are difficult to make. Nonetheless, even with the recognition that numbers may not be directly comparable, the 2019 survey results appear to show a decrease in the overall rates of sexually harassing behaviors from those in the 2015 survey.

In the 2019 survey, 49.2% of students indicated they had experienced at least one type of harassing behavior (see Intro Figure 4). The most common harassing behaviors identified were inappropriate comments about their or someone else’s body (39.7%), and insulting or offensive remarks or jokes (34.0%).

Of the 49.2% of students who said they had experienced one or more of the harassing behaviors, 50.4% indicated that the behaviors had an impact on their Yale experience. In other words, based upon survey responses, it is estimated that 24.7% of Yale students have experienced at least one of the five offensive behaviors in a way that impacted their Yale experience (see Intro Figure 4). Students in the TGQN group and women indicated they experienced these behaviors more frequently and were also more likely to indicate that the behaviors had an impact on their Yale activities.



**Intro Figure 5** Locations of sexually harassing behaviors: Estimated percentages among students experiencing any of the five offensive behaviors since entering Yale ([show data](#))

A large majority of students who indicated that they experienced one or more of the harassing behaviors reported that the individual engaging in the behavior was a fellow student (86.1%) – most often a friend, a classmate, or someone they recognized. Of note and of additional concern, 5.7% of undergraduate women and 30.6% of women in graduate or professional schools indicated that a faculty member or instructor engaged in the harassing behavior.

Students who reported experiencing harassing behaviors were also asked about the location and context of the experience. Intro Figure 5 shows the array of settings, including classrooms and labs as well as off campus sites, where students indicated experiencing these behaviors.

While there is an important difference in how the 2015 and 2019 survey questions were presented, the 2019 survey results suggest a substantial drop in the overall rates of harassing behaviors with impact from 2015. Future analysis will evaluate factors that may have contributed to this reduction. Analysis aside, we recognize that the 2019 survey estimated that a significant number, nearly 25% of Yale students, experienced harassing behaviors that impacted their academic performance, limited their ability to participate in an academic program, or created an intimidating or hostile social, academic or work environment. Clearly, there is more prevention work to do in this area.

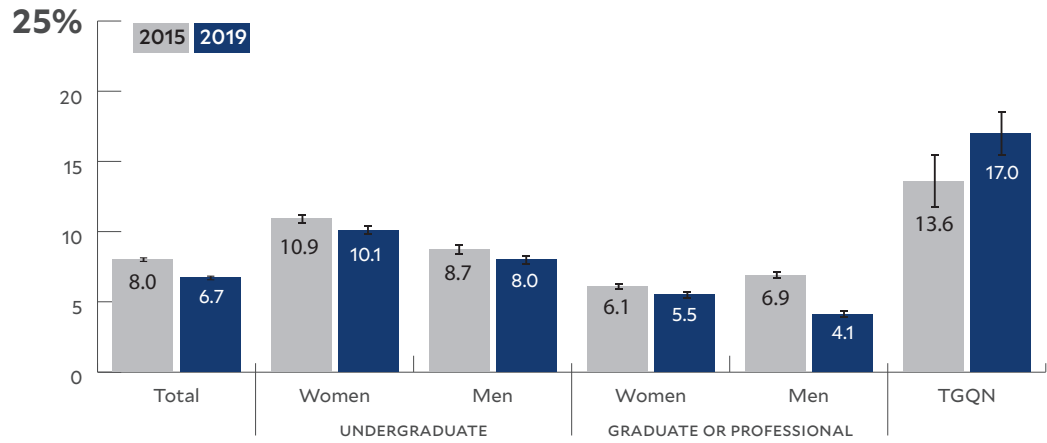
### Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking

As was the case in 2015, the 2019 survey questions focused most intensively on students' experiences of sexual assault and sexual harassment. However, the 2019 survey also produced estimates of student experiences of intimate partner violence and stalking, which are also behaviors of concern. In both the 2019 and the 2015 surveys, questions about intimate partner violence, defined by Westat as non-sexual violence among intimate partners, were asked of students who said they had been in a "partnered relationship" since entering Yale (71.1% of students). The data in the 2019 survey (see Intro Figure 6) indicate a decrease in student experiences of intimate partner violence at Yale overall (from an estimated 8.0% in 2015 to an estimated 6.7% in 2019), and a decrease in experiences involving the use of physical force (from an estimated 3.0% in 2015 to an estimated 1.6% in 2019). Additionally, Yale's estimates of intimate partner violence experiences were lower than those in the AAU aggregate data, which estimate that 10.1% of students experience at least one instance of intimate partner violence and 3.3% experience intimate partner violence involving physical force. Both Yale and AAU aggregate data indicate that TGQN students experienced these behaviors more frequently than women or men (17.0% estimated for TGQN students at Yale and 18.4% estimated in the AAU aggregate).

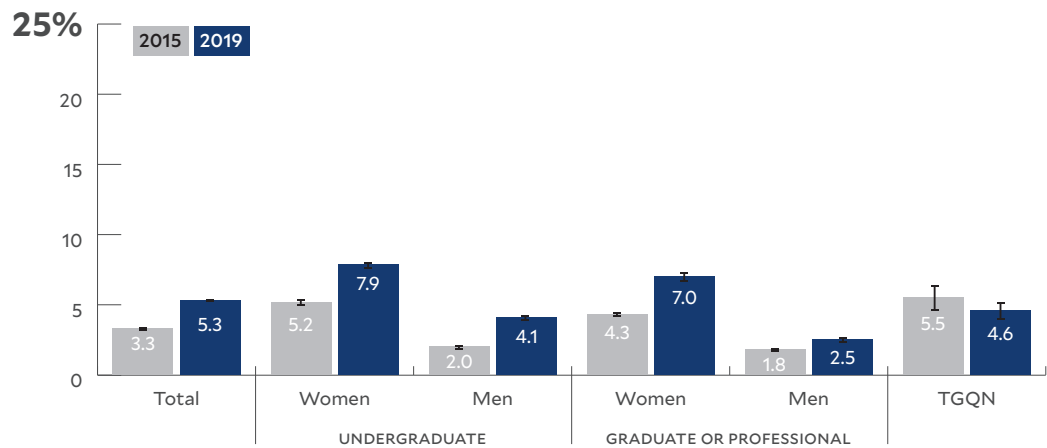
Questions about stalking in the 2019 survey were modified to reflect changes in state and federal laws. More specifically, in contrast to the 2015 survey, the 2019 questions include the criterion of "causing substantial emotional distress" as a factor that constitutes stalking in addition to the criterion of causing fear for personal safety. The estimates of stalking behavior for both the Yale student community and the AAU aggregate increased relative to 2015, due perhaps in part to the expansion of the definition. At Yale the estimated rate of stalking in any



form was 5.3%, up from an estimated 3.3% in 2015 (see Intro Figure 7). The AAU aggregate estimates increased from 4.2% in 2015 to 5.8% in 2019.



**Intro Figure 6** Survey-estimated rate of students experiencing intimate partner violence since arriving at Yale, among students who have been in partnered relationships while at Yale ([show data](#))



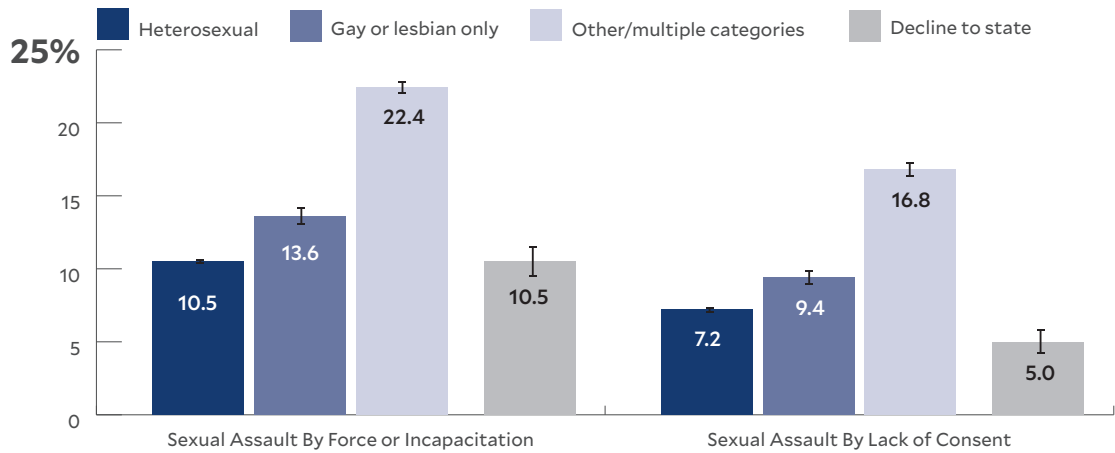
**Intro Figure 7** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing stalking since arriving at Yale ([show data](#))

### Student Populations Disproportionately Affected by Sexual Misconduct

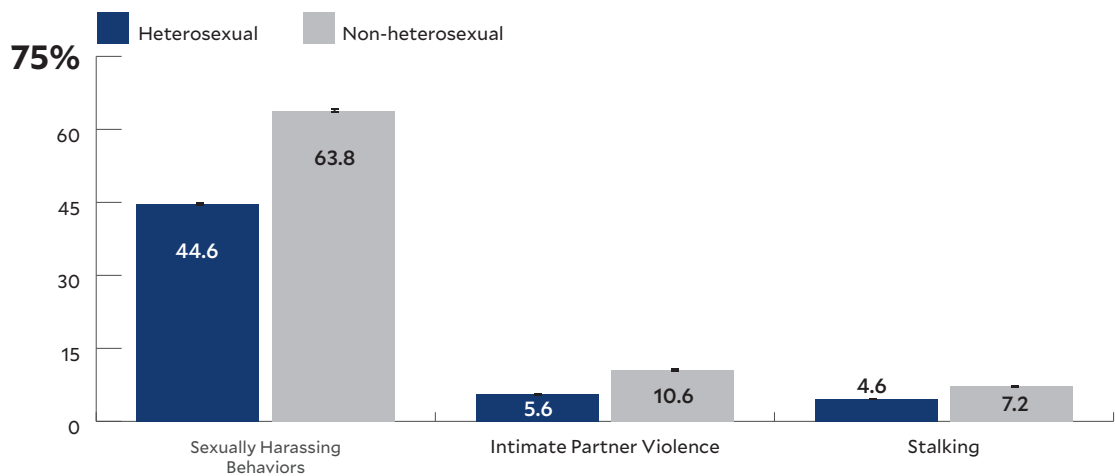
As discussed above, Westat’s gender-focused analysis highlights the high rates of sexual misconduct experienced by women and TGQN students. We are still analyzing Yale’s survey results for patterns and correlations among student populations. While more intersectional analysis is needed, the initial data tables produced by Westat show that additional aspects of identity play a role in students’ experiences of sexual misconduct.

For students who identified as gay, lesbian or within another of the non-heterosexual orientations, estimates based on their reports of non-consensual sexual contact are significantly

higher than those of students who identified as heterosexual. For example, Survey-based estimates for sexual assault by force or incapacitation range from 10.5% for those who identified only as heterosexual, to 13.6% for those who identified only as gay or lesbian, to 22.4% for those who selected other or multiple orientations (see Intro Figure 8). Survey-based estimates of sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and stalking are higher in these student groups (see Intro Figure 9).

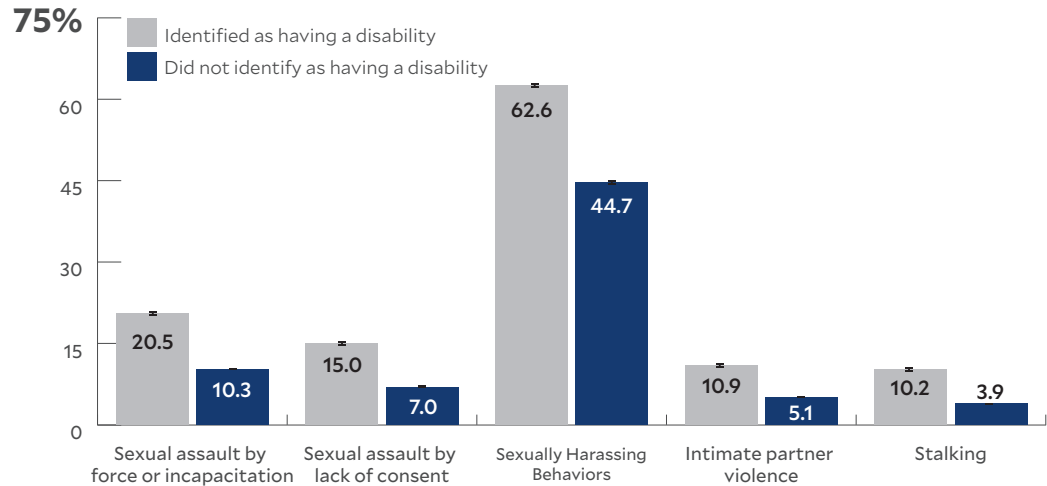


**Intro Figure 8** Sexual orientation: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual assault by tactic ([show data](#))



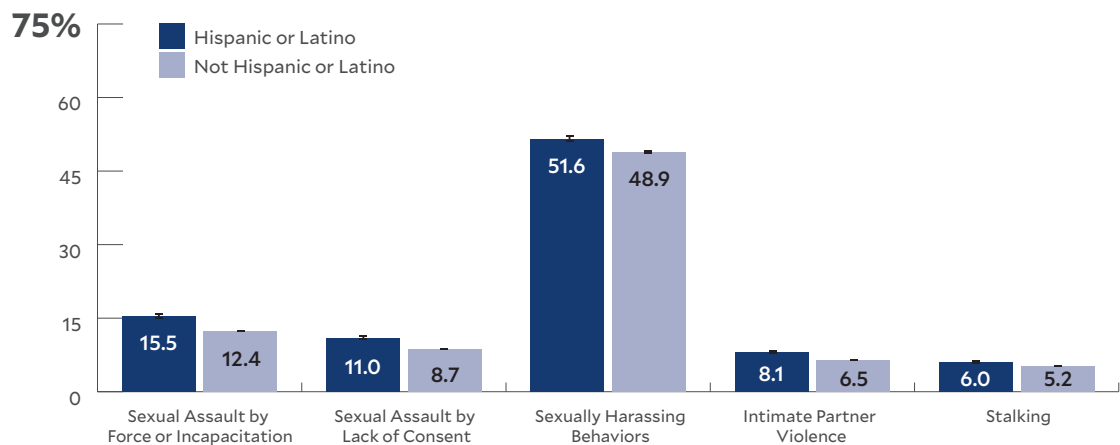
**Intro Figure 9** Sexual orientation: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexually harassing behaviors, intimate partner violence, and stalking ([show data](#))

Responses from students who self-identified as having disabilities and chronic conditions also indicated higher rates of nonconsensual sexual contact than those for students who did not identify as having a disability. The Survey estimate of the rate of sexual assault by force or incapacitation among students identifying with a disability was 20.5%, compared to 10.3% for students who did not identify as having a disability (see Intro Figure 10). Survey estimates also indicate that students with disabilities experience higher rates of sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and stalking.

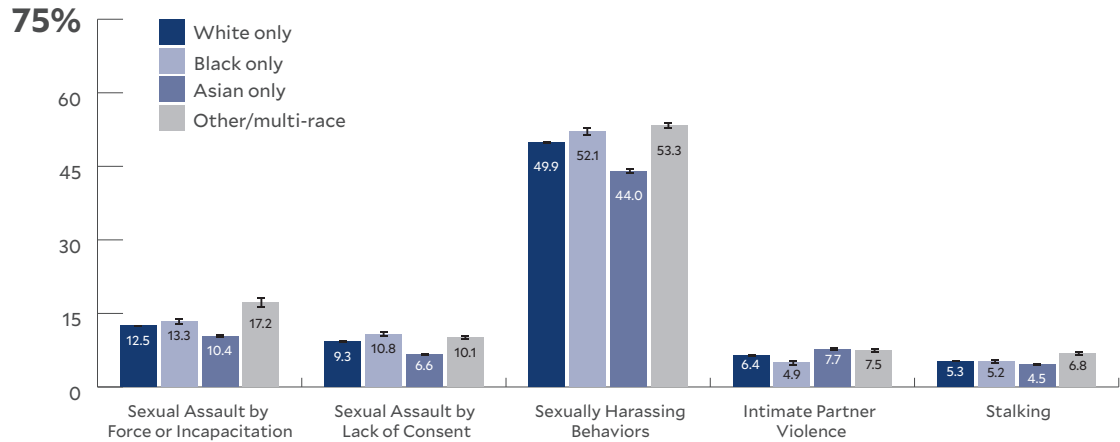


**Intro Figure 10** Students who identified as having a disability, disorder, or chronic condition compared to those who did not: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale ([show data](#))

With regard to race and ethnicity, the Survey asked two separate questions: whether students were Hispanic or Latino and whether they identified as American Indian or Alaskan native, Asian, Black or African-American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and/or White. In the Westat analysis, students’ designations of the race(s) that best described them were categorized as “White Only,” “Black Only,” “Asian Only,” or “Other/Multi race.” Survey results summarized across all Yale students indicate that Hispanic and Latino students and students who were categorized as Other/Multi race are at higher risk for experiencing sexual assault and sexual harassment (see Intro Figure 11 and Intro Figure 12). We will conduct additional analysis in order to explore the connections between race and experiences of sexual misconduct, especially as those experiences vary across intersections with gender and student affiliation.



**Intro Figure 11** Hispanic or Latino Students compared with Non-Hispanic or Latino Students: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale ([show data](#))



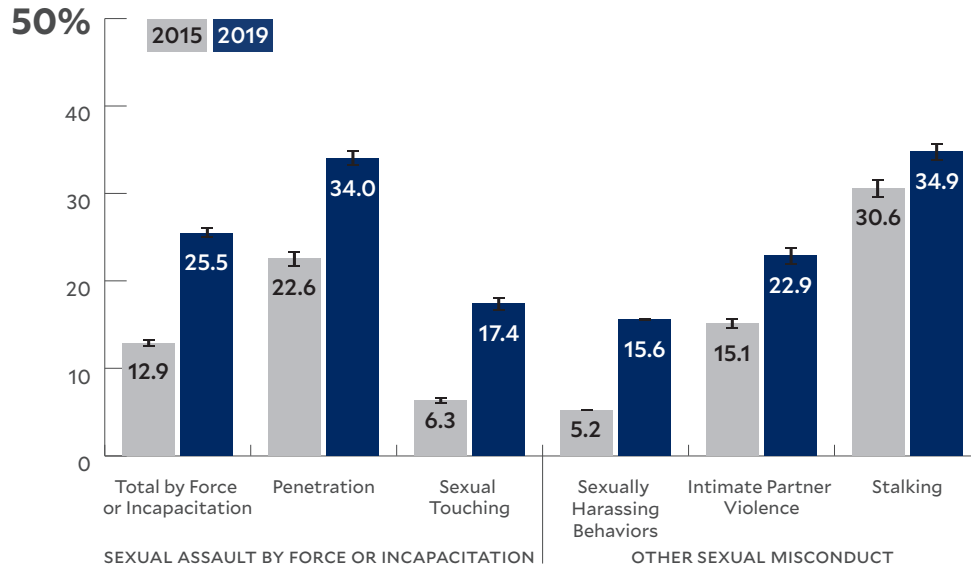
**Intro Figure 12** Student race/ethnicity: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale ([show data](#))

### Reporting Experiences of Sexual Misconduct to University Programs

Both the Survey and its 2015 predecessor asked students who indicated that they had experienced sexual misconduct whether they contacted one or more University programs about their experiences: the SHARE Center, a Title IX Coordinator, the University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct, the Yale Police Department, the New Haven Police Department, and Yale Health. Following our review of the 2015 survey results, which showed very low rates of reporting, we fortified our efforts and engaged community members across the campus to increase awareness of Yale’s resources and to identify and address barriers to reporting, e.g., by dispelling misperceptions about confidentiality and by providing more complete descriptions of the range of support services and accommodations available through informal processes.

Since 2015, the number of incidents brought to the attention of campus resources has risen substantially, as evidenced in Yale’s semi-annual reports of complaints of sexual misconduct. The Survey findings support our hope that this increase, at least in part, reflects students’ greater awareness and use of our resources, rather than merely an increase in the number of incidents themselves. Specifically, the Survey estimates that rates of reporting have risen substantially across all four forms of sexual misconduct. For example, reporting by women who experienced penetration by force increased from 27.4% in 2015 to 46.6% in 2019; reporting by women who experienced penetration by incapacitation increased from 17.9% in 2015 to 32.4% in 2019; and reporting by men who experienced penetration by force or incapacitation went from a rate too low to estimate in 2015 to 16.2% in 2019. Among students who experienced sexually harassing behaviors in 2019, 15.6% contacted a campus resource, as compared to only 5.2% in 2015. Intro Figure 13 provides estimates for other behaviors as well. Of note, in nearly all cases the Yale estimate for reporting exceeds the AAU aggregate.

Despite the notable increases in reporting and awareness, the 2019 survey revealed that substantial numbers of students did not report their experiences of sexual misconduct to any campus resource. When asked about the reason, students most often indicated that the



**Intro Figure 13** Survey-estimated rates of students contacting a program or resource following an experience of sexual misconduct, among students who experienced sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale ([show data](#))

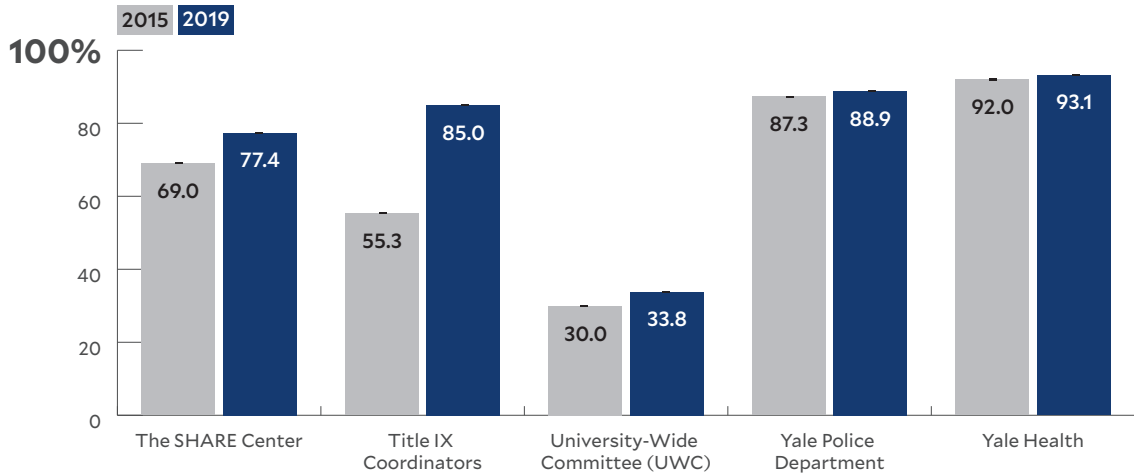
behavior was “not serious enough” to report. In 2015, that response was also the most frequent one selected. Subsequent analysis revealed that many of those students nonetheless listed harms they had suffered as a result of the experience. In conversations with the community at the time, we heard that “not serious enough to report” could be a measure of overall climate and expectations: many students said that they looked to faculty, staff, and peers for signals about which behaviors warranted response. We consider all of the behaviors measured on the survey to be serious. We will both more closely analyze the 2019 data and engage with community members to better understand and address remaining barriers to reporting.

### Community Knowledge, Perceptions, and Skills

Along with asking about experiences of sexual misconduct, the Survey also asked students about their general knowledge of campus policies, definitions and resources, their perceptions of campus climate, and their bystander intervention skills. Given the substantial increase in community education over the past four years, it is gratifying to see that we have made progress in many of these areas.

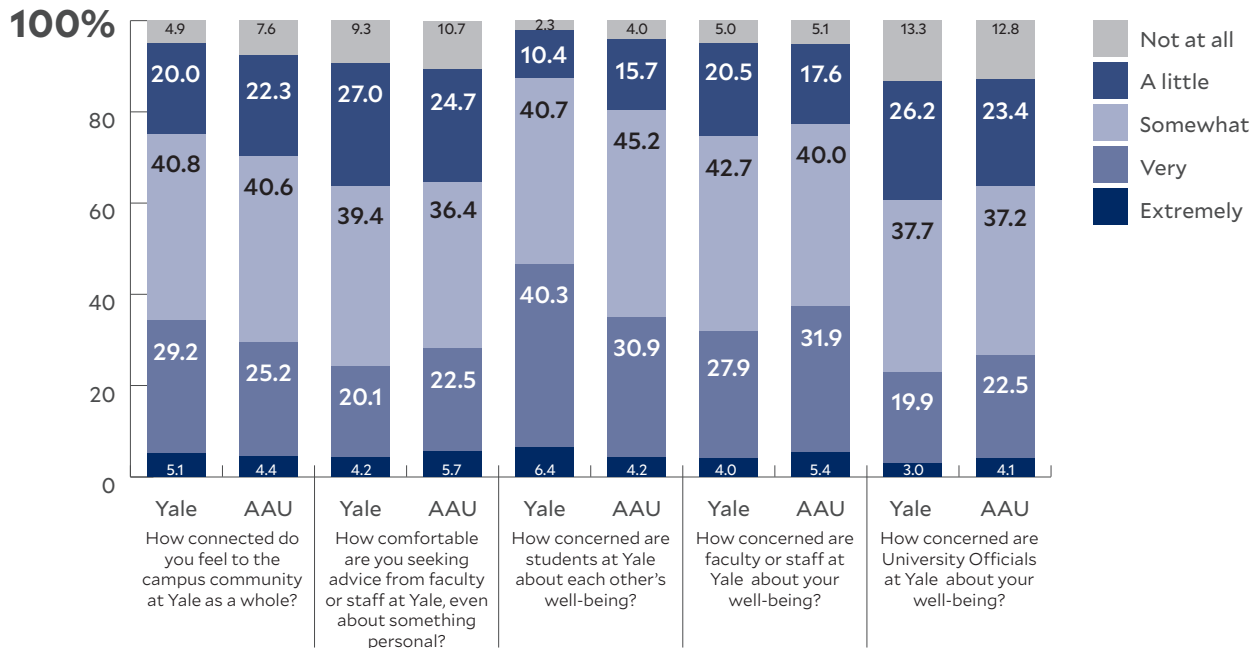
Survey estimates indicate that, since 2015, Yale students’ familiarity with campus resources has increased significantly, with the greatest gains among graduate and professional students. For example, 2019 survey estimates suggest that 85.0% of students are aware of the Title IX Coordinators’ services and resources, an increase from 55.3% in 2015 (see Intro Figure 14).

The estimated percentage of students who indicated that they are “very” or “extremely” knowledgeable about Yale’s definitions rose from 22.7% in 2015 to 40.0% in 2019; if we include students who indicated that they are “somewhat” knowledgeable, the 2019 estimate rises to 78.5%. We also see significant knowledge increases regarding where to get help: 52.1%



**Intro Figure 14** Survey-estimated rates of student awareness of campus resources (show data)

of students now indicate they are “very” or “extremely” knowledgeable, an increase from 38.2% in 2015; adding “somewhat” knowledgeable increases the 2019 estimate to 85.5%. In these areas, Yale students appear to be more knowledgeable than peers in the AAU aggregate data. Survey-based estimates also indicate that Yale students are more confident in 2019 that campus officials would take reports of sexual misconduct seriously. Estimates of Yale students’ confidence that campus officials would conduct fair investigations rose slightly between 2015 and 2019; however, they remain lower than the AAU aggregate and continue



**Intro Figure 15** Survey-estimated student perceptions of 2019 campus climate and community, Yale vs. AAU aggregate (show data)

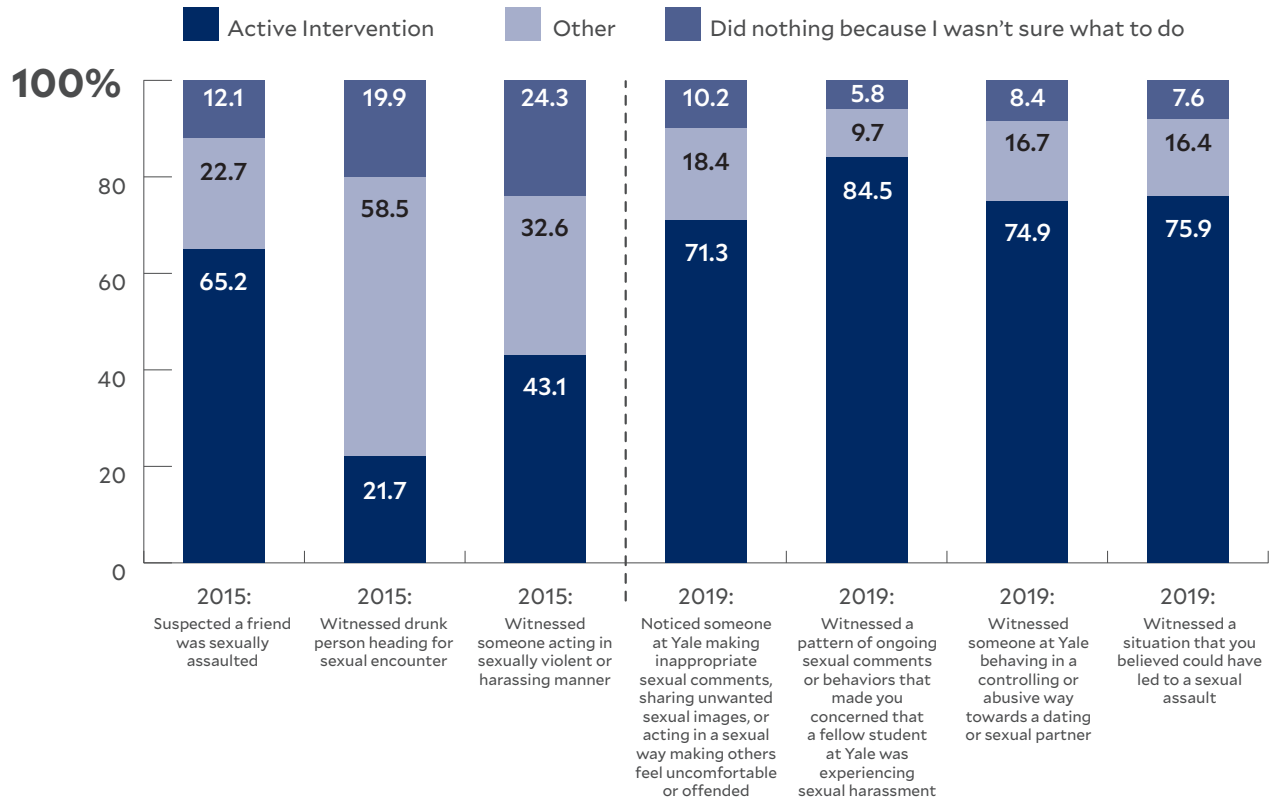
to show significant gender differences, with men expressing the most confidence and TGQN students the least.

The Survey included new questions about campus connectedness and support. While we have no 2015 data for year-to-year Yale comparisons, Intro Figure 15 shows the comparisons to the 2019 AAU aggregate data. Overall, Survey estimates indicate that Yale students feel more closely connected to their campus community than do the students in the AAU aggregate. They also indicated that they feel more confident that other Yale students care about their well-being. However, Yale students indicated they had less confidence than peers in the AAU aggregate that faculty or staff, or university officials care about students' well-being. Within the Yale and the AAU aggregate data, estimates varied across gender and student affiliation. For example, Yale estimates indicate that undergraduate women felt most connected to the campus community as a whole, with 56.6% of them saying they felt "very" or "extremely" connected, while graduate and professional women felt the least connected, with only 15.9% selecting "very" or "extremely." Male students, both at Yale and among the AAU aggregate population, indicated that they have more confidence than women or TGQN students that faculty, staff, and campus officials care about their wellbeing.

Along with these awareness and general perception measures, the Survey asked students about bystander intervention: how they responded when witnessing signs of potential sexual misconduct. Expanding bystander intervention training, especially among graduate and professional students, has been a major initiative at Yale over the past four years, and so we were eager to see these results. The bystander section of the Survey asked students whether they had witnessed certain troubling situations and gave a broad range of options for how students reacted if they said they had seen one of them. The scenarios described and the response options presented were substantially different in the 2015 versus the 2019 survey, making direct comparisons difficult. Nonetheless, in comparison to 2015 survey results, we find evidence in the Survey that current students have increased intervention skills and are more likely to use them.

Of the students who indicated that they had observed incidents such as those described in the Survey, many more were likely to indicate that they engaged in direct or active interventions – interrupted the situation in the moment, for example, or expressed concern to the person engaging in the problematic behavior – and fewer indicated that they "did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do" (see Intro Figure 16). The revised questions in the Survey have provided us with important new information about how Yale students are putting bystander training to use. With this additional information in hand, we have already refined the undergraduate bystander training that concluded in late September of the current term.

One critical element of our current campus educational program teaches skills on how students can respond in supportive and productive ways if a friend or classmate shares an experience of sexual misconduct. These skills are especially important given that the 2015 and 2019 surveys confirmed that many students turn first (and sometimes only) to friends. In order to assess our progress on this initiative, we added a set of custom questions to the Survey as it was administered to Yale students, asking about students' experiences of receiving disclosures as well as of making them. The Survey estimates that 35.3% of Yale students had a friend or



**Intro Figure 16** Survey-estimated rates of student bystander behavior in response to witnessing offensive, abusive, or violent behavior ([show data](#))

close acquaintance who told them about an experience they thought might have been sexual misconduct. Of those, 96.7% indicated that they had listened and offered support, and significant percentages also engaged in other positive responses. Only 1.6% indicated that they reacted in a way they regret, and only 2.2% indicated that they did nothing because they did not know what to do. More importantly, the positive skills students reported using were reflected in their peers’ descriptions of how their friends reacted to them after disclosures. For example, the Survey estimates that 89.9% of students who discussed a sexual assault experience with a friend felt listened to, comforted, or reassured; 53.8% received ongoing support from the friend. The Survey data also point to areas where we may focus future training efforts. For example, among students who told a friend about an experience of sexual assault, 12.7% encountered a minimizing or dismissive response.

### Moving Forward

The 2019 survey has added immeasurably to our fund of information about Yale’s sexual climate. It also presents a clear call for further action. As we turn to engage the community in reviewing the Survey results and discuss future initiatives in the days and weeks ahead, there are a number of avenues we are already pursuing:

- Engaging with the Office of Institutional Research and community members in further analyses of the data to address outstanding questions and identify additional patterns and trends, e.g.:



- » conducting additional analysis to understand the intersections between student identities and experiences of sexual misconduct,
- » conducting additional analysis to examine key factors that influence experiences of sexual assault across different student communities;
- Identifying remaining barriers to engaging with University resources and seeking ways to remove or mitigate them, e.g.:
  - » using the data to guide engagement with groups more likely to experience sexual misconduct and/or less likely to seek support or report,
  - » exploring a range of additional support modalities through SHARE, such as trauma-informed arts, that can appeal to communities as well as individuals;
- Reviewing and enhancing our current training programs, e.g.:
  - » developing supplemental training for graduate and professional students, faculty, and staff that goes “beyond the bystander” to focus on supporting positive behaviors and fostering culture change,
  - » creating a more consolidated training sequence for undergraduates by moving bystander intervention training from sophomore fall to first-year spring, adding new workshops for sophomores, and piloting multi-session workshops for students who wish to opt-in to more intensive skill-building,
  - » strengthening training for community members seeking to change their own behavior;
- Expanding faculty engagement in prevention and response efforts, e.g.:
  - » moving beyond the pilot program to make bystander intervention and culture change workshops available to a broader range of faculty,
  - » fortifying resources to support faculty whom students turn to for support,
  - » creating a Title IX faculty advisory group to supplement the existing student advisory boards;
- Identifying synergies and pursuing stronger partnerships with other Yale initiatives devoted to community building and culture change, e.g., with:
  - » Belonging at Yale,
  - » Yale Well, especially the “Love Well” component;
- Updating our knowledge of evidence-based prevention strategies and working with community members, peer institutions, and local/national experts to develop new approaches to prevention and response, e.g.:
  - » sharing data and analysis with peer institutions to identify promising practices,
  - » learning from Yale’s active participation in the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative to Prevent Sexual Harassment in Higher Education;
- Assisting academic leaders in using school-based data to shape local prevention and awareness initiatives, e.g.:
  - » using the 2019 AAU Survey to help schools and departments develop follow-on surveys and other means to better understand their local climates,
  - » supporting and expanding local task forces, committees, and climate groups;

- Exploring opportunities to create and enhance guidelines and procedures, e.g. :
  - » developing a system within Yale College for addressing student group misconduct,
  - » developing guidelines for shaping re-entry plans when an individual is returning to the community after a disciplinary separation;
- Supplementing the semi-annual reports of complaints of sexual misconduct with other steps to increase transparency, e.g. :
  - » issuing regular reports to the community about university-wide and school-specific prevention and education work
  - » seeking additional channels, such as YaleNews, to spotlight key initiatives.

Most importantly, our work will be guided by the Yale community. The 2019 AAU Survey findings are illuminating, but they serve primarily to confirm what we knew already: sexual misconduct exists on our campus. To address the harms already inflicted, and to prevent new ones from occurring, we will need to draw on all of our community strengths: creativity, expertise, determination, and caring. Most of all, we must work together.

Over the next several weeks, my colleagues and I will be hosting community conversations in locations across campus. I hope you will join us at one. For more details on these and other opportunities, go to the “Get Involved” section of the Sexual Misconduct Response and Prevention site at [smr.yale.edu](http://smr.yale.edu).

Appendix: Supplementary Data Tables

**Intro Figure 1 Table** 2019 AAU Campus Sexual Climate Survey response rates: Percent of all enrolled students who completed the survey

	TOTAL	UNDERGRADUATE		GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL	
		WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	MEN
YALE	45.4	60.9	45.9	42.2	35.3
AAU	21.9	25.1	15.4	27.7	21.1

**Intro Figure 2 Table** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual assault by means of any tactic since arriving at Yale

	TOTAL			UNDERGRADUATE				GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL				TGQN	
	Either Behavior	Penetration	Sexual Touching	WOMEN		MEN		WOMEN		MEN		Penetration	Sexual Touching
				Penetration	Sexual Touching	Penetration	Sexual Touching	Penetration	Sexual Touching				
2015	16.1	7.3	12.4	18.2	31.4	4.8	8.9	6.0	9.5	1.5	3.0	19.0	16.8
2019	18.1	7.8	14.3	17.8	30.9	6.3	11.8	6.1	11.7	1.5	4.0	15.4	25.5

**Intro Figure 2.1 Table** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual assault by tactic, year, and student population

Survey Item Response	TOTAL		UNDERGRADUATE				GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL				TGQN	
	2015	2019	WOMEN		MEN		WOMEN		MEN		2015	2019
			2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019		
Sexual contact by physical force or inability to consent or stop what was happening; or attempted penetration using physical force	11.1	12.8	28.1	28.4	8.2	10.4	8.2	9.7	2.5	3.7	20.6	23.3
Penetration	5.0	5.0	13.2	12.1	3.1	3.9	3.6	3.6	0.8	0.9	16.7	8.7
Sexual touching	8.2	9.9	21.5	22.3	5.7	7.8	5.6	7.5	2.1	2.9	11.2	18.3
Sexual contact by physical force, incapacitation, coercion, or without voluntary agreement; or attempted penetration using physical force	16.1	18.1	38.8	38.7	11.7	15.4	13.3	14.9	3.9	5.0	28.4	28.6
Penetration	7.3	7.8	18.2	17.8	4.8	6.3	6.0	6.1	1.5	1.5	19.0	15.4
Sexual touching	12.4	14.3	31.4	30.9	8.9	11.8	9.5	11.7	3.0	4.0	16.8	25.5

**Intro Figure 4 Table** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexually harassing behaviors since arriving at Yale

	UNDERGRADUATE		GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL		TGQN	
	TOTAL	WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN		MEN
2015: Offensive Behaviors & Impacts Combined	55.1	74.0	57.6	53.9	38.2	81.3
2019 Part 1: Offensive Behaviors	49.2	69.7	51.3	46.1	31.8	67.6
2019 Part 2: Offensive Behaviors Causing Impact	24.7	39.1	16.3	28.8	12.7	49.8

**Intro Figure 5 Table** Locations of sexually harassing behaviors: Estimated percentages of students experiencing any of five offensive behaviors since entering Yale

	ALL YALE STUDENTS							
	TOTAL		WOMEN		MEN		TGQN	
	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	Std Err	%	StdErr
Classroom	16.3	0.5	17.5	0.6	14.4	0.8	18.9	3.7
Lab or clinic	6.2	0.3	6.6	0.4	5.7	0.5	5.7	1.8
Faculty office	2.4	0.2	3.0	0.4	1.4	0.3	5.0	1.6
Athletic facility or gym	3.2	0.2	3.1	0.3	3.4	0.4	4.9	1.9
Performance or rehearsal space	2.6	0.2	2.5	0.3	2.5	0.4	6.5	2.1
Space affiliated with a student organization or team	8.2	0.4	10.3	0.5	4.8	0.5	10.6	3.4
Student center or other University-run gathering space	7.3	0.3	7.2	0.4	7.1	0.6	10.8	2.8
Residential College or other Yale housing	29.5	0.6	28.8	0.7	30.8	1.0	27.9	4.0
Off-campus non-Yale housing	19.2	0.5	20.5	0.6	17.1	0.8	20.9	3.5
Campus dining facility	8.8	0.4	8.8	0.5	8.6	0.6	12.5	3.1
Bar or club	22.4	0.6	23.3	0.7	21.2	1.1	19.2	3.3
International location of study, research, or professional experience	1.6	0.2	1.9	0.2	0.9	0.2	5.0	2.1
Online	9.7	0.4	9.8	0.5	9.2	0.7	13.0	2.9
Other location on or around campus	29.9	0.7	32.3	0.9	26.0	1.1	34.6	3.8
Other location away from campus	13.0	0.5	12.4	0.6	13.8	0.9	14.5	2.9

**Intro Figure 6 Table** Survey-estimated rate of students experiencing intimate partner violence since arriving at Yale, among students who have been in partnered relationships while at Yale

	TOTAL	UNDERGRADUATE		GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL		TGQN
		WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	MEN	
2015	8.0	10.9	8.7	6.1	6.9	13.6
2019	6.7	10.1	8.0	5.5	4.1	17.0

**Intro Figure 7 Table** Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing stalking since arriving at Yale

	TOTAL	UNDERGRADUATE		GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL		TGQN
		WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	MEN	
2015	3.3	5.2	2.0	4.3	1.8	5.5
2019	5.3	7.9	4.1	7.0	2.5	4.6

**Intro Figure 8 Table** Sexual orientation: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual assault by tactic

	Sexual Assault by Force or Incapacitation	Sexual Assault by Lack of Consent
Heterosexual	10.5	7.2
Gay or lesbian only	13.6	9.4
Other/multiple categories	22.4	16.8
Decline to state	10.5	5.0

**Intro Figure 9 Table** Sexual orientation: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexually harassing behavior, intimate partner violence, and stalking

	Sexually Harassing Behavior	Intimate Partner Violence	Stalking
Heterosexual	44.6	5.6	4.6
Non-heterosexual	63.8	10.6	7.2

**Intro Figure 10 Table** Students who identified as having a disability, disorder, or chronic condition compared to those who did not: Survey-estimated rates of sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale

	Sexual Assault by Force or Incapacitation	Sexual Assault by Lack of Consent	Sexually Harassing Behavior	Intimate Partner Violence	Stalking
Identified as having a disability	20.5	15.0	62.6	10.9	10.2
Did not identify as having a disability	10.3	7.0	44.7	5.1	3.9

**Intro Figure 11 Table** Hispanic or Latino students compared with non-Hispanic or Latino students: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale

	Sexual Assault by Force or Incapacitation	Sexual Assault by Lack of Consent	Sexually Harassing Behavior	Intimate Partner Violence	Stalking
Hispanic or Latino	15.5	11.0	51.6	8.1	6.0
Not Hispanic or Latino	12.4	8.7	48.9	6.5	5.2

**Intro Figure 12 Table** Student race/ethnicity: Survey-estimated rates of students experiencing sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale

	Sexual Assault by Force or Incapacitation	Sexual Assault by Lack of Consent	Sexually Harassing Behavior	Intimate Partner Violence	Stalking
White only	12.5	9.3	49.9	6.4	5.3
Black only	13.3	10.8	52.1	4.9	5.2
Asian only	10.4	6.6	44.0	7.7	4.5
Other/multi race	17.2	10.1	53.3	7.5	6.8

**Intro Figure 13 Table** Survey-estimated rates of students contacting a program or resource following an experience of sexual misconduct, among students who experienced sexual misconduct since arriving at Yale

	Sexual Assault by Force or Incapacitation			Other Sexual Misconduct		
	Total by Force or Incapacitation	Penetration	Sexual Touching	Sexually Harassing Behavior	Intimate Partner Violence	Stalking
2015	12.9	22.6	6.3	5.2	15.1	30.6
2019	25.5	34.0	17.4	15.6	22.9	34.9

**Intro Figure 14 Table** Survey-estimated rates of student awareness of campus resources

	2015	2019
The SHARE Center	69.0	77.4
Title IX Coordinators	55.3	85.0
University-Wide Committee (UWC)	30.0	33.8
Yale Police Department	87.3	88.9
Yale Health	92.0	93.1

**Intro Figure 15 Table** Survey-estimated student perceptions of 2019 campus climate and community, Yale vs. AAU aggregate

		YALE		AAU	
		%	STD ERR	%	STD ERR
How connected do you feel to the campus community at Yale as a whole?	Not at all	<b>4.9</b>	0.2	<b>7.6</b>	0.1
	A little	<b>20.0</b>	0.4	<b>22.3</b>	0.1
	Somewhat	<b>40.8</b>	0.5	<b>40.6</b>	0.1
	Very	<b>29.2</b>	0.4	<b>25.2</b>	0.1
	Extremely	<b>5.1</b>	0.2	<b>4.4</b>	0.1
How comfortable are you seeking advice from faculty or staff at Yale, even about something personal?	Not at all	<b>9.3</b>	0.3	<b>10.7</b>	0.1
	A little	<b>27.0</b>	0.5	<b>24.7</b>	0.1
	Somewhat	<b>39.4</b>	0.5	<b>36.4</b>	0.1
	Very	<b>20.1</b>	0.4	<b>22.5</b>	0.1
	Extremely	<b>4.2</b>	0.2	<b>5.7</b>	0.1
How concerned are students at Yale about each other's well-being?	Not at all	<b>2.3</b>	0.2	<b>4.0</b>	0.1
	A little	<b>10.4</b>	0.3	<b>15.7</b>	0.1
	Somewhat	<b>40.7</b>	0.5	<b>45.2</b>	0.1
	Very	<b>40.3</b>	0.5	<b>30.9</b>	0.1
	Extremely	<b>6.4</b>	0.2	<b>4.2</b>	0.1
How concerned are faculty or staff at Yale about your well-being?	Not at all	<b>5.0</b>	0.2	<b>5.1</b>	0.1
	A little	<b>20.5</b>	0.4	<b>17.6</b>	0.1
	Somewhat	<b>42.7</b>	0.5	<b>40.0</b>	0.1
	Very	<b>27.9</b>	0.4	<b>31.9</b>	0.1
	Extremely	<b>4.0</b>	0.2	<b>5.4</b>	0.1
How concerned are University Officials at Yale about your well-being?	Not at all	<b>13.3</b>	0.3	<b>12.8</b>	0.1
	A little	<b>26.2</b>	0.4	<b>23.4</b>	0.1
	Somewhat	<b>37.7</b>	0.5	<b>37.2</b>	0.1
	Very	<b>19.9</b>	0.4	<b>22.5</b>	0.1
	Extremely	<b>3.0</b>	0.2	<b>4.1</b>	0.1



**Intro Figure 16 Table** Survey-estimate rates of student bystander behavior in response to witnessing offensive, abusive, or violent behavior

	OBSERVATION		INTERVENTION
<b>2015-1</b> Suspected a friend was sexually assaulted	22.1	Active Intervention	65.2
		Other	22.7
		Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do	12.1
<b>2015-2</b> Witnessed drunk person heading for sexual encounter	55.4	Active Intervention	21.7
		Other	58.5
		Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do	19.9
<b>2015-3</b> Witnessed someone acting in sexually violent or harassing manner	25.3	Active Intervention	43.1
		Other	32.6
		Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do	24.3
<b>2019-1</b> Since you have been a student at Yale, have you noticed someone at Yale making inappropriate sexual comments about someone else's appearance, sharing unwanted sexual images, or otherwise acting in a sexual way that you believed was making others feel uncomfortable or offended?	32.6	Active Intervention	71.3
		Other	18.4
		Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do	10.2
<b>2019-2</b> Since you have been a student at Yale, have you witnessed a pattern of ongoing sexual comments or behaviors that made you concerned that a fellow student at Yale was experiencing sexual harassment?	9.4	Active Intervention	84.5
		Other	9.7
		Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do	5.8
<b>2019-3</b> Since you have been a student at Yale, have you witnessed someone at Yale behaving in a controlling or abusive way towards a dating or sexual partner?	13.4	Active Intervention	74.9
		Other	16.7
		Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do	8.4
<b>2019-4</b> Since you have been a student at Yale, have you witnessed a situation that you believed could have led to a sexual assault?	17.0	Active Intervention	75.9
		Other	16.4
		Did nothing because I wasn't sure what to do	7.6