

Tips for Victim Advocates in Helping University Students with Technology-Facilitated Sexual Violence (TFSV)

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1.

Understand & Recognize TFSV

Understand that TFSV includes cyber harassment, non-consensual image sharing, deepfake pornography, digital stalking, and sextortion. Recognizing these behaviors helps in providing timely support.

2.

Listen Without Judgment

Create a safe space for students to share their experiences. Believe them, validate their feelings, and use supportive phrases like: *"I believe you. You are not alone."*

5.

Support Emotional & Academic Well-Being

Acknowledge the mental health effects of TFSV, including anxiety, depression, and academic struggles. Encourage accommodations, such as flexible deadlines, to support affected students.

4.

Connect to Mental Health & Advocacy Resources

Encourage students to seek counseling, advocacy, and peer support groups by connecting them to local or university resources. Additionally, national resources such as **RAINN (800-656-4673)** and the **Cyber Civil Rights Initiative (844-878-2274)** offer specialized help.

3.

Protect Their Privacy & Safety

Encourage students to adjust social media privacy settings, block perpetrators, and document any incidents (screenshots, emails, messages). Ensure their personal information remains confidential.

6.

Offer Non-Judgmental Guidance on Reporting

Inform students about their options for reporting abuse, whether to campus authorities, law enforcement, or online platforms. Emphasize that reporting is their choice, and provide support regardless of their decision.

7.

Educate on Campus & Legal Protections

Familiarize yourself with Title IX, the Clery Act, and Campus SaVE Act policies. Inform students of their rights and reporting options through the university's Title IX office or law enforcement.

8.

Promote Digital Literacy & Online Safety

Teach students how to manage online privacy, recognize cyber threats, and respond to digital abuse. Help them understand tools for reporting and removing harmful content.

11.

Train Faculty, Staff, and Students

Encourage mandatory training for faculty and student leaders on recognizing and responding to TFSV. Bystander intervention programs can also help prevent and address digital abuse.

10.

Address Institutional Gaps

Ensure universities take TFSV seriously by implementing clear response protocols. Advocate for anonymous reporting options, survivor-centered policies, and accountability for institutions.

9.

Advocate for Stronger Campus Policies

Work with student organizations and faculty to strengthen institutional policies addressing cyber harassment and image-based abuse. Push for clear consequences for perpetrators and better reporting mechanisms.

12.

Gather Feedback & Continuously Improve Support Systems

Universities should regularly assess their response to TFSV cases through student feedback, climate surveys, and policy reviews to improve institutional support.