

Dear Sycamores,

This semester, we've seen the initiative "It's On Blue" grow in force. We were all mandated to complete a training video before being cleared to register for our next set of classes. Some of us did not like the mandate, but it is important.

It's important because we are raising awareness about an important issue on our campus and so many other campuses across the country. It's important because it really is on us – the student body – to stop sexual assault. But It's On Blue is not enough.

1 in 4 college women are sexually assaulted. 1 in 6 college men are sexually assaulted.

This is not only a women's issue. This is not only a men's issue. This is our issue and we must stop it. We must ask for consent. We must communicate with our partners. We must drink responsibly. We must respect each other. To do any less than that is unacceptable.

Sexual assault is most often not committed by a stranger in the bushes. It occurs in bedrooms, on couches, and with people we trust. This is called "acquaintance rape" and is the most common form of sexual assault, especially on campus.

A sexual experience might begin as consensual, but can turn into rape if either person says no at any point. A person does not even have to say no. The law requires affirmative consent to be freely given, which means consent given under coercion or intoxication is not really consent either.

If we all know this, we will stop sexual assault. If we all know what consent is and ask for it, we will stop sexual assault. If we respect our partner enough to stop when they do not give consent, we will stop sexual assault. We will stop sexual assault.

We must stop sexual assault.

After an assault occurs on a college campus, the victim is then often forced to continue seeing their rapist around campus, in class, in the dining hall, etc. The victim becomes afraid to leave their room and the rapist walks free.

If the victim reports the crime to the police, they are then forced to go through scrutinizing interrogations, retelling their story multiple times. It often, unfortunately, ends with a less than satisfying punishment for the rapist.

We can stop sexual assault.

Be an active bystander

When you see something happening that should not be, speak up against it. Help those in need. Don't just walk by and continue with your day. If we all make an effort to help those that need it, we will create a new culture that does not blame or shame victims.

Be a buddy, take a buddy

When you decide to go to a party, take a friend with you who will stay sober and be responsible enough to make sure you are safe. Be willing to be a buddy for someone else. Look out for each other and others will look out for you.

We have a responsibility to each other and ourselves to put an end to sexual assault on campus. We must stand up for each other and say enough is enough. If one in four or one in six people on our campus were being shot and murdered, we would be outraged. If reckless drivers were hitting and killing one in four people, we would be outraged.

We should be outraged at sexual assault, because one in four women and one in six men are being attacked.

It doesn't have to be that way. Let's take our campus back.

With Sycamore Pride,
Concerned Indiana State University Students

**Show your support: The annual Take Back The Night rally is
Wednesday, November 18, at 6 pm in Dede 1 and 2.
#takebackSTATE**