



GAINESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, September 11, 2013
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Step In and Make a Difference. Help Prevent Alcohol-Related Sexual Assaults.

Gainesville, FL – The Gainesville Police Department has collaborated with other local law enforcement agencies, the University of Florida GatorWell Health Promotion Services, The Alachua County Office of Victim Services Rape Crisis Center, Santa Fe College, and other University of Florida and community partners to create two short Public Service Announcements addressing alcohol-related sexual assault prevention.

**No means no. But what if you're unable to say no?
Anything other than a willing YES means a no.**

All too often local agencies respond to reports of sexual assault where the victim was unable to consent to sexual activity due to being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In many of these cases the attacker has chosen to exploit the victim's lack of communication as consent. These cases have the ability to impact people's lives forever. Local officials hope to generate a movement that will motivate bystanders to step in and help someone that may be too intoxicated to say no.

Captain Lynne Benck, the Commander of GPD's Criminal Investigations Bureau has been focusing on the issue of alcohol-related sexual assault for many years. She urges students to help watch over one another. "All over the nation, especially in other college cities, people are looking at this issue from another standpoint. Instead of putting the blame on a person who gets extremely intoxicated, they are looking at the people around that person and asking whether they could have done something to prevent a sexual assault" Benck said. "One drunk night shouldn't turn into a nightmare."

Maureen Miller, Director of GatorWell Health Promotion Services, hopes these videos empower students to feel they have the ability to step in and be an active and responsible bystander. "Student's health and safety are our number one priority. If a student sees a situation that doesn't look right, be that person and step in and help" urged Miller. "And if they feel unsure or scared about stepping in, go ask for more help. The take home message is to do *something*."

The PSAs can be viewed on the Gainesville Police Department's website, Facebook and YouTube accounts.

These PSAs were created by a partnership of the Gainesville Police Department, GatorWell Health Promotion Services, the University of Florida Police Department, the Alachua County Sheriff's Office, Santa Fe College, Alachua County Office of Victim Services Rape Crisis Center and the University of Florida's Student Health Care Center.

The University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications graciously produced the PSAs.

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