

The Scholar-Practitioner

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National Conference for Hidden Student Populations

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<https://nchp.okstate.edu>

Current Hidden College Student Populations

May include those who have foster care histories, justice-involved experiences, who are survivors of sexual violence or sex workers, recovering substances addicts, who face housing insecurity, who are considered Third Culture Kids/Individuals, or who have sought/seeking abortion care.

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The Scholar-Practitioner is a monthly publication of research summaries that targets the research-to-practice gap for U.S. scholar and practitioner advocates for hidden college student populations.

This publication reinforces the work of the **National Conference for Hidden Student Populations (NCHP)** by providing a space to share research applications for practice. NCHP was the first research conference dedicated to this multidisciplinary area of study.

The NCHP 4th conference will be held February 28 - March 1, 2024, at University of Texas—San Antonio. Conference presentations can be attended online. [Registration is now open!](#)

Campus Interpersonal Violence Survivor Advocacy

Klein, L. B., Brewer, N. Q., Cloy, C., Lovern, H. M., Bangen, M., McLean, K., Voth Schrag, R., & Wood, L. (2023). Campus interpersonal violence survivor advocacy services. *Journal of American College Health*. Advanced online publication.

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Summary by L. B. Klein

In community settings, advocacy services are usually voluntary, low-barrier, and founded on the principles of trauma-informed treatment. Such services may include medical and legal support, emotional support, financial aid for community resources access, building social and community support, and health and rights education, among others. Similarly, institutions of higher education (IHEs) provide on-campus this type of services to empower survivors of interpersonal violence as well as to improve survivors' environments.

Campus-based advocacy services have an emerging evidence base demonstrating their utility; however, very little research has explored their effectiveness. Through our engagement with campus-based survivor advocates, this exploratory study aimed to describe campus interpersonal violence survivor advocacy practices within a sample of 155 IHEs in the U.S. More specifically, we asked:

- What are advocacy staffing levels and caseloads?
- How is the delivery of advocacy services structured, including both campus-based advocacy programs and partnerships with community organizations?
- What types of advocacy services are provided at IHEs?
- What connection is there, if any, between services for survivors and services for students who have caused harm?

We used a participatory process with the Campus Advocacy and Prevention Professionals Association (a 1,000+ membership of survivor advocates and prevention educators working on or closely with college and university campuses, mainly in the United States) to develop and disseminate what we think is the first study to benchmark what campus interpersonal violence survivor advocacy programs in the U.S. are doing. Advocacy staffing levels vary quite widely but overall, there are too few advocates to meet the needs of students (and the faculty, staff, visitors, etc., who they also might be tasked to serve).

Our sample skewed toward more highly resourced schools that have participated in climate surveys indicating a much greater demand from survivors than they could meet. In fact, 26% of campuses had no advocates. On average, there was one full-time equivalent advocate per 15,219 students. Campuses varied as to whether advocates and prevention educators were co-located and if they had memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or partnerships with community organizations. Services for graduate students, faculty, and staff were more inconsistent than for undergrads. Almost all advocacy programs referred to other on- or off-campus resources for people who had caused harm.

Campuses should certainly structure their advocacy efforts to

meet the unique needs of their campuses, but we also need centralized and evidence-informed resources to help them do so. We are missing opportunities to capture the wisdom of campus survivor advocacy leaders.

Without clearer national guidance, survivor advocates are often struggling to have the structure, scope, and confidentiality needed to do their jobs as effectively as possible, and survivors don't get the support they need and deserve. We need clear confidentiality, record-keeping, and data to continue to examine these programs. We also need more sustainable funding structures, as many of these advocacy programs are funded by Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) grants that expire without clear pathways toward institutionalizing these programs. Survivors and advocates deserve more stability and less precarity.

This study provides crucial preliminary information about how campuses provide advocacy services, but more researcher-practitioner engagement is needed to build on this study and establish clear practice guidelines.

We will be releasing a report from the full survey of 155 colleges' survivor advocacy and prevention practices in the summer of 2024. A paper on our prevention-related findings, as well as two papers on qualitative responses related to self-care

and prevention educators' use of social justice frameworks and the social ecological model, are also forthcoming.

NCHP

**Hybrid Conference
Feb 28—March 1, 2024**

Register now!

For more information, go to:

<https://nchp.okstate.edu>



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To sign up for ongoing email updates about the 2024 national conference and/or for archives of The Scholar-Practitioner, go to: <https://risforthursday.okstate.edu>