
University of Colorado Boulder

Sexual Assault on the College Campus: The CU-Boulder Approach

Buff Open Forum

November 18, 2015 | Old Main Chapel

Teresa Wroe

Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance

OIEC Mission

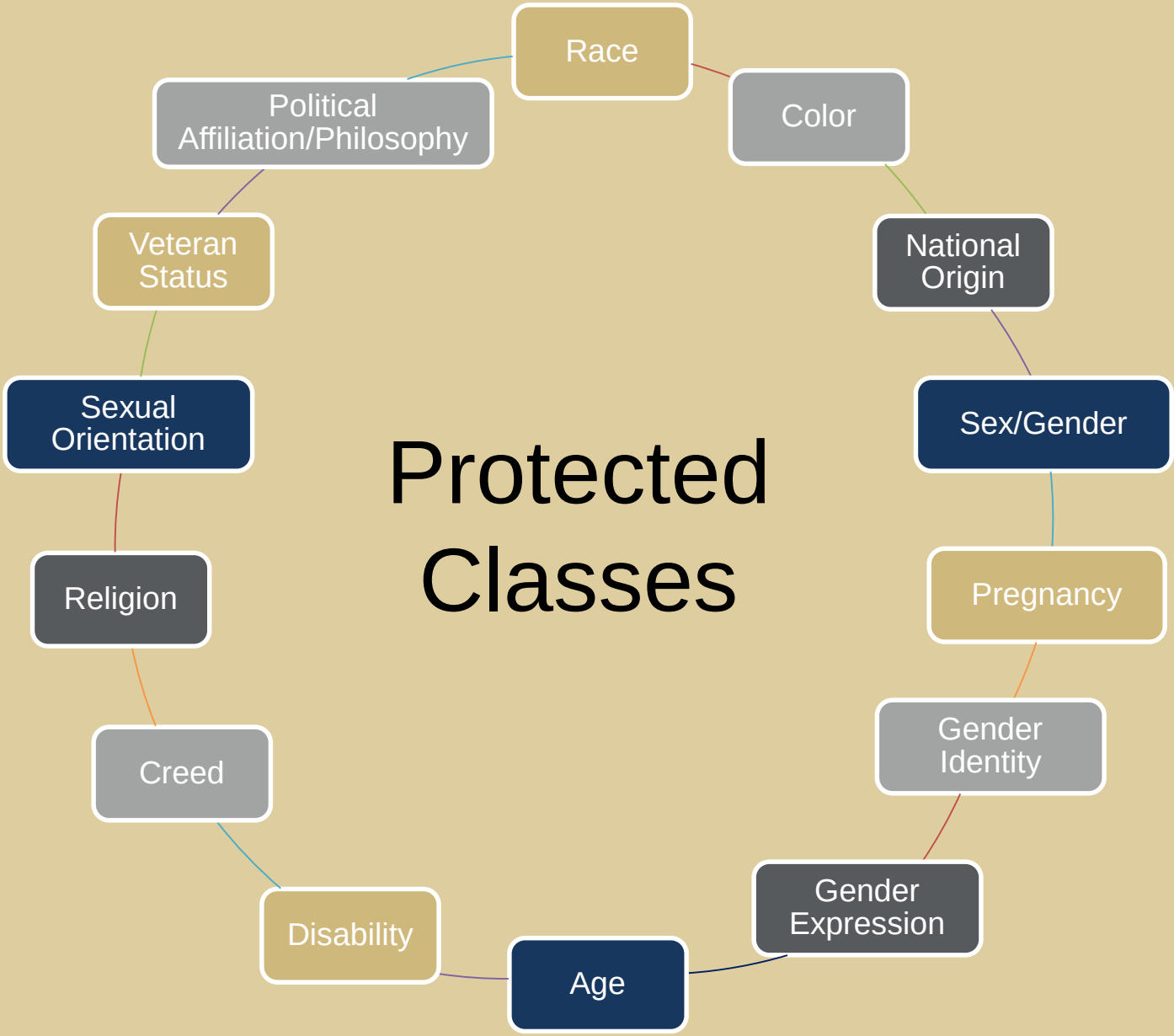
- To prevent and address discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and related retaliation at CU-Boulder by educating the campus and investigating complaints under university policies

Policy Enforcement

- Reporting process and procedures apply to all students, staff, and faculty
- Investigators are neutral, objective fact-finders
- Formal and informal investigative processes
- Remedial and protective measures
- Sanctioning

Sexual Misconduct

- Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse
- Non-Consensual Sexual Contact
- Sexual Exploitation
- Sexual Harassment
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Stalking


Protected Classes
Race
Color
National Origin
Sex/Gender
Pregnancy
Gender Identity
Gender Expression
Age
Disability
Creed
Religion
Sexual Orientation
Veteran Status
Political Affiliation/Philosophy

Beyond Policy

Prevention & Education

The Role of Law and Policy

- Laws and policies set the boundaries for behaviors
  - Expectations
  - Accountability
- Law and policy are necessary and can set the course for change
- Policies are not sufficient to change behavior or culture in and of themselves

Sexual Misconduct Survey

- Large prevalence study of sexual misconduct at CU-Boulder
  - Mirrored behaviors prohibited by our policies
  - Inquired about response services and reporting process
  - Bystander intervention strategies
- Survey went to all students (undergrad & grad)
- Overall response rate was 40%

Mandatory Training

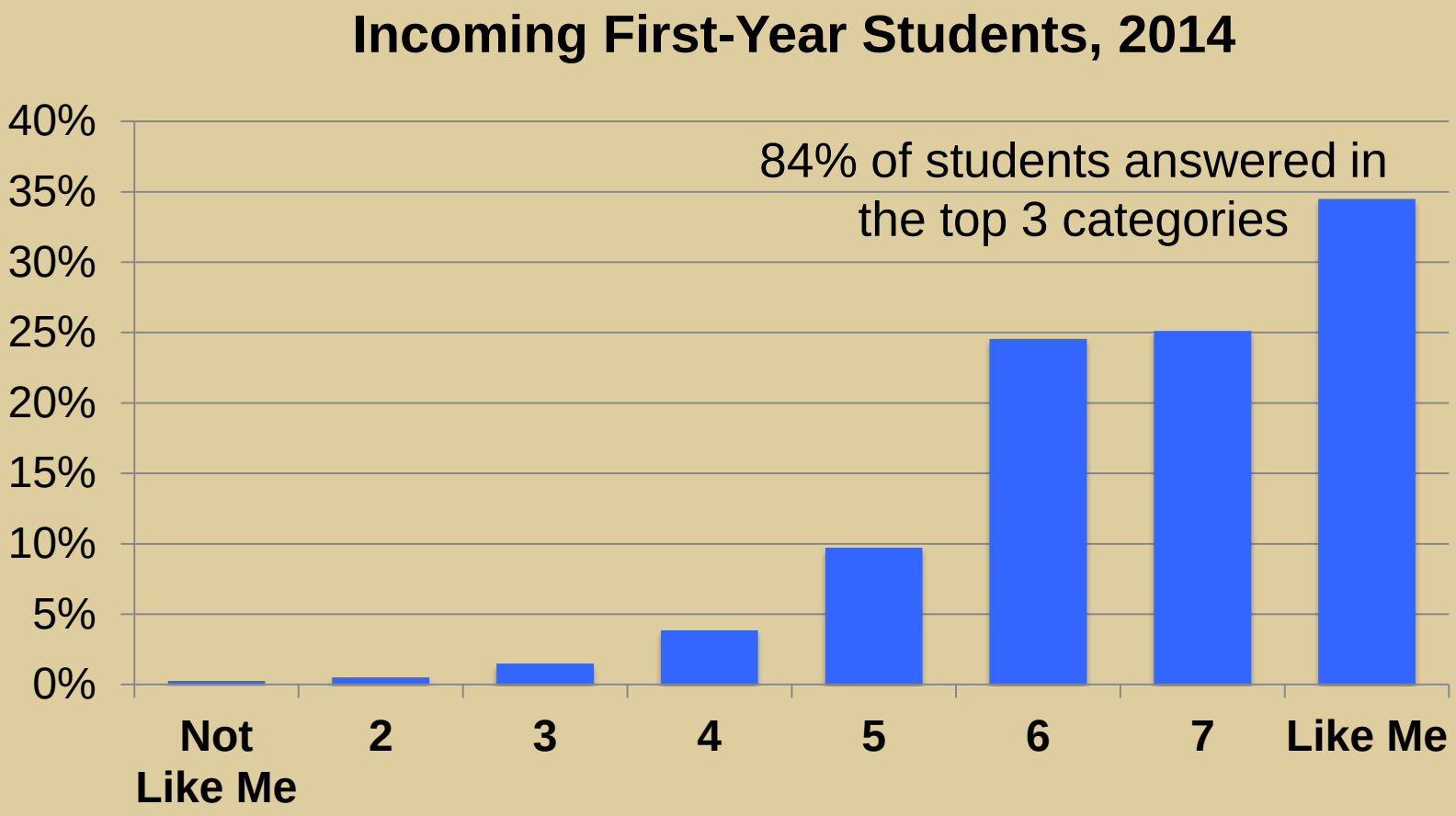
- New Faculty and Staff
  - Online or in-person training
  - Refresher course every five years

- New Students
  - Community Equity (online)
  - Effective Bystander Intervention (in-person)

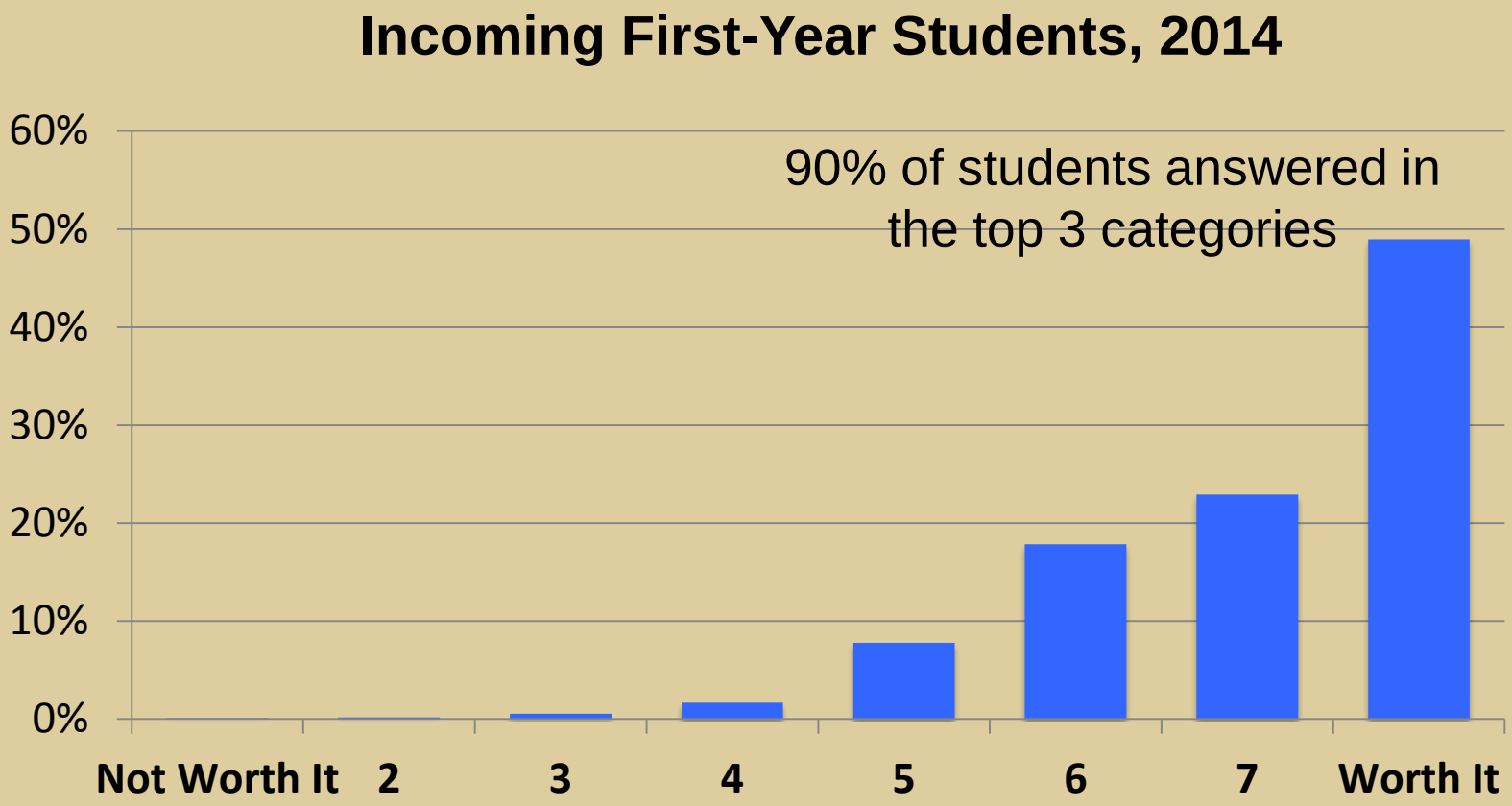
Our Bystander Approach

- Our bystander intervention program:
  - Improves recognition of potentially harmful situations/behaviors
  - Increases likelihood of helping
  - Improves skills for intervening effectively

Trying to assist when someone needs help is…



Trying to assist when someone needs help is…



Barriers to Helping

- I’m not sure I’m interpreting this correctly
- I didn’t know what to say/do
- No one else is doing anything
- The person didn’t ask for help
- Concern for myself or safety
- I have other priorities or not enough time
- I don’t want to embarrass or offend the person

Intervention Strategies

- Be Direct
- Use Distraction
- Go Stealth
- Now vs. Later

Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance

Website: www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity

Phone: 303-492-2127

Location: 3100 Marine Street
Administrative and Research Center, Second Floor
University of Colorado Boulder
Boulder, CO 80309

Supporting Survivors

Jessica Ladd-Webert, LPC-Director



Office of Victim Assistance

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Office of Victim Assistance (OVA)

- **Free and confidential information, counseling, support and advocacy**

  - For **ALL** CU students, staff, faculty, and their significant others

303-492-8855

- **Open M-F, 8a-5p-phone has after-hours coverage**
  - **Center for Community (C4C), room S440**

OVA services continued

- **OVA Staff**
  - Professional, trauma-informed counselors who are also advocates
- Counseling and Advocacy
- We are familiar with a variety of systems on and off campus
- Do not have to identify with the word "victim" to receive our services

OVA is here to help mitigate the impact of trauma

- The Office of Victim Assistance values diversity and inclusion. We support students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The OVA shall maintain and promote a policy of non-discrimination.

- We acknowledge that culturally relevant trauma services is an ongoing process of learning that begins by looking within ourselves and honoring basic human rights. As individuals and as an agency, we are committed to responding effectively to social-cultural diversity.

If someone experiences . . .

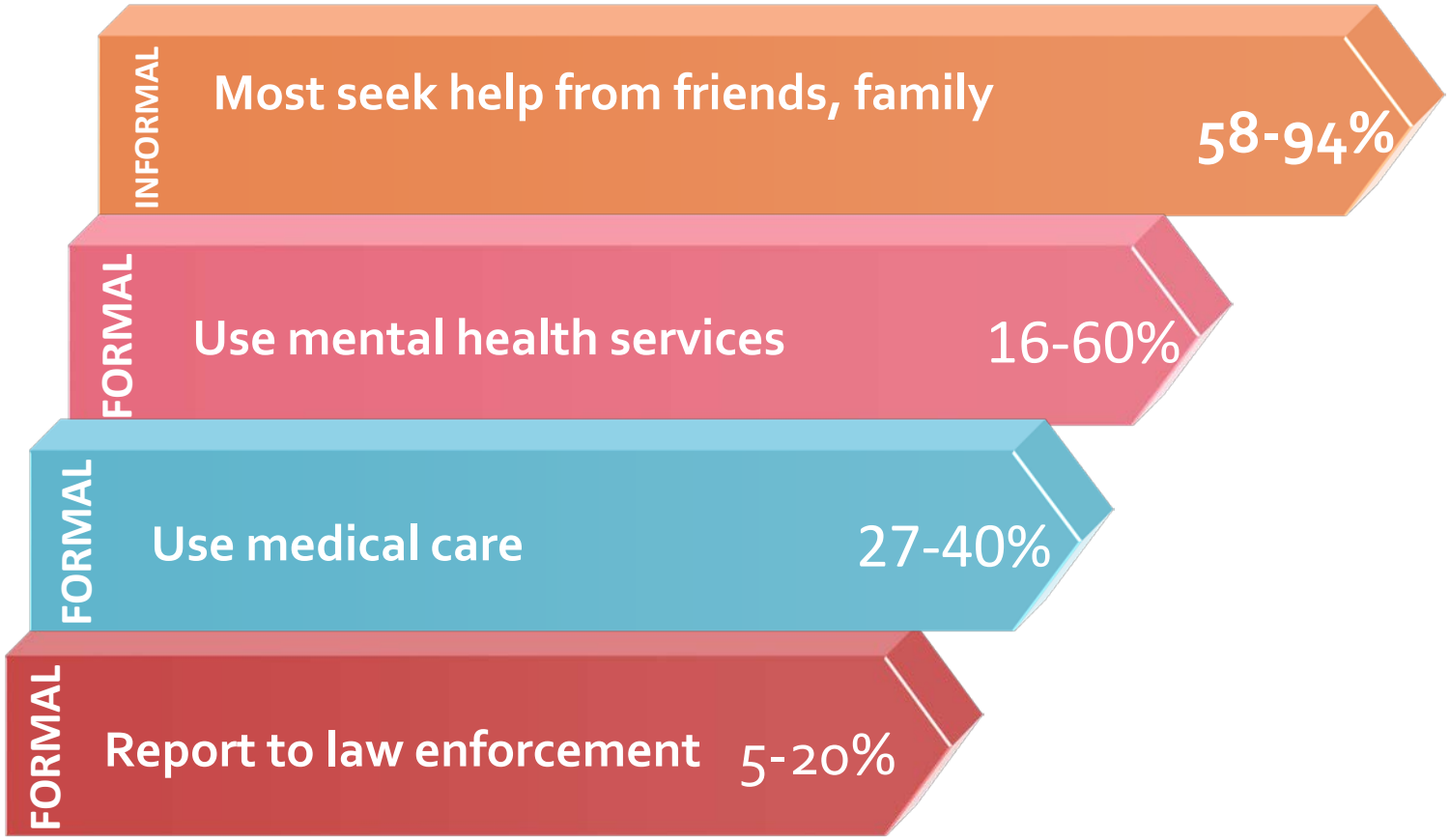
- Physical Assault
- Sexual Assault
- Crime
- Hazing
- Death of a loved one
- Sexual harassment
- Natural/human-made disasters
- Bias motivated incident
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Intimate partner abuse
- Stalking
- Serious accident
- Other . . .

OVA is here to help

Impact-may include, but is not limited to

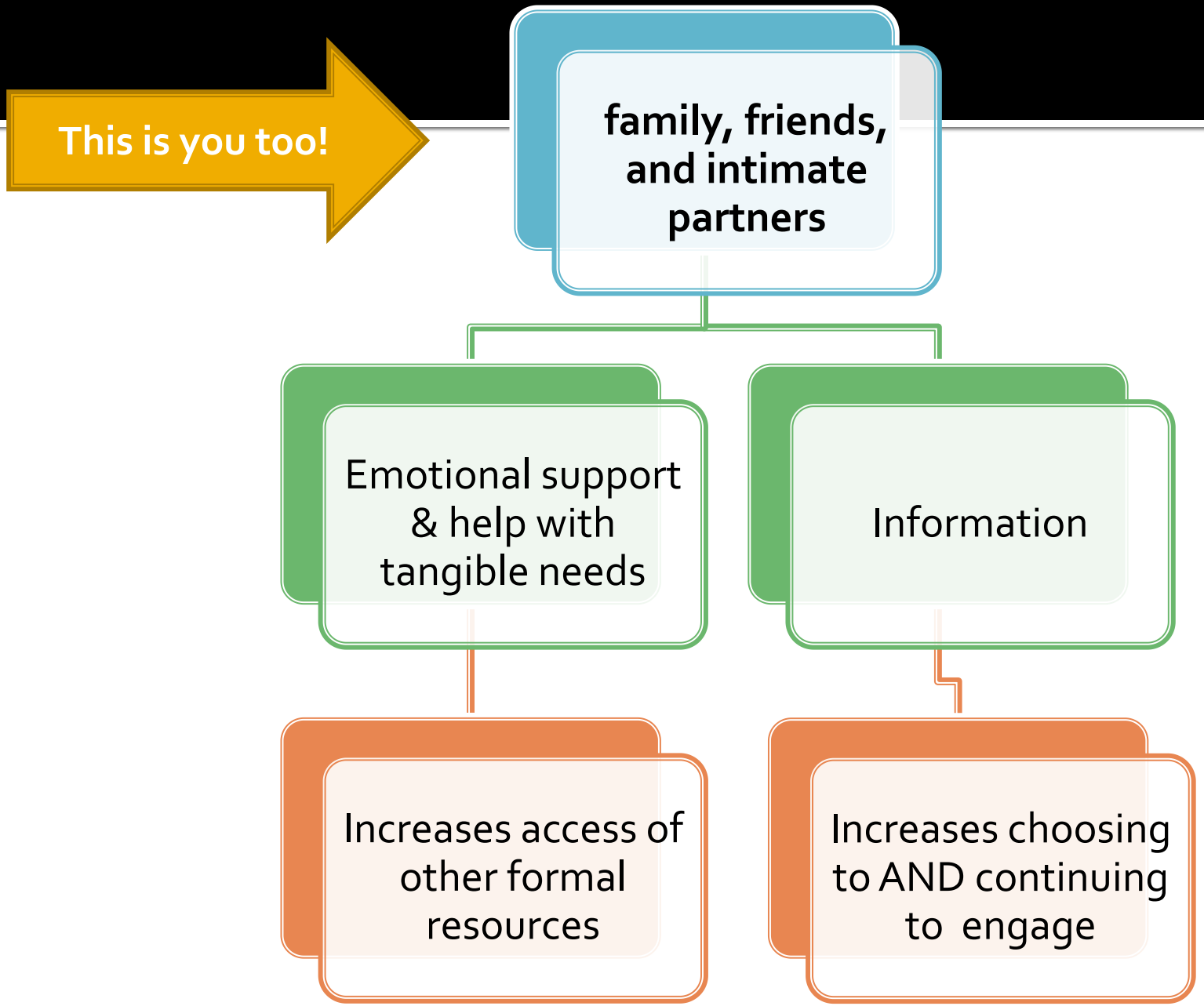


Informal and Formal Support



End Violence Against Women International

Benefits of Informal Support



Benefit of Formal Support

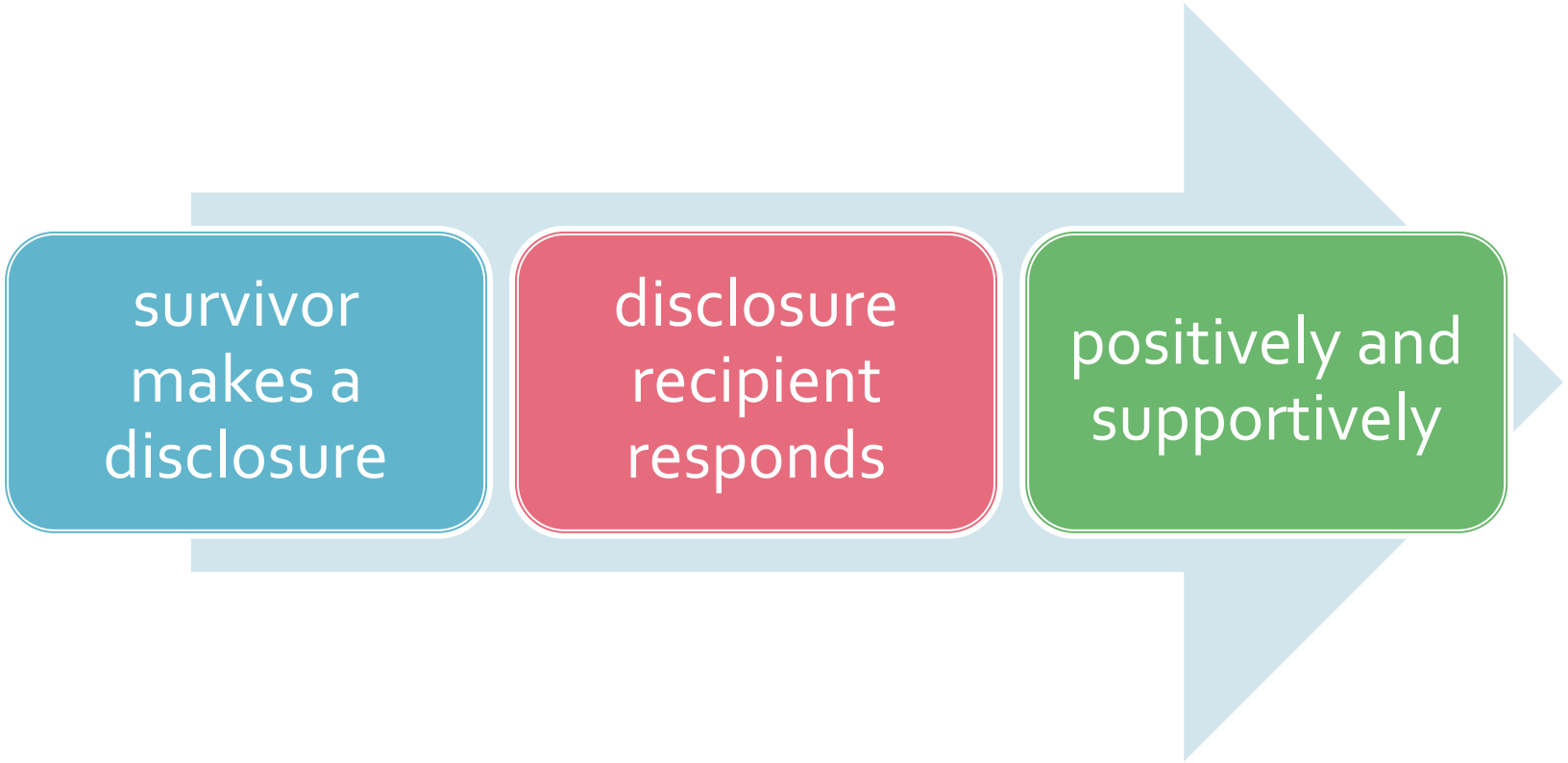
- Research documents benefits of formal support on victim recovery, well-being

- Victim advocacy
- counseling
- health services

- Help mitigating the negative impact of trauma

- Less self-blame
- Less feeling bad about themselves
- Less reluctant to seek further help

How to provide support?



The Impact of Negative Responses on Survivors

- **Creates an additional, measurable negative impact**
  - Post traumatic stress
  - Delayed recovery
  - Poorer health
  - Self blame, shame
  - Minimization
    - questioning the experience
  - Silenced
- **This impact can sometimes be over and above the actual trauma itself!**

Impact of Positive Responses on Survivors

- Helps mitigate the impact of trauma
- Less likely to experience self blame
- Less reluctant to seek further help
- Gain resources and referrals
- Feel support and care
- Learn and utilize healthy coping
- Learn about options, assistance navigating systems
- Fewer physical and psychological symptoms

Unsupportive Responses/Pitfalls

- Taking control any more then you have to
- Escalating the situation
- Defining or labeling their experience
- Asking why questions
  - "Why did you . . . ?"
- Telling them they have to……
- Verbalizing judgment in the moment
- Telling them you "know how they feel"



Supportive/ Positive Responses



- Check on safety first
- Follow their lead
- Listen/be open
- Let them decide what is best for them
- Respect the survivor's need for privacy
- Assure them they did the right thing to survive
- Summarize what you hear
- Normalize their feelings
- Ask if they want to know about support resources

  - **Call OVA and/or help bring them over**

Connect with OVA:

- assist@colorado.edu
- http://cuvictimassistance.com

- 303-492-8855

- https://www.facebook.com/CUvictimassistance





