



PRESS RELEASE

FOR: IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FROM: Missoula City-County Relationship Violence Services
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SUBJECT: Sexual harassment prevention campaign asks bars to ‘make a move’

MISSOULA – Make Your Move! Releases Results of Bar Patron Experience Survey

How common is sexual harassment in Missoula bars? That’s what Brenna Merrill set out to learn when she conducted an online bar patron experience survey in January of this year.

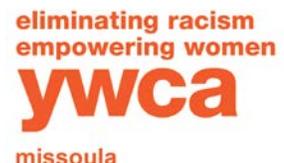
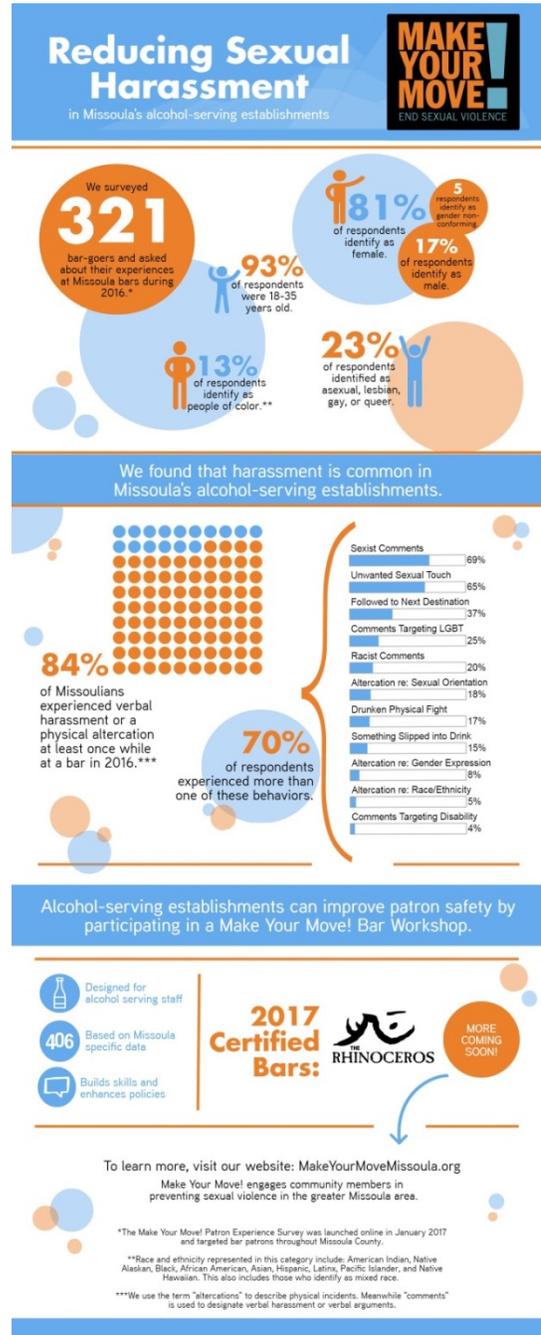
Merrill is a prevention specialist at Missoula City-County Relationship Violence Services and coordinates the Make Your Move! campaign to end sexual violence.

Of the 321 Missoulians who completed the survey, 84% had experienced verbal harassment or a physical altercation at least once while at a bar in 2016. The most common experience of aggressive behaviors were receiving sexist comments (69%), unwanted sexual touch (65%), and being followed to their next destination (37%). Additional behaviors are itemized in the attached infographic.

Merrill decided to take on the survey to get a better picture of what bar patrons experience in Missoula.

“In talking with bartenders, we heard over and over again that they want to keep their patrons safe and make sure that everyone is having a good time. We wanted to know if most bar-goers felt that sense of safety and if they regularly saw bar staff intervening. The survey responses showed that while most people enjoy going out to be with friends or listen to live music, they still experience harassment and other aggressive behaviors at a high rate. The Bar Workshop is designed to bridge that gap, and to help bar staff recognize and respond to unsafe behavior.”

Make Your Move! offers a two hour sexual violence prevention training for bars. After completing the workshop, bar staff will be better able to identify signs of sexual harassment and ways a person might incapacitate someone else with alcohol or drugs in order to sexually assault them. Merrill also discusses policies that bars can adopt to head off the problem – such as taking steps to



ensure that bartenders don't overserve alcohol to patrons, having established procedures for responding to harassing behavior, or knowing when it is appropriate to call 9-1-1.

On June 5, staff at The Rhinoceros Bar completed a sexual violence prevention training hosted by Make Your Move! It was the bar's second training – they first participated in 2014. Merrill facilitated the training along with her coworker, Prevention Coordinator Kelly McGuire. Missoula Police Department crime prevention officer Ethan Smith and detective Bob Franke also attended to provide a law enforcement perspective and answer questions from staff.

Brad Martens, one of The Rhinoceros' owners reflects, "Make Your Move! is a viable program to educate the staff in identifying and reacting to sexual harassment and sexual assault. The class also helps develop strategies to use in your own business policy handbook. I would recommend the class to staff, management and owners of any business."

Make Your Move! Bar Workshops are available free of charge to any alcohol-serving establishment. Interested businesses should contact Brenna Merrill at (406) 258-3838. Established in 2012, Make Your Move! is Missoula's coalition to promote sexual violence prevention through social marketing and bystander intervention. Partner agencies include Missoula City-County Relationship Violence Services, YWCA Missoula, the University of Montana Student Advocacy Resource Center, and the Missoula Forum for Children and Youth.

Bar Workshops are made possible by funding through Raliance: Ending Sexual Violence in One Generation and supported by the Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

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