Dear Stanford Parent:

As you prepare to send your son or daughter to Stanford, you are likely engaging them in conversations to ensure their health, safety, and well-being in a new environment. We want to assure you that the safety and well-being of our students is a priority. In particular, Stanford is committed to providing your son or daughter with a campus environment that is safe from sexual harassment, including sexual violence.

The Challenge

The prevalence of sexual violence on college campuses, which affects both men and women, is a national concern and a call to action. In the great majority of cases, survivors of a sexual assault know the perpetrator—either an acquaintance, classmate, friend or date. On January 22, 2014, the United States President established the “White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault.” We encourage you to read the report, entitled “Not Alone,” which can be found at notalone.gov. The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (the agency charged with enforcing the federal civil rights law, Title IX, that prohibits sexual harassment, including sexual violence), also issued new guidance in April 2014 to assist colleges in addressing sexual violence as a form of sexual harassment. For more information, visit www.ed.gov/ocr.

Stanford will continue to align our policies and practices with all guidance issued by the federal government. As a learning environment, we strive to reflect upon and renew our efforts in this critical area to ensure that we are doing all that we can to appropriately prevent and promptly and equitably respond to sexual violence and to support our students.

As a parent, you are an important partner in our efforts, and we want you to be aware of our current efforts and resources. We encourage you to review this information with your student this summer.

Stanford’s Initiatives to Address Sexual Violence

- Before they arrive on campus this fall, all undergraduate, transfer, and graduate students will be required to take an online education course on sexual assault, healthy relationships, consent, and alcohol use. This course stresses individual and collective responsibility to help students take care of themselves and their peers. As in the past, undergraduates will also receive live training during New Student Orientation (NSO).

- In May 2014, Stanford hired a new Title IX Coordinator, Catherine Criswell, whose primary responsibility is to ensure prompt and appropriate investigation and resolution of reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence involving students, as well as to oversee our comprehensive outreach and training efforts: diversityandaccess.stanford.edu/title-ix.

- In June 2014, the Provost announced the creation of a new faculty-student committee to suggest ways of improving educational efforts around sexual assault and to provide advice on Stanford’s process for handling reported cases of sexual assault.

- Stanford offers many confidential and non-confidential resources for students who have been the victim of sexual violence or who have been impacted by sexual violence. Please see the list of sexual assault resources accompanying this letter.

The Conversation Starts at Home

We recognize that sexual violence is a difficult topic to discuss. The following are tools that can assist you in starting the conversation at home and continuing it throughout your student’s time at Stanford. It is important to discuss not only how students can protect themselves and their peers, but also how they can avoid causing harm to others.
1. Reflect on your values and beliefs and talk to your student about how they align with Stanford's community standards. Research shows that a person's closest social circle—family members, peers, and partners—greatly influences their behavior and experiences. Encourage your student to exercise sound judgment at all times.

2. Talk to your student about healthy relationships and consent. It is important for students to understand the difference between healthy and harmful relationships and the necessity of obtaining consent prior to any sexual act. Consent is informed, freely given, and mutually understood. Consent requires an affirmative act or statement by each participant. Please ensure that your student has read and understands Stanford's consent policy before arriving on campus: admguide.stanford.edu/chapter-1/subchapter-7/policy-1-7-3.

3. Encourage your student to become familiar with the campus climate and culture. Campus life often requires that students adapt in ways that may be new or different to them. This can lead to an increased sense of vulnerability, isolation, and negative coping behaviors. It is important for students to seek out a community of peers that will support them and reinforce healthy decisions. It is also important for students to hold themselves and their peers accountable and to treat others with respect.

4. Periodically check in with your student and inquire about his or her sense of safety and well-being. Take note of any major changes in attitude, behavior, or habits and talk openly about issues of concern. Students who have been impacted by sexual violence may not immediately disclose such information, but they often exhibit symptoms of depression, anxiety, or withdrawal. Most importantly, if your student tells you that they have been harmed, believe them and offer to help them seek resources and support.

5. Talk to your student about the role he or she will play in protecting themselves and others from experiencing harm or unwelcome interactions. Students are essential partners and leaders in creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful campus climate. They often witness or are the first to be aware when incidents of sexual violence occur. Students who experience sexual violence are most likely to tell a friend before seeking resources. Encourage your student to be an “upstander,” who safely intervenes to prevent violence and who offers assistance to those who are impacted. For more tools on how your student can get involved visit studentaffairs.stanford.edu/sara/how-to-help.

We Are Here to Help

We sincerely hope that none of our students are victims of sexual violence or otherwise impacted by sexual violence. However, should that happen despite our best efforts, we want you and our students to know where they can turn for help and to know they are not alone.

Thank you for your partnership and support. We look forward to welcoming you and your student to campus in the fall. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us or the offices on the sexual assault resources list.

Sincerely,

Greg Boardman
Vice Provost for Student Affairs

Angela Exson
Assistant Dean of Student Life & Director, SARA

Catherine Criswell
Title IX Coordinator
Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Resources

For anyone dealing with an incident of sexual violence, Stanford encourages (a) consulting confidentially with a counselor, (b) making a report to police, and (c) making a report to the university. Individuals in need of immediate medical attention are encouraged to go to either Stanford Hospital or the Vaden Health Center on campus.

Confidential Counseling

The following service providers of support, counseling and referrals at Stanford, or contracted through Stanford, are confidential resources (and are not under obligation to report an incident to the Title IX Coordinator).

- **The YWCA Stanford Rape Crisis Hotline** offers confidential and anonymous support from professionally trained and certified advocates from the YWCA Sexual Assault Center on a 24-hour basis: (650) 725-9955, vaden.stanford.edu/special-topics/sexual-assault.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** is Stanford's counseling center devoted to student mental health and well-being: (650) 723-3785, vaden.stanford.edu/caps/about-us.
- **The Faculty and Staff HELP Center** provides similar assistance for faculty and staff: (650) 723-4577, helpcenter.stanford.edu.
- **The Office for Religious Life** clergy guide spiritual, religious, and ethical life within the Stanford community and are available as confidential resources: (650) 723-1762, religiouslife.stanford.edu.
- **The University Ombuds Office** provides neutral and confidential resources to identify and evaluate options to resolve problems: (650) 723-3682, stanford.edu/dept/ombuds/.

Reporting to Police

Stanford encourages victims of sexual violence to report to the police. The Stanford University Department of Public Safety (SUDPS) is a multi-service agency providing law enforcement, security, safety, crime prevention, and emergency services on campus. The department is staffed by sworn peace officers trained to investigate allegations of sexual assault. For an emergency, call 911. During normal business hours, the department can be reached at (650) 723-9633. For more information, visit police.stanford.edu/.

Any police investigation of a sexual offense that occurs within the jurisdiction of the department will be forwarded to the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, which is responsible for prosecution. An individual who has suffered a sexual assault may elect to have a case investigated by the police and/or by the university through the university's processes. A criminal investigation is separate from Stanford's own internal investigative processes, and the two distinct processes may proceed simultaneously.

Individuals who have suffered a sexual assault are encouraged to request collection of medical/legal evidence. The Santa Clara Valley Medical Center is the dedicated facility in Santa Clara County for providing evidence collection and has specially trained staff. Stanford Police will provide students with transportation to this medical center. Students also have the right to have a victim's advocate from the YWCA Rape Crisis Center support them through the process and to provide confidential and anonymous services throughout the medical, legal and administrative procedures.
**Reporting to the University**

Reports of incidents relating to student-related sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking should be reported to Stanford's Title IX Coordinator and the Office of Sexual Assault & Relationship Abuse Education & Response (SARA).

- **Title IX Coordinator:** Catherine Criswell, (650) 497-4955, titleix@stanford.edu
  The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for investigating student related concerns of sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual misconduct, dating violence or domestic violence, and stalking involving students, regardless of whether the alleged conduct occurred on or off campus and regardless of whether the alleged perpetrator is a student, faculty member, staff member, or third party.

- **SARA Director:** Angela Exson, (650) 725-1056, saraoffice@stanford.edu
  The Office of Sexual Assault & Relationship Abuse Education & Response (SARA) provides educational resources and programming for incoming students, lectures for academic courses, and outreach through student organizations, workshops, and a comprehensive set of information resources on the web. The office also provides consultation to students, staff and faculty about options and resources to address student incidents of sexual and dating violence. Any individual in the Stanford community with questions about issues regarding sexual assault can contact the SARA Office for assistance.

**Campus Resource**

**Sexual Harassment Policy Office:** To address issues of sexual harassment, the Sexual Harassment Policy Office (SHPO) coordinates resources and acts as the liaison between the primary parties and those helping to resolve the situation. The office provides support and resources for all persons involved in or working to resolve a situation, but does not advocate for any particular party: harass.stanford.edu.