

Biases, Barriers, & Barricades for Utah Women: A Solutions-Based Workshop

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Although some opportunities abound for women in Utah, there are still many challenges that keep women from contributing and thriving within various settings, including workplaces, educational institutions, politics, government, religious, and in the community at large. This in-person solutions-based workshop focused on three complex issues in Utah: decreasing sexism, increasing women in Utah politics, and stopping sexual assault and domestic violence. Below are notes from the workshop.

How do we speak up against sexism to reduce its prevalence in the state?

- Educate people, especially if sexism is part of social norms
- Push back against false narratives
- Encourage women to come forward
- Practice how you should respond
- Use humor to call this sexism out
- Use comments that buy you time:
 - “Can you say that again?”
 - “What makes you say that?”
- Don’t be afraid to directly call sexism out in the moment:
 - “You just said that aloud”
 - “We are at work today”
 - “I didn’t realize we were saying that today”
 - “What do you mean by that?”
- Bring the topic of sexism up in close relationships, such as a marriage
- Recruit male allies
- Direct, one-on-one conversation
- Ask a manager for advice
- Create spaces where women see other women in careers
- Create programs in schools to teach about the impact of sexism
- Create campaigns to eliminate sexism and misogyny
- Uplift children
- Address sexism embedded in policies
- Ask reflective questions
- Be an active witness; support women when you see them experiencing sexism
- Paradigm shift; “white men” aren’t the default
- HR Training, built-in practices
- Adjust hiring practices
- Utilize the power we have to mentor others

- Better accommodations for mothers in the workplace (i.e. lactation spaces)
- Politely question others' perspectives
- Realign gender norms
- Respond to sexism respectfully

How do we increase the number of women in Utah politics?

- Education - knowing what it is like to run
- Finding the "why", women should run to make their state/community better for their loved ones and friends
- Look beyond party in supporting candidates
- Mobilize women to vote
- Help people realize the impact of women in politics
- Increase civility in politics
- Make the voting process more transparent
- Set patterns for voting from a young age; encourage voting in first three elections
- Build bridges between high school, college, and adulthood
- Increase mentorship programs
- Look for spaces at local levels to insert women
- Help empower women who are ready to run
- Increase networking events for women
- Discuss experiences at caucuses, etc. – help to reduce intimidation
- Trust yourself, fight imposter syndrome
- Increase marketing for groups helping women run for politics
- Teaching girls and women how to speak up and debate
- Encourage being comfortable with conflict
- Access to quality and affordable childcare
- Build allyships with men who are already in elected roles
- Increase women at the caucus level
- Breakdown gender norms — women belong in the game!
- Encourage girls to pursue leadership opportunities
- Reform campaign ad policies to be more civil
- Bring men to events like this workshop
- Improve civic education, make it a requirement
- Encourage political involvement with religious and community groups
- Have more women share their stories of success
- Ask questions
- Change the negative perception around politics
- Understand your priorities
- Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment
- Donate more to women's campaigns

How can we all raise awareness of the problems with sexual assault and domestic violence in Utah?

- Educate on how to respond
- Education on consent

- Challenge rape myths
- Believe women
- Educate on what sexual assault and abuse looks like
- Self-defense classes
- Listen to those we know tell their stories, support them
- More resources for parents
- Listen to our children, help them feel safe to tell their stories
- Teach children boundaries and warning signs
- Better health/sex education
- Education on healthy relationships
- Uplift experiences of LGBTQIA and BIPOC
- Challenge laws that keep abusers from being held accountable
- Hold people accountable for violence
- Address toxic masculinity
 - Terry Crew “You Are Not So Smart” podcast, episode 235 ‘Tough’
- Reading recommendation: “Ejaculate Responsibly”
- Increase funding for therapy and survivor support
- Funding for home visits to vulnerable women and new mothers
- Improved screening at OBGYN/ERs for intimate partner violence
- Improve policing and prosecution
- Realize that being respectful doesn’t mean compromising boundaries
- Changing our voice: Don’t say “she was raped”, say “he raped her”