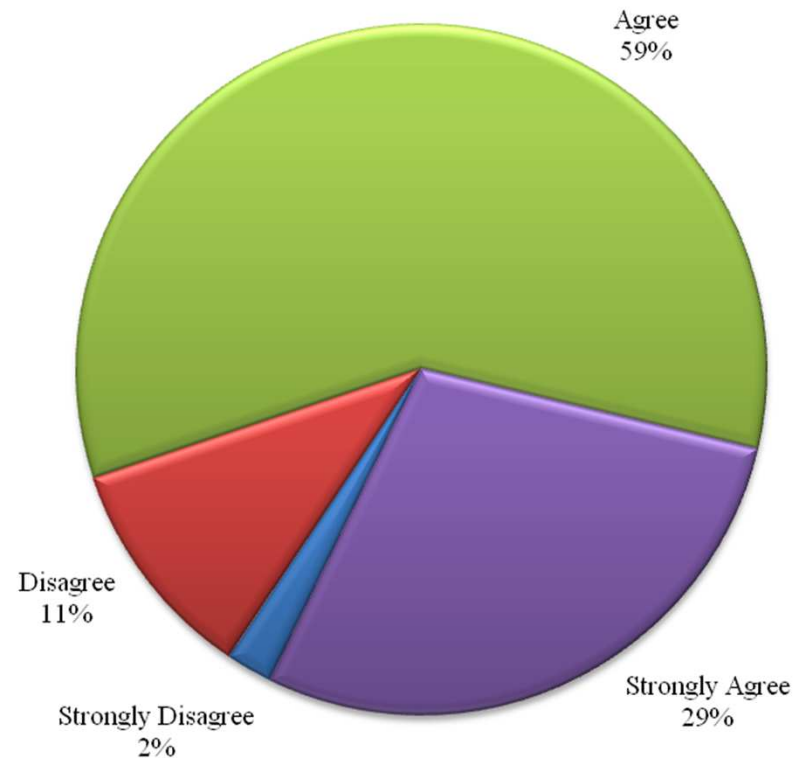


# **UWRF Step Up Survey Results**

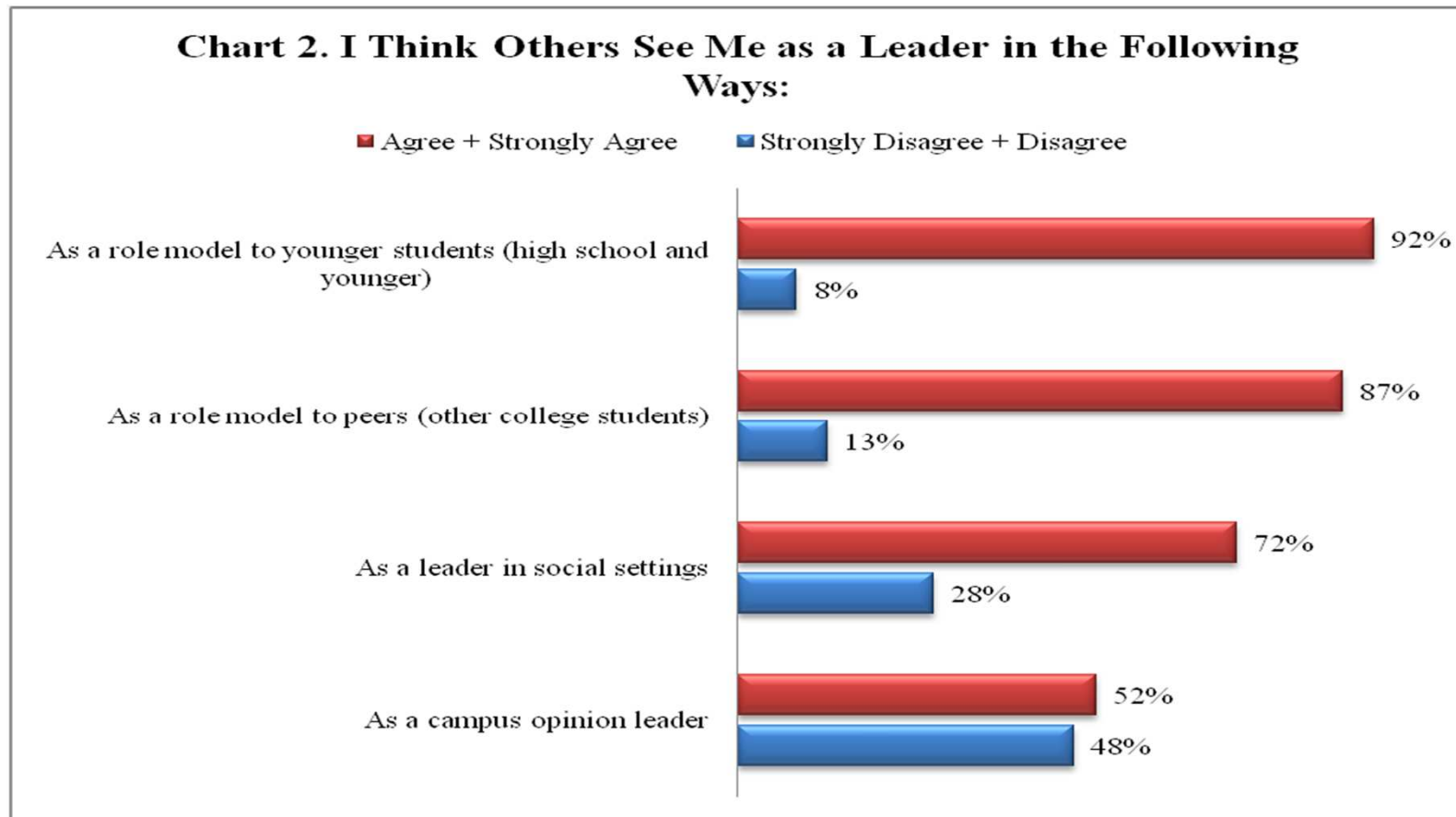
- The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences and attitudes of University of Wisconsin-River Falls students with regard to bystander intervention practices in four situations where the personal safety of another person is at risk: (1) Someone has had too much to drink, (2) Hazing, (3) Someone being taken advantage of sexually, (4) Verbal mistreatment/harassment based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.
- The questionnaire was adapted from the Step Up survey instrument developed by the University of Arizona and was used with permission.
- On November 29, 2010, the Survey Research Center (SRC) sent email invitations to three groups of UWRF students asking them to participate in an Internet survey: intercollegiate athletes (N=408), Greek society members (N=231), and a random sample of enrolled students (N=1,456).

- The SRC sent three email reminders to non-respondents before closing the survey on December 9. Overall, the SRC received 605 useable responses, which is a 29 percent response rate. Within the total number of responses, the SRC received 201 from athletes (49% response rate), 90 from Greeks (39% response rate), and 314 from general students (22% response rate). The calculated confidence intervals (“margin of error”) for the three groups are as follows: Athletes,  $\pm 4.9\%$ , Greeks  $\pm 8.1\%$ , and general students  $\pm 5.4\%$ .

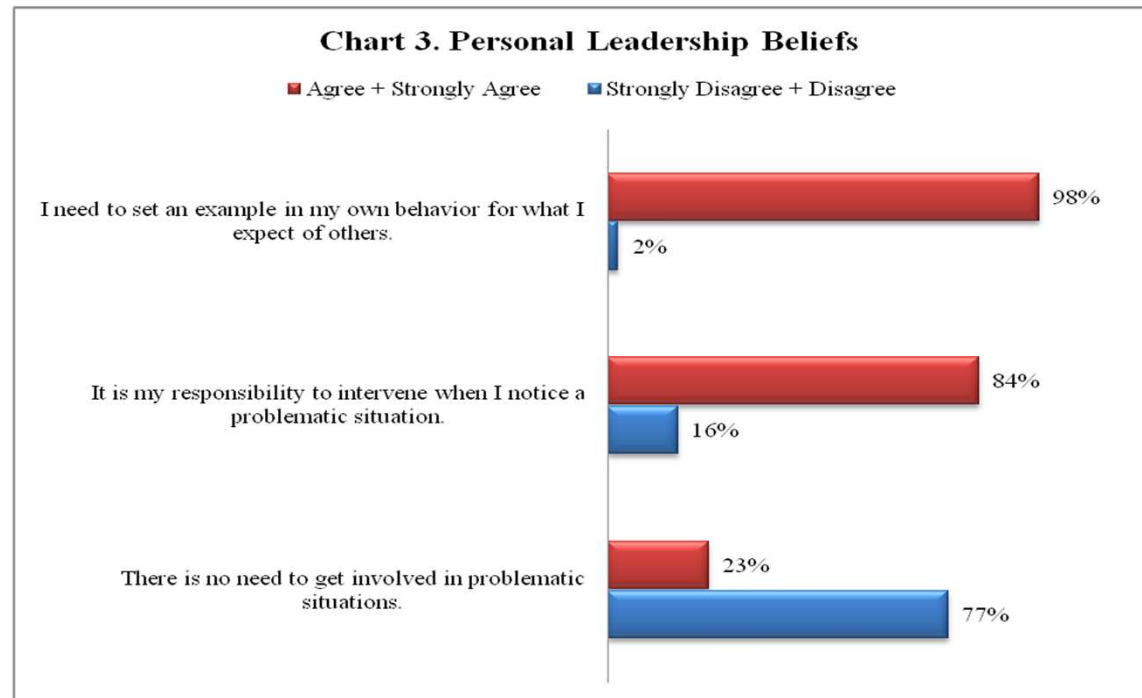
Chart 1. I See Myself as a Leader



- Nearly nine in ten respondents said they “agree” (59%) or “strongly agree” (29%) that they see themselves as leaders (all students) .



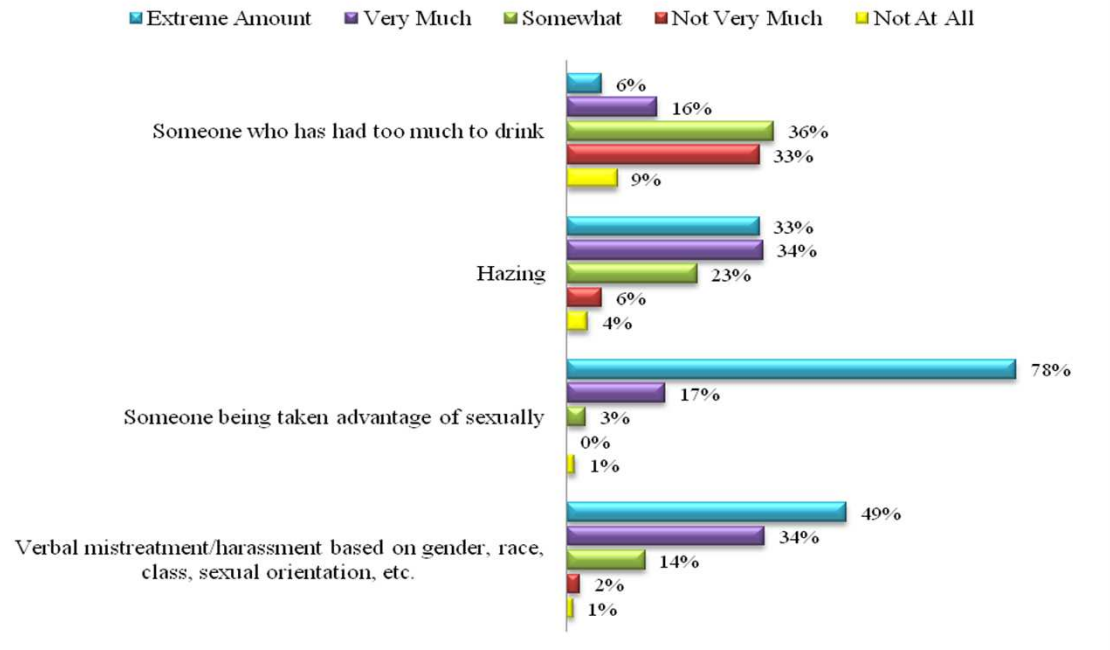
- General Students (88%) saw themselves as role models for younger students (high school and younger).



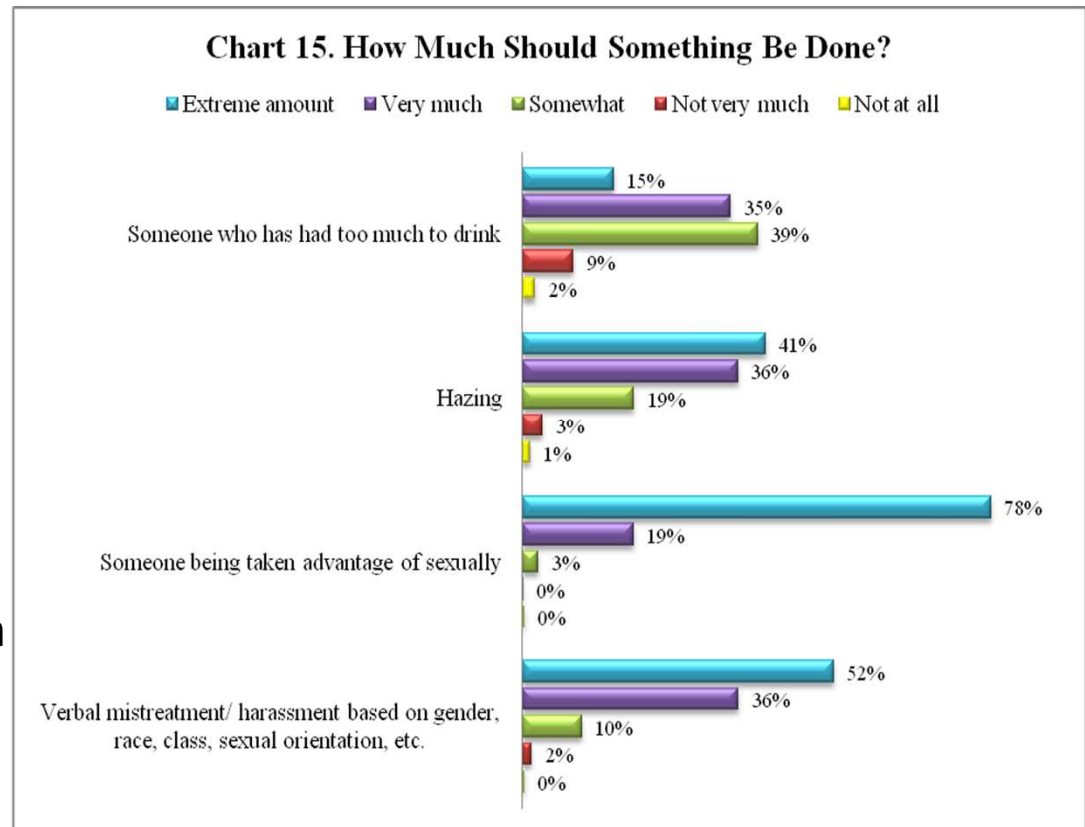
- There was near unanimity among respondents who said that they need to set an example with their own behavior.
- A large majority of respondents (84%) said they have a responsibility to intervene in problematic situations.
- More than three-fourths of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that there is no need to become involved in problematic situations.

- Observing somebody being taken advantage of sexually was that most bothersome situation, with nearly all respondents indicating they were bothered an “extreme amount” (78% “very much” (17%).
- Verbal mistreatment was a bothersome behavior to a large majority of respondents, half of whom said they were bothered by verbal mistreatment an “extreme amount,” 34% bothered “very much.”
- Women respondents were more likely to be bothered an “extreme amount” by verbal mistreatment (57%) compared to men (33%).

**Chart 8. How Much Do the Following Situations Bother You?**

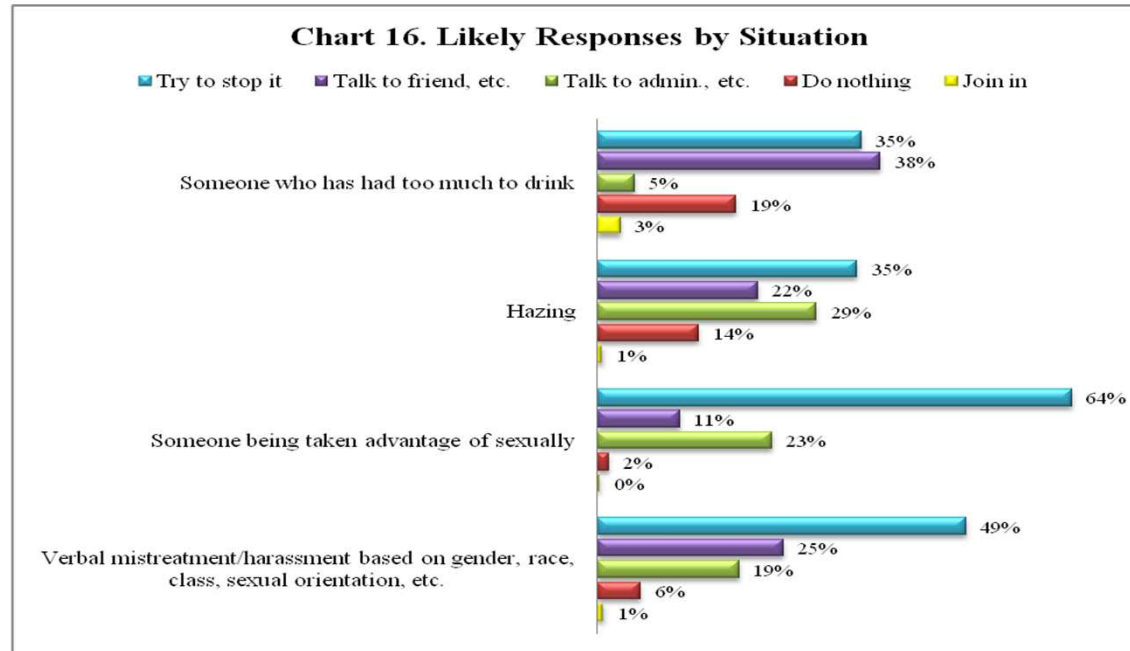


- The strength of the belief that something should be done varies among the four situations. Respondents had the strongest opinion about situations involving someone being taken advantage of sexually.
- Respondents were less sure about the need to intervene when somebody has had too much to drink.





- Respondents were next asked to indicate their most likely response if they witnessed each of the four situations.

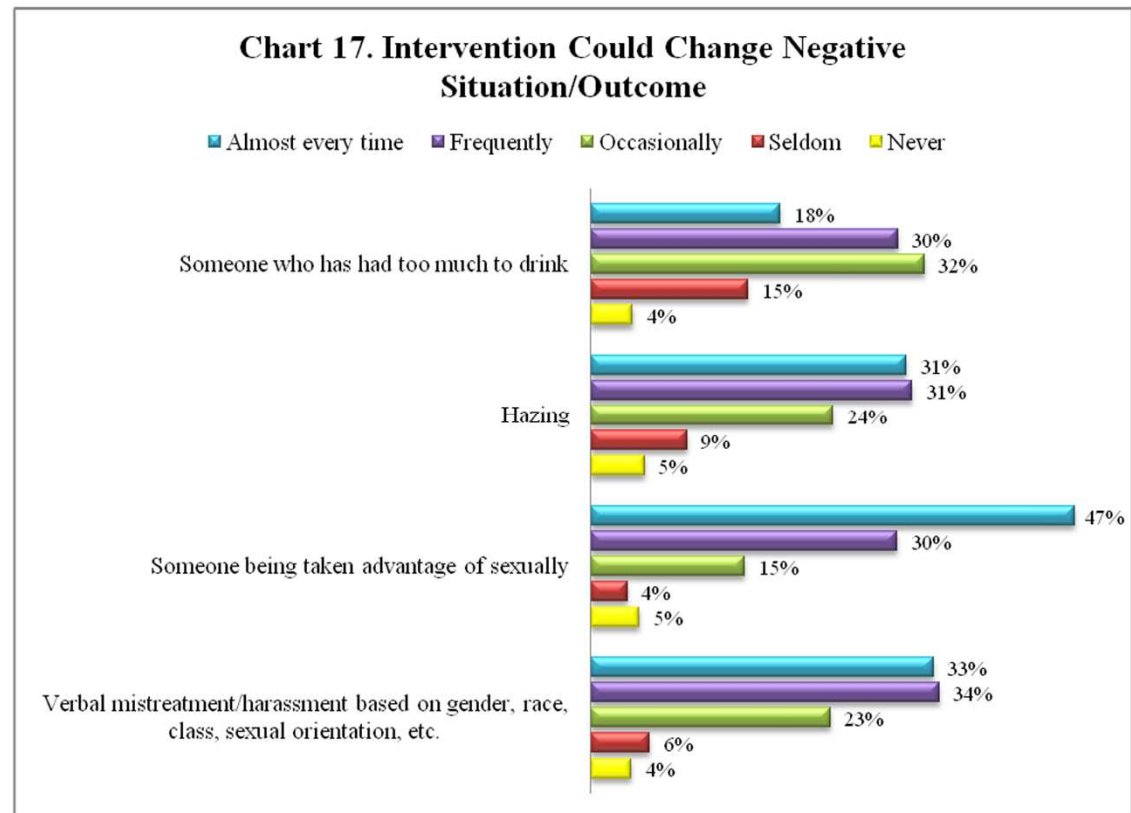


- Respondents are most likely to actively intervene to stop the behavior when someone is being taken advantage of sexually (64%) and when someone is being verbally mistreated (49%).
- Very few respondents said they would join in or do nothing if they witnessed someone being taken advantage of sexually or being verbally mistreated.

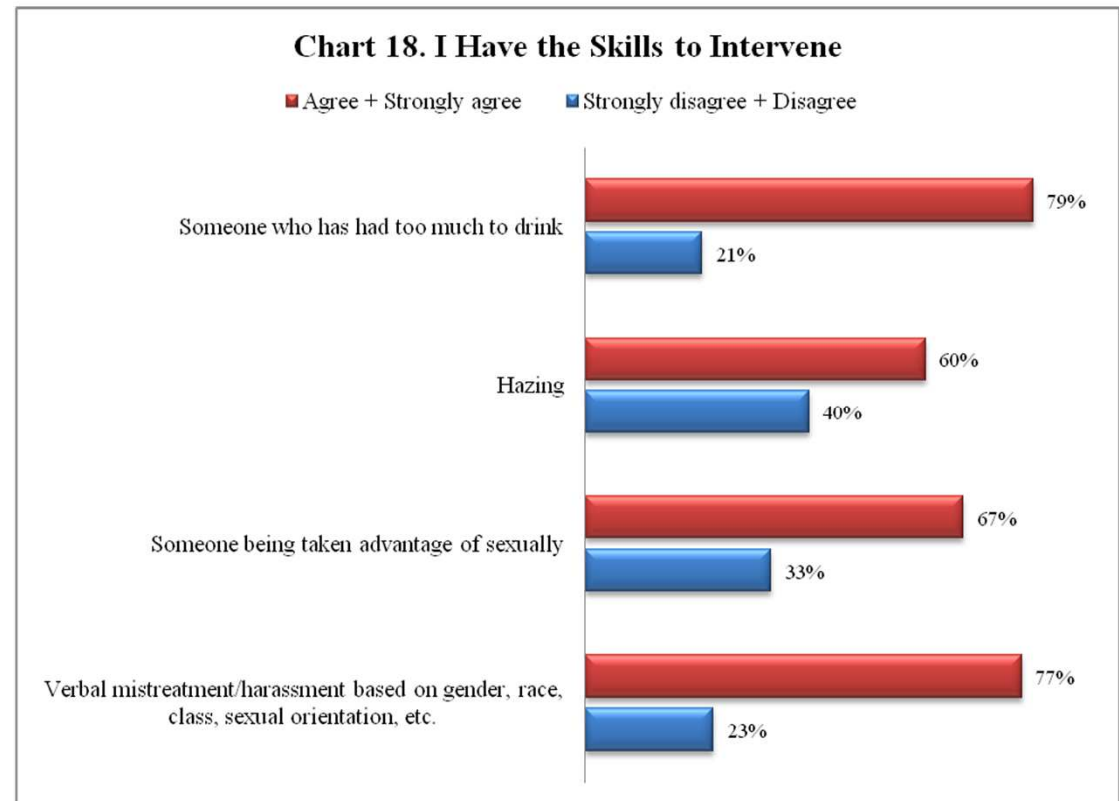
**Table 4. Reasons NOT to Intervene by Type of Situation.** (Percentages may exceed 100 percent because respondents were allowed multiple choices.)

	<b>Someone who has had too much to drink</b>	<b>Hazing</b>	<b>Someone being taken advantage of sexually</b>	<b>Verbal mistreatment/harassment based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.</b>
Ever witnessed a situation of:	6% (N=20)	73% (N=254)	74% (N=254)	34% (N=211)
Net count: Respondents who had witnessed a situation	N=336	N=94	N=87	N=215
Assumed it wasn't a problem	65%	39%	13%	26%
Was afraid of embarrassing myself	11%	31%	15%	23%
Assumed someone else would do something	40%	34%	37%	34%
Believed that others aren't bothered	32%	34%	13%	24%
Was afraid my teammates/fellow friends/other students would not approve/support me	10%	24%	10%	9%
Felt that my involvement could put my safety at risk	21%	28%	49%	27%
Didn't know WHEN to intervene	33%	35%	46%	40%
Didn't know HOW to intervene	34%	53%	60%	50%
Lack of confidence to intervene	20%	33%	33%	39%
Was none of my business	46%	36%	34%	29%
Fear of retaliation	16%	29%	33%	21%

- Respondents were likely to believe that intervention could avoid a negative outcome of any of the four situations.
- Respondents were most sure about the impact of intervention when someone is being taken advantage of sexually (47% “almost every time” and 30% “frequently”).

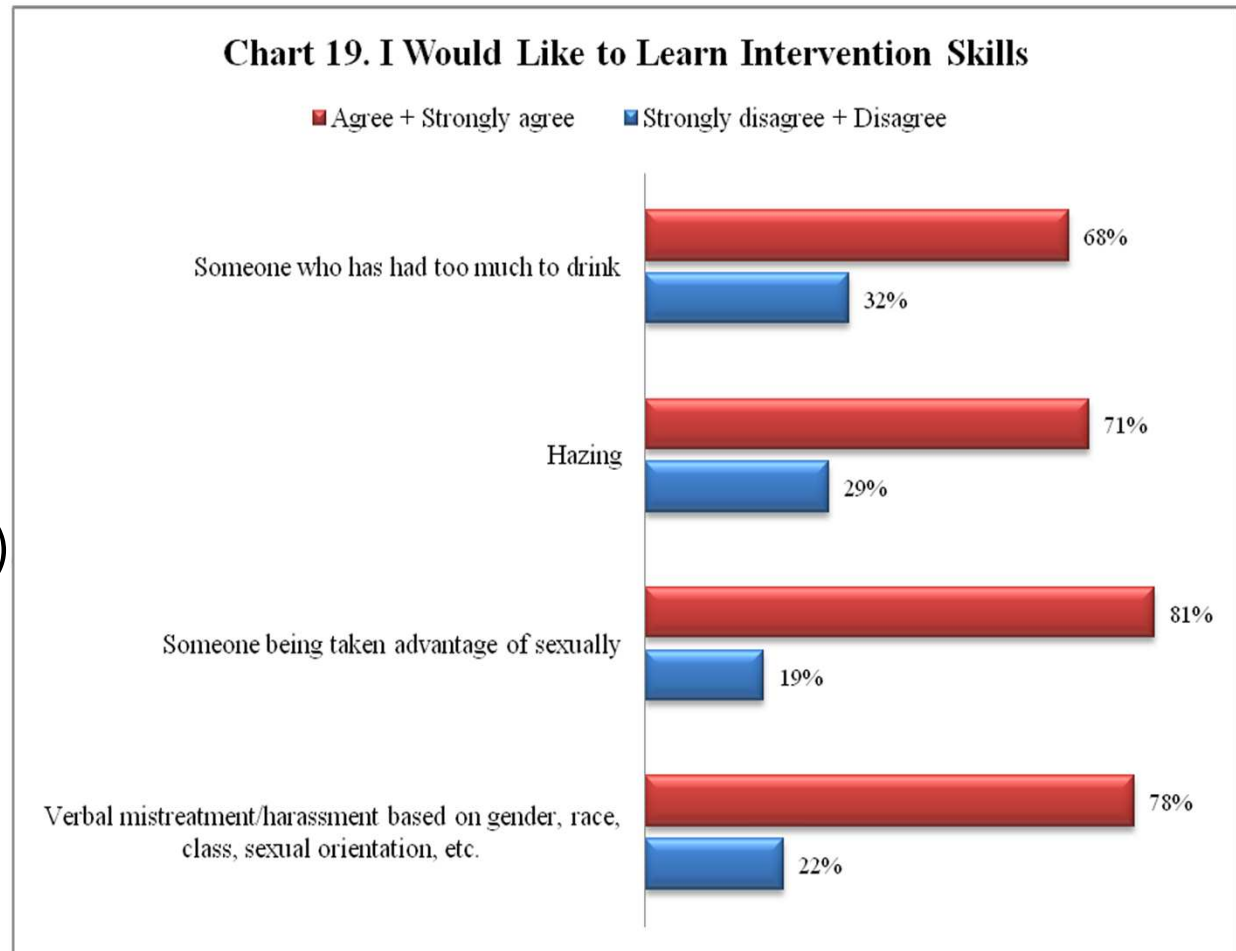


- A majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have the skills to intervene in all of the four situations.



- Respondents were most sure of their intervention skills when someone has consumed too much alcohol and when someone was being verbally mistreated (more than three fourths agreed or strongly agreed).

- The greatest degree of interest is for skills to intervene when someone is being taken advantage of sexually and when someone is being verbally mistreated (approximately 80 percent)



- Typical interventions related to excessive alcohol consumption include the following:
  - *“Somebody had too much to drink and I helped them out by getting them back to their room and making sure they were okay.”*
  - *“Drove a friend home that wasn't able to drive one night after a party.”*
  - *“Took away their drink, got them some water and something to eat. And took away their keys.”*
- Typical interventions related to verbal mistreatment include the following:
  - *“Someone was making fun of people who are gay and I have a really good gay guy friend. I stuck up for him and told this girl that they're people too.”*
  - *“Correct people when they say disrespectful words such as gay, fag, the n word, etc.”*
- Typical interventions related to someone being taken advantage of sexually include the following:
  - *“I know people who have been sexually assaulted, and I brought them to the right people to talk to so they could get the help they needed.”*
  - *“I stepped between the victim and the assailant and told the assailant to stop. I then proceeded to help the victim get home.”*

**Table 6. Reasons for Previous Intervention by Type of Situation (multiple choices allowed)**

	Someone who has had too much to drink	Hazing	Someone being taken advantage of sexually	Verbal mistreatment/harassment based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.
Count	N=366	N=140	N=176	N=268
It was the right thing to do	75%	56%	70%	71%
I think teammates/Greeks/her students should look out for each other	68%	56%	57%	57%
Someone needed help	67%	32%	55%	47%
I would want someone to help me in that situation	66%	43%	59%	50%
So the situation wouldn't escalate	55%	37%	41%	46%
So a teammate, Greek brother/sister, or fellow student wouldn't get in trouble	47%	21%	10%	12%
It makes me feel good to help	47%	29%	36%	39%
It was easy to help	42%	17%	16%	24%
I related to the person's experience	29%	10%	18%	26%
To preserve the reputation of my team, fraternity/sorority, or university	23%	24%	17%	19%
Because others expected me to	23%	9%	15%	16%
To impress others	6%	3%	5%	3%

- Three-fourths of respondents included the moral imperative “it was the right thing to do” among their reasons to intervene when someone has had too much to drink.
- Similarly, two-thirds of respondents said they intervened because the person needed help, they would want someone to help them in the same situation, and they think members of their group should look out for each other.

# Conclusions

- In general, someone being taken advantage of sexually, verbally mistreated, or being hazed are viewed as troublesome situations by majorities of survey respondents. Excessive alcohol consumption is viewed as problematic, but less so than the other three situations.
- Since a large majority of respondents believe that troublesome situations can be improved by intervention, the most common reasons for non-intervention stated by respondents represent opportunities for UW-River Falls to seek ways to address the causes of non-intervention.
- With respect to someone being taken advantage of sexually, verbally abused, or hazed, the most frequently cited reason for non-intervention is that respondents don't know how to intervene. Since a majority of respondents said they would like to learn intervention skills, this suggests an opportunity for awareness programs and educational programs focused on skills for effective by-stander interventions.
- The primary reasons for non-intervention when someone has had too much to drink were that the respondents' assumption that it wasn't a problem and that the situation as none of their business. This may suggest the planning and implementation of awareness programming and educational outreach on the campus to help students increase their awareness of the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption and to recognize when it is a situation that is no longer "none of my business."



## For More Information

- For more information about the survey or about “Stepping Up” contact Student Health and Counseling Services at 715/425-3293