

## **Closed Caption of Podcast 1.1**

### **IMELDA: Intro**

Welcome to the Cyber Abuse Project (CAP) podcast series where we invite guests to talk about the use/misuse of technology in sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking (including cyber stalking). This project seeks to support the work of criminal justice professionals as they navigate these cases. I'm Imelda Buncab, Project Coordinator with CA Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA). Joining me is my co-host and colleague, Jessica Moreno, Community Initiatives Manager with Break The Cycle. Hi Jessica!

### **JESSICA:**

Hey Imelda! Break the Cycle is really excited to be working with the CA Coalition Against Sexual Assault as our partners in the CAP project and look forward to hearing from a variety of criminal justice professionals as this series continues. This is one of many resources the CAP project is going to be releasing to campus safety folks, school resource officers, and school administrators. So really, any professional that may be attached, a point in the criminal justice component of these cases among young people.

### **IMELDA:**

Yes, this podcast is the first in a series of six to be released. We wanted to start the series centered on the experiences of youth survivors. Today's guests will be speaking to the impact of online abuse on victims/survivors and strategies for criminal justice professionals on effective responses.

### **JESSICA:**

Yes. We're excited to have our guests with us from SAFEBAe. We have Daisy Coleman from Kansas City, Missouri. Hi Daisy!

### **DAISY (SAFEBAE):**

Hello! How are you?

### **JESSICA:**

And we have Ella Fairon from Los Angeles, California. Welcome Ella.

### **ELLA (SAFEBAE):**

Hello, Thank you.

### **JESSICA:**

And lastly we have Charlie Coleman from Kansas City, Missouri. Welcome Charlie

### **CHARLIE (SAFEBAE):**

Hi, thanks for having me.

### **JESSICA:**

Jumping in, thanks again for everybody joining in. We want to start off by getting folks familiar with SafeBae.

**JESSICA:**

*Can you tell us about SafeBAE and your roles within the organization. (what does BAE stand for)*

**DAISY:**

SafeBAE, which stands for BEFORE ANYONE ELSE, is the national organization that we all founded to help end sexual assault among teens. We all met during the making of Audrie and Daisy and really wanted to prevent what happened to us from happening to anyone else. We don't want anyone to feel like they are alone or what they are going through is something they have to go through alone and we want them to know their rights at their school. Everything we work on is based on our experience of what we didn't have available to us.

**CHARLIE:**

The beautiful thing about it is that we all got to come up with our own materials, plan our upcoming initiatives & campaigns, as well as travel to speak at schools to help recruit students to become activists of their own and become the culture change in their schools because it is very needed..

**JESSICA:**

Daisy, you mentioned that you all met during the making of Audrey and Daisy. I understand that's a Netflix documentary, but for folks who haven't seen it or maybe aren't familiar, can you give us a quick summary of what that documentary addresses.

**DAISY:**

So, Audrey and Daisy is the two stories of two teenage girls (me being Daisy and the other girl being audrey) we both have very similar experiences with sexual assault and what we went through with bullying in High School.

**JESSICA:**

As I am understanding, your work since the film SafeBAE has been doing a lot of traveling. And Charlie as you mentioned speaking at schools. How common is it for other young people to reach out to y'all and share their stories of assault or abuse or online harassment?

**CHARLIE:**

It's really not uncommon at all. Right after the film came out, I remember it was within the first week or so. I had to put security settings on my facebook and twitter, because I had such an influx of messages coming in and a lot of them were really empowering messages. Like "what you are doing is a good thing" and stuff like that. And then you have the really hard ones to read that were people just filling their entire story out to you and you don't really know what to say sometimes. I mean is a blessing to be able to help people like that, but it is crazy to see how many people are affected by this.

**JESSICA:**

So, we know that the issue has hit pretty close to home for all of you and you also are hearing some of these stories as you are traveling across the country. The hope is that every survivor gets to decide (you know) what's best for them in terms of what to do after. Something like a sexual assault has taken place and sometimes the folks around them at the time can have a really huge impact on how a person experiences what's going on. Can you all speak to maybe what some of the not so helpful responses you received specifically from campus administration or law enforcement folks in your journey or in your work.

**DAISY:**

Some of the things that I experienced were being told that I wasn't allowed to go to my prom my senior year of High School or how they kicked me off the cheer squad. And It wasn't until I learned my Title IX rights that I pushed for my right to go to prom and be a part of things.

**JESSICA:**

Follow up question really quickly for Daisy, Could you tell us what the rationality was, why was that the choice that the school to tell you not to go to prom or kick you off the cheer squad?

**DAISY:**

I think they were just trying to take an easy way out almost instead of looking into my title IX rights. A lot of school coordinators don't even know what title IX rights are and that's absolutely shocking, because they should know what our rights are.

**ELLA:**

I think the thing that was hardest for me in my experience was that once I disclosed to my therapist, she was a mandated reporter, so when the police were investigating, no one told me that I could of asked for an advocate to be with me throughout the process. And i feel like we hear that from so many people, that no one tells us that we can have an advocate and that would make ALL the difference in improving how traumatic the reporting process is and can be.

**JESSICA:**

Can you tell us in what ways you think having an advocate could of been helpful for you or maybe other survivors?

**ELLA:**

Well so, here I am in this whole terrifying traumatic experience and I'm feeling so incredibly alone. Feeling alone is so powerful and so dark and I feel like that just having someone there with you is so key or at least being told that you can have someone there with you instead of just not letting them know.

**JESSICA:**

In what ways was the school there for you?

**ELLA:**

Like, they just constantly let me know that if I was feeling really anxious or if I was triggered at school that I could come and sit in the principal's office, which it really didn't help, anyways, but it was nice to know that I had that option. And just knowing that they knew what was going on with me and they were trying to understand and trying to help me was good for me. I was really lucky to have that here.

**JESSICA:**

It sounds like there was a lot of ways the school, specifically campus administration in your school environment kind of intervened or could of intervened. Just thinking about some of the other stories that y'all heard. Are there any other instances that perhaps were helpful or not so helpful responses that you've seen or heard from law enforcement specifically or prosecutors or anyone else?

**CHARLIE:**

I'll speak on that one. There have been several instances we've gone on speeches to various colleges and High Schools and campus officials have actually showed up to some of our speeches and shared interest in how they can do better when someone confides in them or reports their story on how they can be more comforting and less, I guess invasive on who is right or wrong. They listen to the story clearly and they want to do better for the students. I think , the one that really stood out for me. I think it was University of Indiana, the campus security officer actually came up to and talked with us after. It was really refreshing to know that someone in that position was really taking the initiative to be a better leader and better role model and someone that survivors can really feel safe going to after such a traumatic experience.

**DAISY:**

As Ella mentioned, one of our biggest messages to law enforcement is to please offer any survivors that comes in to report, the opportunity to have someone there as a victim's rights advocate. And to inform themselves of the facts around false reporting because there are still so many misconceptions about there being a lot of people that falsely report when that's not truly the case. Because there's only 3% of false reports.

**JESSICA:**

Daisy, you mentioned false reporting. Do you think that has potentially impacted how investigators approach the cases?

**DAISY:**

I think it affects how everyone approached cases. because (you know) not only is there this misconception for you know people in legal standings, but there's also this misconception for anyone who is viewing the case and (you know) we just really need to get rid of (you know) that underlying myth that there's more people lying about these cases when isn't.

**JESSICA:**

So, I want a kind of transition and think a little bit more specifically about any kind of dating or sexual violence cases that involve online harassment or cyberstalking/abuse. What do you think would be helpful for criminal justice professionals or campus administrators to know when they are responding to those type of cases that really involve online abuse.

**CHARLIE:**

Taking it with an open mind and hearing the story out knowing that someone is confiding their story with you. That is probably pre-traumatic causing them a lot of mental and emotional distress. Not to point fingers and ask what they were wearing or what they were doing wrong. Because, nine times out of ten it has nothing or actually, ten out of ten it has nothing to do with what you were wearing or how you were acting in public for something like that to happen to you. Definitely, don't be pointing fingers towards the victim or survivor find the whole story. I wouldn't be pointing fingers at that point. So, everything is completely out there with facts.

**JESSICA:**

That sounds pretty similar to Charlie, what you were talking with regards of the campus security folks who came out and how they were really trying to think about how they could approach their work in a trauma informed way. I want to talk about that also for just a moment. Can you tell us about how young people can sometimes be re-traumatized through technology, I think that looking at SafeBAE's work you all have a term Cyber-Re-Victimization, Can you give us any examples of what that is?

**DAISY:**

So yeah, I feel like cyberbullying and that whole component of assault is just like completely re-traumatizing to the survivor, because not only are they experiencing bullying in person when they are out in public, but there's no really an escape from it when you go home when you go online and then there's this constant you know cycle of bullying for them and there's really no escape when it's online for them also.

**JESSICA:**

I believe SafeBAE has a campaign specifically addressing how to end cyber-re-victimization. Can you tell us about that?

**CHARLIE:**

Yes! That campaign we launched it earlier this past year. We named it #QuitThisShit we wanted it to be a little bit more edgy. It was really meant to be used in school clubs and classrooms, but we wanted to create a campaign that it dealt firsthand what the kids and what they were experiencing online. The crazy things that are actually being said to survivors, their families & friends. We wanted to all be out there, we wanted to expose how horrible and inhumane these comments are that were seen online. We decided in order to really be authentic with the kids that we are trying to reach, it needed to be the REAL in the messages that we are sending. And with a strong message back, that it has to stop. And so quit this shit was kind of formed and we decided to go forward with it and it has been a success so far.

**ELLA:**

Yeah, and we've gotten such great responses from #QuitThisShit and we do have a non-explicit version for schools use, but the video got great shares and feedback online. And some schools & parents definitely didn't like that we used that kind of language, but we found that we have to reach kids because they are the ones who have to change their school cultures and they are the ones who kind of talk like that. But, we need schools and the people working with kids to prioritize kindness, peer support and things like bystander intervention as a top priority in their schools and provide the means for students to learn these messages in a way that they can relate to, so they want to model those behaviors.

**JESSICA:**

So, I hear this message of relatability and it sounds like this campaign is really focusing on shifting peer behavior. Do you have any tips for criminal justice professionals or campus administration on how they can potentially be relatable to young people and help prevent or intervene in cases of cyber re-victimization. For example, if they are hearing about a cyber re-victimization case happening on campus. How will you help them to approach that?

**CHARLIE:**

I mean I feel like they can at least shut it down. It takes one person to say something. If one person says something it changes the conversation being had. I feel that it can completely turn it around. I am a firm believer in sarcasm, when I see stuff going down hill online. I usually pop in with a little bit of sarcasm like "oh, really. That's cool that you have those kind of feelings. I wonder what your grandma would feel about that kind of stuff". And people just shut down what they are saying, because then it becomes real to them how childish and petty they are being. By trying to re-victimize somebody that they don't even know. 9 times out of 10 and then it also makes them look like a fool as well. Nine times out of ten like I said, it stops.

**ELLA:**

If I could speak to that too. I also feel like law enforcement just taking it really seriously when someone, when a situation is brought to them or someone comes to them with a situation. Because, you know I feel like oftentimes there isn't really a firm stop put to it before it's too late sometimes. And I feel like just nipping it in the butt right when the situation is brought is like the best way to go about it and taking it really seriously.

**JESSICA:**

You all may not know the answer to this, but this is kind of a curiosity of mine. What do you think sometimes gets in the way for folks to you know whether it's campus administrators or law enforcement professionals. What do you think gets in the way of being able to as you put it, "nipping it in the bud?"

**ELLA:**

I think a lot of people have a hard time like, navigating through social media. And even I have found this to be true for me recently and I feel extremely old for it. Because, I had someone explain to me how to use you know, different things on Facebook. But I think just being able to

you know understand how to use everything and utilize these tools that you know, kids are using and being able to understand where all this is coming from. It's really important for officers to know so that way they know the root where everything is happening and nothing is you know, being hidden from them.

**JESSICA:**

So, we gotta get more comfortable using social media and learning these platforms, because that's what young people are using. We have to kind of stay ahead of that game is what I'm hearing.

**ELLA:**

Yeah! Definitely.

**CHARLIE:**

Yeah!

**JESSICA:**

Are there any other concrete actions SafeBAE is promoting for young people to prevent dating and sexual violence?

**DAISY:**

So, one of the actions that we promote is participating in Survivor Love Letter. This has been a partner project of ours since we launched. There's an event link on our FB page. All you have to do is write an anonymous letter to a survivor saying that you support them and believe them. The message is meant to create a culture where survivors feel safe to come forward and get help. You can do it individually and add it to the thousands that have been collected online or you can gather a group and make a bunch to put around your school. They are all so beautiful and it's a way of really creating an environment of support and caring for each other at your school.

**JESSICA:**

I'm excited to see what comes out of the Survivor Love Letter campaign. Does anyone else have any other last words you all want to share in terms of advice for criminal justice professionals or campus administrators or anyone of us out here trying to work to support and prevent these cases. Please feel free to share any other final thoughts about it.

**ELLA:**

I do want to say thank you to the law enforcement and all the people that are like, paying attention and working to make a change and I think this is really important and I'm really excited that it's getting acknowledged.

**CHARLIE:**

Feel free to visit our website <http://www.safebae.org/>

**JESSICA:**

Well, Thanks again. Daisy, Ella, and Charlie of SafeBAE for joining us today. We really appreciate your time and your thoughts on how to inform criminal justice professionals in their work to end and prevent cyber abuse and mistreatment.

**DAISY:**

Yeah, of course, thank you for having us!

**ELLA:**

Thank you for having us!

**CHARLIE:**

Thanks again!

**IMELDA:**

You just heard an interview with SafeBAE co-founders in our first episode of the Cyber Abuse Project's podcast series. Jessica, those are some pretty powerful young people.

**JESSICA:**

Yes they are, and they gave us some great ideas on how to approach the criminal justice process specifically with youth survivors who have experienced sexual assault and cyber abuse. And I think that some of the strategies that can apply to other forms of cases such as stalking and dating violence.

**IMELDA:**

Yea it sounds like they had some really good ideas that could directly benefit first responders in the criminal justice field, specially on campuses. What were your favorite takeaways?

**JESSICA:**

So one of the biggest things we heard from SafeBae is around informing young people throughout the criminal justice process, of what their options and their rights are. For example, Ella talked about the importance of informing young people of their right to have a victim's advocate present with them especially through the earlier phases of the investigation. While access and parameters can change from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, its important for criminal justice and campus safety professionals to get familiar with what is available to youth survivors in their areas, and let the young person know what those resources on the front end.

**IMELDA:**

Absolutely, information is key and I can only imagine how helpful it could be to remind them of their options more than once.

**JESSICA:**

Exactly. As Daisy mentioned, it is really important to educate everyone about their rights before cases of sexual assault, dating violence, and cyber abuse/misuse occur. AND whenever a



young person is directly impacted by these types of cases, it's also important for the responding criminal justice professionals and campus safety folks to inform and remind that young person about their rights and options throughout the process.

**IMELDA:**

It sure sounds like SafeBAE has some great resources and videos that folks can use at large to educate the community and folks at large about youth rights. Were there any other striking takeaways, Jessica?

**JESSICA:**

Yeah, Charlie talked about something really important about criminal justice professionals employing trauma informed responses to youth survivors. So, this could be a possible area for training, additional training, for criminal justice professionals and their team's and it sounds like based on Charlie's experience that many law enforcement teams have already begun to think about getting this type of training for their staff, so that's a really good indicator.

**IMELDA:**

Our time with SafeBAE was very informative and we hope that is also helpful to our audience out there. Well that concludes our first episode in the Cyber Abuse Project Podcast Series. Thanks for joining and be sure to tune in to the remaining podcasts in the series by visiting [breakthecycle.org](http://breakthecycle.org).