Twitter Thread by James Mishra



James Mishra
@rishmishra

(1/25) A number of Silicon Valley investors are putting their money and influence into a campaign to gaslight rape victims into not seeking medical treatment

despite the warnings of top law enforcement officials

and NOBODY is talking about this.

(2/25) First, a little about me. I used to be a licensed sexual assault crisis counselor, counseling victims admitted to one of three Minneapolis emergency rooms.

After I'd speak to the victim, they'd receive a medical exam from a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE).

(3/25) During the exam, DNA and other evidence is collected with a "rape kit" to optionally be used in a civil or criminal case.

(4/25) But collecting evidence is not the ONLY reason to receive an exam.

The victim may also receive:
- counseling (hello!)
- treatment for (potentially invisible) injuries
- medications like Plan B and emergency antiretroviral therapy for HIV prophylaxis.

(5/25) Leda Health, a startup cofounded by Madison Campbell and Liesel Vaidya, is raising money to sell "do-it-yourself" rape kits that wouldn't require a hospital visit

which is possibly the most HARMFUL startup idea that I have ever heard of.


Before you begin, take a look at this manual.
Survivor Kit
Instructional Booklet
Self Evidence
Swab Kit
DNA Swab
Kit A
DNA Swab
Kit B
Sterile Water Vial
Leda Health
Leda Health
Leda Health
step 1
step 2
step 3

(6/25) Leda Health's marketing is misleading to victims and may cause them to not seek critical and time-sensitive medical treatment.

Furthermore, rape kits in a hospital are protected. There needs to be a strong "chain of custody" or the kit will not be admissible in any court.

(7/25) The problem with any do-it-yourself rape kit is that it is impossible to guarantee that it has not been tampered with.

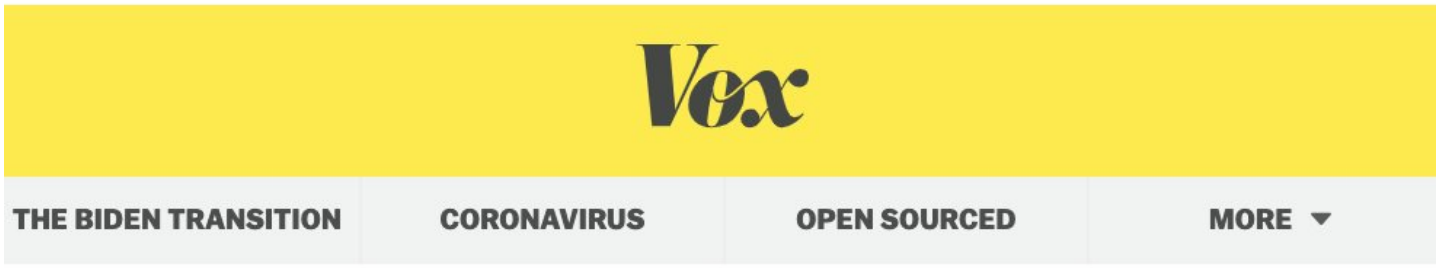
Such a kit cannot be admissible in court and may harm other efforts to collect evidence.

(8/25) Campbell has repeatedly been misleading about her kits' admissibility in court.

Leda Health used to be called "MeToo Kits" and they were widely panned in the press for both their tasteless name and their nonsensical plan.

https://t.co/LrGgiCaJGK

https://t.co/3rk0rK2sgF



This company is advertising MeToo-branded at-home rape kits. Experts say it's a terrible idea.

The MeToo Kit is marketing itself as an alternative to a professional examination. It's unlikely to stand up in court.

By Anna North | Updated Sep 6, 2019, 11:27am EDT



(9/25) These are some victim advocacy orgs have criticized MeToo Kits:

- Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- End Rape on Campus
- New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault
- The Aurora Center (my old org)
- National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
- HAVEN
- CAPPA

Madison Campbell, the founder of MeToo Kit Company, told KARE 11 over the phone late Wednesday that the product offers an alternative to victims, who may find the exam and reporting process daunting after the trauma of a sexual assault.

However, representatives for the Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education, the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) and the Sexual Violence Center each told KARE 11 that the at-home kit could pose a series of problems for victim-survivors of sexual assault and rape. They argue a kit performed at home could be a dangerous alternative to a forensic exam conducted by a trained professional at a hospital emergency room, and they say it could jeopardize law enforcement investigations by disrupting chain of custody.

After Michigan's attorney general sent a cease-and-desist letter to the company last week, a spokesperson for Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison confirmed on Wednesday his office is aware of the MeToo Kit. Ellison spoke with MNCASA about the kit earlier this week.

(10/25) Governments have also sharply rebuked MeToo Kits:

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel issued a cease-and-desist to MeToo Kits under the Michigan Consumer Protection Act--arguing that MeToo Kits "misleads victims."

https://t.co/EO0Xpcx1Q6

An at-home evidence kit does not address the health care needs of many sexual assault survivors. It assumes the only reason a collection is made is for evidentiary purposes at trial. However, the medical examination is significantly important because it can identify and treat injuries and provide medications for the prevention and treatment of pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and injuries. Medical professionals can also help victims identify resources for emotional support.

Your marketing campaign also assumes and misleads victims into thinking that they are collecting all the evidence that could be collected from the assault. Medical forensic examinations involve the taking of photographs, documentation of injuries, and an anatomically thorough investigation by a qualified professional in an appropriate

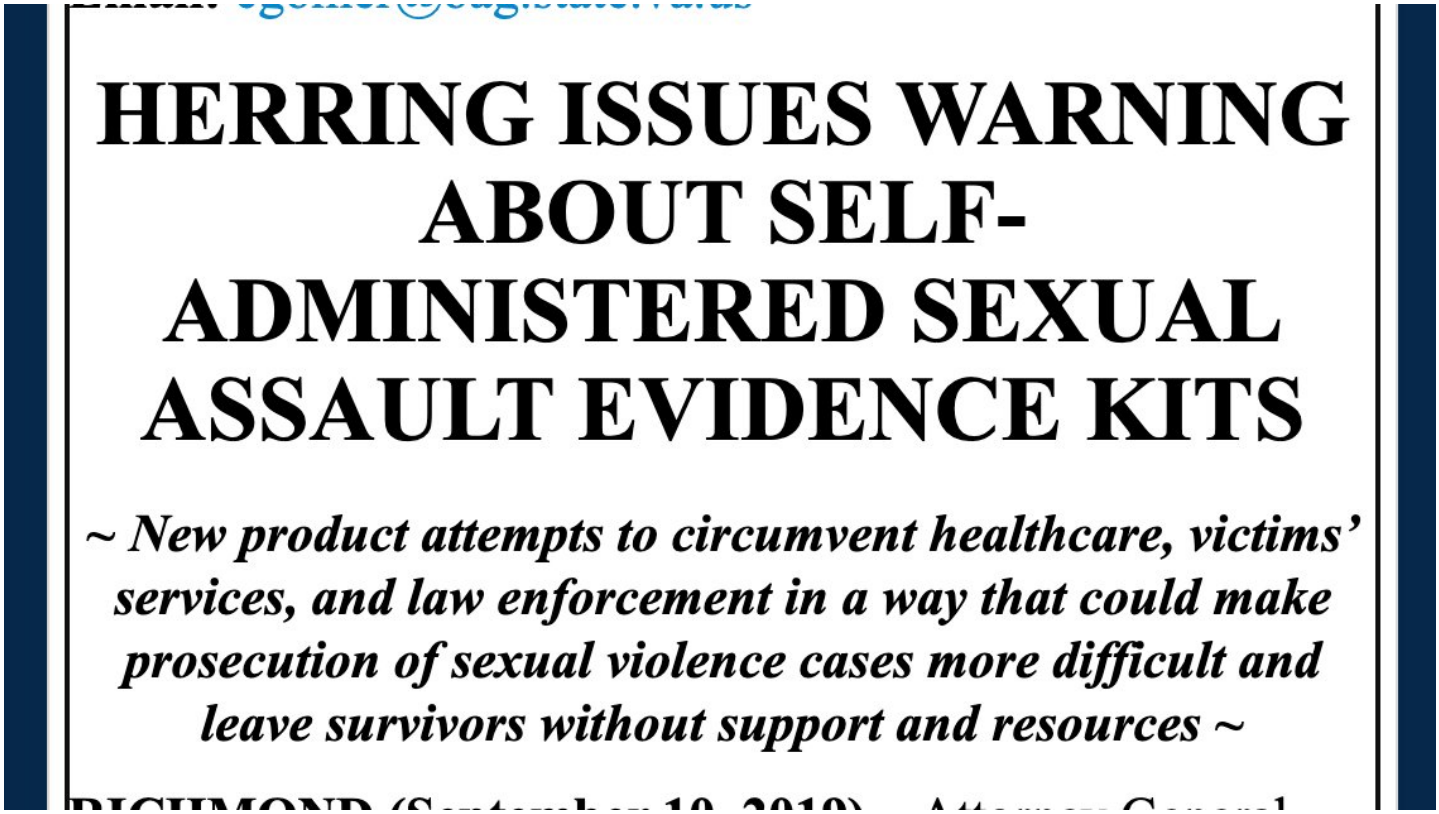
(11/25) MeToo Kits received similar responses from attorneys general in Virginia, North Carolina, New York, and Oklahoma--and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

https://t.co/P6K9tmoBhU

https://t.co/5dFHnXoiJ5

https://t.co/IhQk5Ffw04

https://t.co/BJhHPp7d74



HERRING ISSUES WARNING ABOUT SELF-ADMINISTERED SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE KITS

~ New product attempts to circumvent healthcare, victims' services, and law enforcement in a way that could make prosecution of sexual violence cases more difficult and leave survivors without support and resources ~

(12/25) Even members of Congress have responded.

Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia and 15 colleagues sent a letter to Madison and MeToo Kits warning about the medical and legal issues of DIY rape kits.

https://t.co/TPC64uSmuD

Madison Campbell
CEO and founder of MeToo Kit
370 Jay Street, 7th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11202

Dear Ms. Campbell:

We write to express our profound concerns about your product called the "MeToo Kit", the at-home rape kit including DNA collection tools and packaging. Our alarms relate to the for-profit nature of this product, considering sexual assault forensic exams are currently provided at no cost to survivors seeking care, and its risks of diverting victims of sexual violence from the support and resources they need to recover through professionally provided, trauma-informed care.

One in 6 women in the United States will be sexually assaulted[1]. Only one-fourth of those cases will ever be reported – and even less so on college campuses[2]. Even in instances where survivors choose to report, they frequently face additional steps that might deter them from seeking help. Sexual violence is an issue that cannot be ignored. The current system must be fixed, but we

(13/25) Campbell never says out loud that victims shouldn't go to the hospital,

but as per the attorneys general and district attorneys, she doesn't have to.

The kits are misleading nonetheless.

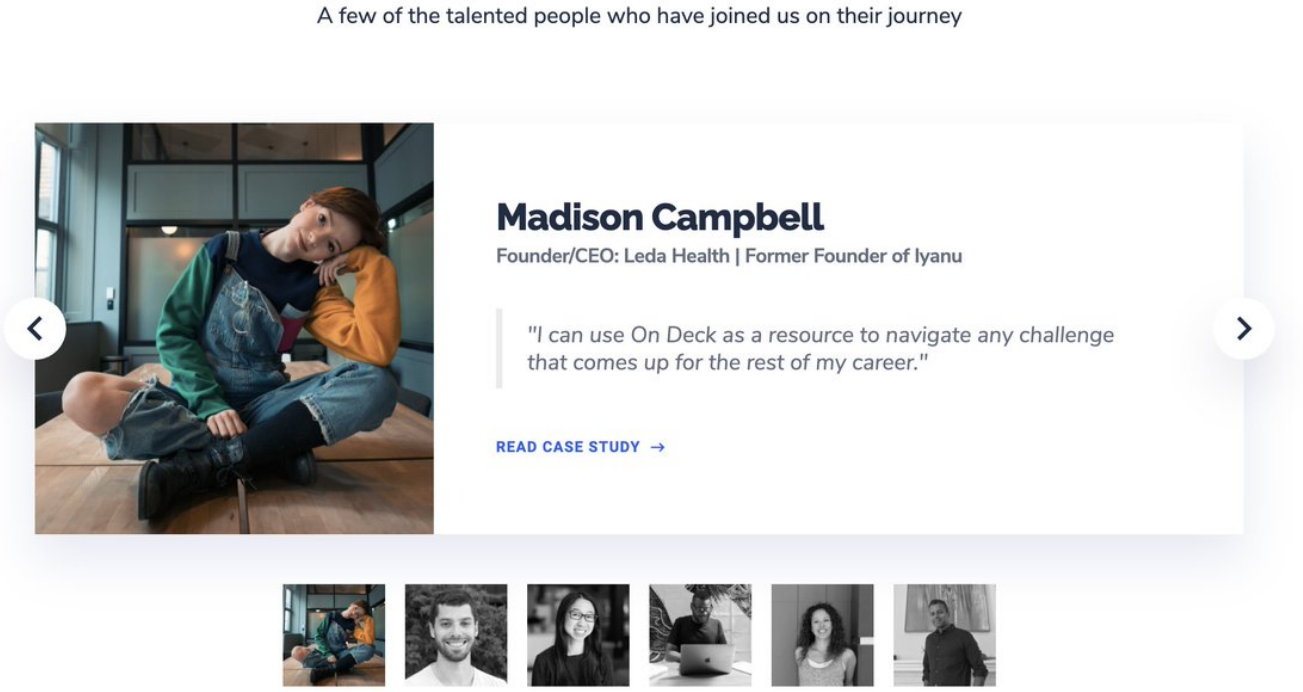
(14/25) While victim advocates, law enforcement officials, and members of Congress aren't falling for Campbell's claims, Silicon Valley tech investors are.

Campbell rebranded "MeToo Kits" to "Leda Health" and started raising money.



(15/25) Campbell is also a member of On Deck (https://t.co/iy7yZpmhlp)--a fellowship aimed at training the tech executives of tomorrow.

They just redesigned their website, and Campbell is a featured case study.



(16/25) When MeToo Kits rebranded to Leda Health, they removed information from their new website.

Later, Campbell insisted in an interview that the kits would be "encrypted and backed with blockchain technology."

as if that were the real problem.

https://t.co/3ZTVBDweA7

How She’s Leading the Industry

Leda Health poses both a hardware and software solution, starting with a patent-pending tamper-proof device that aims at protecting the chain of custody while preserving time-sensitive forensic evidence crucial in sexual assault cases. The device works alongside a HIPAA compliant guidance and documentation platform, encrypted and backed with blockchain technology. They have secured partnerships with an STI testing partner as well as Plan B to provide survivors holistic care after an assault. All of Leda’s services utilize technology and innovation built for survivors, by survivors - transforming a market that has remained antiquated in over 50 years.

(17/25) Blockchains are a solution for establishing chains of custody for digital assets like Bitcoin

but they don't solve the chain of custody issue for biological evidence of a crime.

(18/25) The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner serves as an approximately neutral party and the hospital is physically secure enough to guard against tampering.

DIY kits or "the blockchain" will **NEVER** achieve this, and Campbell is being misleading about this to raise money.

(19/25) It's not clear if Leda Health has pivoted away from selling fake rape kits, but what little public evidence is still available indicates they haven't.

Last August, they applied for a USPTO trademark for marketing rape kits.

https://t.co/iJi2VqBZeq



(20/25) There is also Campbell's Twitter, where she is building the rape kits "in public."

#BuildInPublic



(21/25) But even if they have pivoted,

given Madison Campbell's commitment to selling inadmissible kits

even after being censured by law enforcement officials and members of Congress,

we can't trust her to not break the law in the future.

(22/25) The way to improve the system is to train more Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and increase the throughput for processing cases.

DIY kits or the goddamn "blockchain" are false flags. Their marketing misleads rape victims and is a danger to the justice system.

(23/25) Law enforcement action against the company, like the cease-and-desist from the Michigan Attorney General, did not stop Campbell from continuing on a path that may harm rape victims and possibly violate US law.

(24/25) This might be a legal fantasy, but I think the only solution is for the government to pierce the corporate veil

and pursue individual criminal charges against founders Madison Campbell and Liesel Vaidya.

(25/25) And for the investors?

They're all people I respect. I hope they aren't mad at me. I'm assuming they just didn't know what they were getting into.

But as a philosopher once said,

the road to... tampering evidence in rape cases... is paved with good intentions.