

*Sexual Violence is the use of sexual actions and words that are unwanted by and/or harmful to another person. Some common terms that are used interchangeably with sexual violence are **sexual abuse and sexual assault.***

Some Key Terms

Sexual Consent: Free and active agreement, given equally by both partners, to engage in a specific sexual activity. **Consent is not present when *either partner:***

- fears the consequences of not consenting (including use of force)
- feels threatened or intimidated
- is coerced (*see below*)
- says no, either verbally or physically (e.g., crying, kicking or pushing away)
- has disabilities that prevent the person from making an informed choice
- is incapacitated by alcohol or drugs
- lacks full knowledge or information of what is happening
- is not an active participant in the activity
- is below the legal age of consent

Sexual Coercion: Compelling someone to submit to an unwanted sexual act by intimidating, threatening, misusing authority, manipulating, tricking, or bribing with actions and words. When a person is **coerced, she or he has not given consent.**

*Please note these are working definitions and not legal definitions.

Types of Sexual Violence

There are many types of sexual violence. Although not all inclusive, the following are examples:

Rape: *Sexual assault involving some type of penetration which occurs through force or threat of force; emotional coercion, lack of consent or inability of the victim to provide consent due to age, intoxication or mental status.*

Date Rape or Acquaintance Rape: *A sexual assault committed by someone the victims knows. Among college students approximately half of all rapes are committed by someone the victim knows. Less than 20% of rapes are committed by someone the victim does not know.*

Ritual Sexual Abuse: *An organized form of sexual abuse, frequently involving numerous perpetrators and victims. Groups who perform ritual abuse use their beliefs to justify their practices; the abuse is used to control and condition victims. Ritual abuse occurs regularly and/or in a formalized or systematic manner, and often involves mind control, drugs, torture, child sexual abuse, rape, violent pornography, and prostitution.*

Sexual harassment as defined by Crowder includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of instruction, employment, or participation in other College activity;
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making academic or personnel decisions affecting an individual; or
- c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive College environment.

ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES:

- One in eight college women are raped
- 84% of women knew their assailant
- 57% of those rapes happened on a date
- 90% of rape involving college students is considered acquaintance rape, meaning it was committed by someone the victim knew (date, casual friend, coworker, general acquaintance, family member)

A survey of 6159 college students enrolled at 32 institutions in the U.S. found:

- 54% of the women surveyed had been the victims of some form of sexual abuse
- 57% of the assaults occurred on dates
- 73% of the assailants and 55% of the victims had used alcohol or other drugs prior to the assault
- 25% of the men surveyed admitted to some degree of sexually aggressive behavior
- 42% of the victims told no one

In a survey of male college students:

- 35% anonymously admitted that, under certain circumstances, they would commit rape if they believed they could get away with it
- One in 12 admitted to committing acts that met the legal definition of rape
- 84% of men who committed rape did not label it as rape
- 43% of college-age men admitted to using coercive behavior to have sex , including ignoring a woman's protest, using physical aggression, and forcing intercourse
- 15% acknowledged they had committed acquaintance rape, and of these 11% acknowledged using physical restraints to force a woman to have sex.

Alcohol and Sexual Violence

While more than ½ of the individuals committing sexual assaults were under the influence of alcohol, sexual assaults do not occur because of alcohol. David Hanson, Ph.D. conducted a study to show that people who have been drinking could control their behavior if they wanted to.

The study involved research volunteers to press a button when told to do so by a computer screen and were also told not to do so if a red light appeared. Those given alcohol were more likely to press the button even when there was a red light telling them to stop. HOWEVER, when those drinking were offered a small reward they were able to perform as well as the volunteers who were not drinking. So “the alcohol made me do it” does not appear to be valid.

Myths About Victims of Sexual Violence

- A person cannot be raped by his or her partner or spouse.
- If she's wearing a short skirt, or flirting, she's asking for sex.
- Only young, attractive girls and women get sexually violated.
- People who are drunk or high have no one to blame but themselves when they get raped.
- People with disabilities do not experience sexual violence.
- Infants and young children do not get sexually abused.
- Men only get raped if they are gay.
- People who are bought and sold for money or drugs are asking to be sexually violated.
- Lots of people claim they were sexual abused when they never were.
- I could get out of a dangerous situation if I really wanted to.
- No one will believe that I was sexually abused, even if I tell.

Some Things We Know

- People are **most often victimized by someone they know, love, live with, or trust.**
- No one is **ever responsible for being a victim.** The person who acts in sexually violent ways is **always responsible.**
- Everyone has the right to say "no" to sexual contact.
- People may want attention, affection, even sexual intimacy; but no one wants to be sexually violated.
- Older people, people with disabilities, and children may be especially vulnerable to being sexually victimized.
- Men and women of any sexual orientation can be victims of sexual violence.
- According to the FBI, only 2 or 3 of every 1000 cases of sexual assault are "false reports."
- People often cannot, or don't know how to get out of dangerous situations.
- There are no guarantees that victims will be believed when they disclose abuse, but it is important for them to find someone who will listen and help.

Sexual violence is never the fault of the victim, even if he or she:

- Did not say no
- Did not fight
- Initiated the contact
- Did not tell
- Felt sexual sensations
- Accepted gifts or money

*None of these behaviors or reactions constitutes **consent**.*

National Statistics on Sexual Victimization

- **# Every 6 minutes, one rape is reported in the United States** (compared with one murder every 27 minutes).¹
- **# An estimated 1.1 million people over age 12 were victims of rape and sexual assault in 1992. This compares with approximately 500,000 people who were physically injured by drunk drivers.**²
- **# Nearly 18% of American women, and 3% of American men, report having been victims of completed or attempted rape during their lifetimes.** ³
- **# In one national survey, 84% of women who disclosed that they had been raped never reported their rapes to the police.**⁴
- **# In a national study of college students, 27.5% of the females reported that, since they were 14 years old, they had experienced an act that could be considered rape (based on the legal definition of rape).** ⁵
- **# Only 3 out of 10 reported rapes/sexual assaults reported to law enforcement are committed by strangers (compared to 7 out of 10 robberies.)**⁶
- **# While most rape victims are female, men and boys are also victimized by this crime. In 1995, 31,979 males age 12 and older reported being victims of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault.** ⁷
- **# Every year approximately 1 million women and 371,000 men are victims of stalking.**³
- **# In 1997, 15,889 charges of sexual harassment were filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and with local and state Fair Employment Practices Agencies around the country.**⁸
- **# In a nationwide survey, 56% of women responding had received at least one obscene phone call, 16% within the last six months.**⁹

1 Federal Bureau of Investigations (1997); 2 Miller, Cohen And Wiersema (1996); 3 Tjaden and Thoennes (1998); 4 Kilpatrick, Edmunds, and Seymour (1992); 5 Koss, Gidycz and Wisniewski. (1987); 6 Bureau of Justice Statistics (1996); 7 Rand (1998); 8 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1998); 9 Katz (1994)

Lower Your Risk – Tips for Women

- **“NO” ALWAYS MEANS “NO”.** Have your words and actions communicate the same message. Know your limits and communicate them. Don’t assume. Tell your date what you do and don’t feel comfortable with and stick to it.
- “Stop it. I am not enjoying this” – Don’t beat around the bush!!! Be direct, firm and forceful in your communication. Don’t allow passivity to be interpreted as permission.
- If someone is doing something you don’t like or you are not comfortable – **IT IS NOT THE TIME TO BE POLITE**, especially if you are just trying to avoid making a scene. Yell, Run, or escape from being attacked. If he does not care about not hurting your feelings, you should not worry about hurting his.
- If it feels uncomfortable, leave. Be responsible for your own rescue, if things start to get out of hand, be loud, leave and go for help.
- Alcohol and drugs are related to acquaintance rape. Make sure you are around people you know and trust if you are going to drink. If you are drinking alcohol, know your limitations. Have a plan for getting home and don’t count on other to “take care” of you. Always carry cab fare.
- Trust your gut-feelings. If you think something is “off” with your date, either confront them or leave. If a situation feels bad or if you are feeling pressured, remove yourself from the situation.
- If walking at night, stay in brightly lit areas. Always good to have a buddy to walk with you.
- Create a buddy system so friends know where you are at and whom you are with. If you are studying or taking a break in your car, always make sure to lock the doors and sound the horn for help.
- Be careful who you invite into your home or whose home you go into. Most rapes occur in the home of the attacker or victim.

Be Extra Cautious

- Of individuals buying you drinks. You may be getting setup as a future victim. Friendly actions allow him to gain your trust and then your drink is spiked with a knockout drug. He sexually assaults you and you wake up not being able to remember anything or where you are at.
- When a guy you met at a friend's last night shows up at your door. Let him know you are busy and can meet him in a few minutes (in the cafeteria, lobby, student center, etc.). Pick somewhere public. Do not invite him into your room.

Lower Your Risk – Tips for Men

- Rape is never OK – “NO” ALWAYS MEANS “NO”. Moving forward when a person has stated NO is rape, regardless of what they are implying.
- If you are not sure if your partner wants to or not, or the signals are simply confusing: STOP. ASK. CLARIFY. If she is unsure, suggest talking about it. Always ask for clarification if you are getting mixed messages. Don’t “assume” or “read into things”, make sure you ask and clarify. It will only take you a couple of minutes to clarify whether she wants to move forward, but it can take you a years to clear up a rape charge. Take the time to ASK and CLARIFY.
- Never assume. Just because you feel comfortable with a certain level of intimacy does not mean your partner does also. Don’t equate her level of affection as a desire for intercourse. Your partner may be interested in sexual contact but not necessarily intercourse. Agreeing on sexual activities you want to share is a good idea.
- Just because you want to have sex with her does not mean she wants to have sex with you. Be aware of what it is she wants. Don’t let your desire cloud the situation. Your desire may be beyond your control but your actions are not.
- Don’t take it personally when you get turned down for sex. Anger and rejection should not cloud your judgment. Keep in mind she is not rejecting you, she is simply letting you know she does not want to participate in the act of sex.
- It is still rape if they can’t give consent. Having sex with someone who is intoxicated, drugged, passed out , not in control of themselves, or any other reason for being incapable of giving informed consent is rape.
- “But I was Drunk” – is not an excuse. You are responsible for your actions.

Reporting a Sexual Assault

To Report a sexual assault that just occurred to you or someone you know call 911

Go to the hospital and tell emergency personnel that you have been sexually assaulted. Take the clothes you were wearing during the attack. Don't shower or bathe before you go. It is best to report IMMEDIATELY.

To Report sexual assaults to campus officials contact Campus Safety and Security 417.455.5744 or the Vice President of Student Affairs 417.455.5636.

Report sexual harassment or other types of Title IX grievances to the Vice President of Student Affairs 417.455.5636. Please check Student Handbook for Title IX grievance procedures