

## Reduce Your Risk of Sexual Assault

While you can never completely protect yourself from sexual assault, here are some things you can do to help reduce your risk of being assaulted.

- Educate yourself. Knowledge is power.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Always have an escape route in mind.
- Travel with a trusted friend.
- Avoid secluded areas. Don't allow yourself to be isolated from others.
- Develop a code word with family and friends to use when feeling uncomfortable, in trouble, or if you wish to leave.
- Don't accept drinks from people you don't know or trust.
- Don't leave your drink unattended.
- Avoid intoxication (alcohol & drugs) in social settings.
- Know your sexual boundaries/limits, state them clearly, and stick to them.
- Trust your instincts. If you are uncomfortable or feel unsafe, GET OUT as quickly as possible!

If you choose to engage in sexual activity, check with your partner to see that they are also a willing participant. Consent is the major issue in rapes, the following are examples of non consent:

- Intoxication - intoxicated individuals can not give consent.
- Minors or vulnerable adults can not give consent.
- Saying NO...no always means no, even if you think your partner is being playful, ask.
- Pushing away from hugs, kisses or other sexual advances.

**Sex without consent is sexual assault.**

## The Facts

- 1 in 6 American women and 1 in 33 American men are survivors of a completed or attempted rape.
- 90% of sexual assaults are committed by someone the survivor knows.
- Females ages 16-19 are 4 times more likely to be victims of sexual assault.
- Alcohol is the most common drug used in drug facilitated rapes.

## Victims of rape are:

- 3 times more likely to suffer from depression.
- 6 times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.
- 13 times more likely to abuse alcohol.

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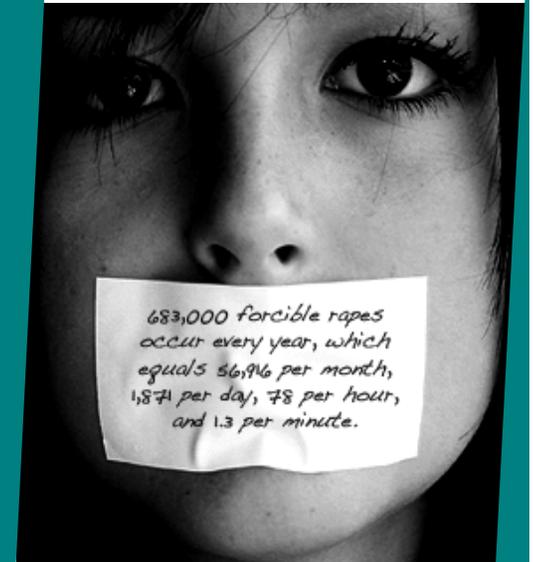
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24-Hour Crisis Line: 1-800-440-4633

Serving Dakota, Dixon, Cedar, Thurston, and Wayne Counties.

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## End the Silence



## on Sexual Violence

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Call toll-free

**1-800-440-4633**

**Advocates are available 24 hours a day to speak with you confidentially.**

## What Is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault is forced, manipulated or coerced sexual contact. It includes rape, child sexual abuse, same-sex assault, acquaintance rape, drug facilitated rape, harassment and marital rape.

Rape is not about uncontrollable sexual urges; it is an attack to inflict physical and emotional violence and humiliation on the victim. The perpetrator exerts power and control over the victim using sex as a weapon.

Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault. Women, men and children of all ages, races, income levels and levels of education, can be victimized.

## Normal Responses to Sexual Assault

- Fear and anxiety
- Depression, sadness
- Loss of control, powerlessness
- Flashbacks, nightmares and triggers
- Trouble concentrating
- Self-blame, shame and guilt
- Embarrassment, feeling exposed
- Anger and rage
- Negative self-image, feeling “dirty”
- Suicidal thoughts
- Withdrawal from people and activities
- Changes in sexuality, intimacy

## If You Have Been Sexually Assaulted

- Sexual assault is a CRIME, and a violation of your body. It is NEVER YOUR FAULT! No matter your actions, dress, or intoxication level. Sex without consent is sexual assault.
- Sexual assault is motivated by the perpetrator’s need for power and control; a need to control, humiliate and harm.
- You are not required to report the incident to law enforcement.
- If you wish to report to law enforcement, evidence must be collected from your body, clothing & the location of the assault. Do not change, move or wash anything that may provide evidence.
- It is important that you seek medical attention for treatment of possible sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy and physical injuries.
- It is important that you talk with an advocate or see a mental health professional trained to handle issues specific to sexual assault. If you have thoughts of suicide or self-harm contact a mental health professional immediately.

## Consent

Consent is when someone agrees, gives permission or says yes to sexual activity with someone else. At the heart of consent is the idea that every person, man or woman, has a right to personal sovereignty – not to be acted upon by someone else in a sexual manner unless he or she gives clear permission to do so. It is the responsibility of the person initiating the sexual activity to attain consent. Being verbally, emotionally, psychologically, or physically pressured into any kind of sexual activity is not consent.

## How to Help A Sexual Assault Victim

- BELIEVE! BELIEVE! BELIEVE!  
It takes a lot of courage for a victim to open up and say that s/he has been sexually assaulted, please believe them.
- Listen without making judgment  
Do not ask questions that would blame the victim for the incident. Sexual Assault is NEVER the victims fault.
- Take care of yourself  
Being aware of your own needs and being healthy is the best way to be strong for a friend.
- Make a referral  
Specialized training is needed to assist victims in their recovery. It is best to refer them to a Haven House advocate or a professional counselor and encourage them to seek medical attention.
- Respect your friend  
Respect your friend’s choices and their right to privacy. Information shared with you is shared in confidence and there is no requirement to report (unless the victim is under 16 and the perpetrator is over 19).