



Security On Campus, Inc.

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SAFE ON CAMPUS PEER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Study Guide/ Handout to accompany:

Breaking the Silence

*An educational video about sexual assault
(20 minute running time)*

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**N.B. We recommend making copies of this study guide to distribute to all participating students.*

BREAKING THE SILENCE

UNDERSTANDING RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

DEFINITIONS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND RAPE

SEXUAL ASSAULT:

Any sexual act against your will, without your consent, or when you are unable to freely give your consent

*Includes rape, sodomy (forced anal intercourse), oral copulation (forced oral-to-genital contact), and sexual battery (the unwanted touching of any intimate part of another person for the purpose of sexual arousal).

RAPE:

Any sex act involving penetration of any body opening by any object, that is against your will, without your consent, or when you are unable to freely give your consent.

Both of the following instances are sexual assaults:

1. SEXUAL ACTIVITY THAT OCCURS AGAINST YOUR WILL:

Implies that one partner said 'no' to a sexual act, or gave another verbal or nonverbal indication such as pushing away or looking away, that indicated that such sexual contact was unwanted.

2. SEXUAL ACTIVITY THAT OCCURS WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT:

Implies that one partner did not agree- in other words, did not say 'yes'- to a sexual act. Importantly, one cannot give consent if he or she is mentally incapacitated. This means if someone is drunk, they **cannot give legal consent**, even if they say "yes" to the sex act.

WHAT IS CONSENT?

CONSENT SHOULD BE BOTH:

1. **Informed-** meaning that the person being acted upon **knows** what is happening
2. **Mutual-** meaning that both parties have equal input, and they both want to participate in a given sexual act

Silence is **not** an indication of consent; being quiet is often an expression of fear or shock.

YOU ARE UNABLE TO GIVE CONSENT WHEN:

- You are intoxicated
- You are passed out
 - You are forced
- You are bound or gagged
 - You are coerced
- You are below the legal age of consent (consent laws vary by state)
 - You are threatened
 - You are high or drugged
- You are mentally incapacitated in some other way (e.g. mentally handicapped)
 - You feel you have no control of the situation

**WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE
SEXUALLY ASSAULTED**

1. Find a safe environment- anywhere away from the attacker. Ask a trusted friend to stay with you for moral support.
2. Preserve evidence of the attack- don't shower, bathe, douche, or brush your teeth. Write down all the details you can remember about the attack & the attacker.
3. Get medical attention. Even with no physical injuries, it is important to determine the risk of STDs and / or pregnancy.
4. To preserve forensic evidence, ask the hospital to conduct a rape kit exam. This does NOT mean you have to press charges.
5. If you suspect you may have been drugged, ask that a urine sample be collected. The sample will need to be analyzed later on by a forensic lab.
6. Report the rape to law enforcement authorities. A counselor can provide the information you need to understand the process.
7. Remember that it wasn't your fault.
8. Recognize that healing from rape takes time. Give yourself the time you need.



Know that it's never too late to call:
Even if the attack happened years ago, the National Sexual Assault Hotline can still help. Many victims don't realize they need help until months or years later.

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT AND RAPE

- 1.) **THE PRIMARY MOTIVE FOR RAPE IS SEXUAL. Myth.** The motive for rape is aggression and power, NOT SEX. Rapists have a desire to dominate, humiliate and degrade their victims.
- 2.) **SEXUAL ASSAULTS ARE USUALLY PLANNED. Fact.** The assailant plans most sexual assaults in advance. The act is premeditated but the specific *victim* tends to be chosen at random based on his/her availability or vulnerability.
- 3.) **WOMEN ARE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BECAUSE THEY ASK FOR IT. Myth.** Society often attempts to shift the burden of blame from the assailant to the victim by implying that “she asked for it.” Being victimized or targeted has no connection to one’s dress or ‘provocative manner.’ The apparent shift of blame directs attention to the victim’s behavior and away from the offender’s actions, thereby absolving the assailant of his/her responsibility for the attack.
- 4.) **MOST REPORTED SEXUAL ASSAULTS ARE TRUE. Fact.** Almost all reported sexual assaults are true, with very few exceptions. FBI crime statistics indicate that of assaults reported, only 2% are false; this is comparable to other major crime reports.
- 5.) **MOST SEXUAL ASSAULTS ARE NOT REPORTED TO THE POLICE. Fact.** Although estimates of sexual assaults vary, sources agree that a very low percentage, for example, less than one-third, is actually reported. Based on the statistics, one can conclude that sexual assaults remain underreported to a vast degree.
- 6.) **ONLY CERTAIN TYPES OF WOMEN ARE RAPED. Myth.** Any woman or man can be sexually assaulted, regardless of age, appearance, social status or race.

*Adapted from Council on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (www.safefromabuse.com)

MINIMIZE YOUR RISK OF SEXUAL ASSAULT (A GUIDE FOR MEN AND WOMEN)

- Know your individual rights.
 - Read the **Sexual Assault Victims Bill of Rights**.
<http://www.securityoncampus.org/victims/billofrights.html>
- Know how alcohol and drug use impacts your own and others' behavior.
- Pay attention to what is happening around you.
- Think about what you want in a relationship. Respect yourself and partner. Communicate your limits clearly.
- Be aware of stereotypes that prevent you from acting as you would like
 - For example, the stereotype that "Men never turn down sex."
- Act on your own needs and wants without exploiting others.
- If you have been victimized (as a child or adult), seek the support that you need.
- Trust your intuitions.
 - If you feel that your partner is pressuring you into unwanted sex, s/he probably is.
- Use positive peer pressure to help stop abusive behaviors that may lead to sexual assault.
 - For example, if you see or overhear someone at a party being disrespectful of their partner, speak up!



Information adapted from www.rainn.org, www.safefromabuse.com, Ithaca Rape Crisis Center, Columbia/Barnard Rape Crisis Center

HOW TO BE SAFE ON FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, ETC.

Social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace are often targets for stalkers and other predators, because of the wealth of personal information available.

DON'T post personal information, such as your dorm room, phone #, or address.

If using these sites to plan a party, DON'T post the location publicly. Message your friends privately to discuss the exact details.

DON'T post your class schedule or other routine. Doing so helps potential stalkers or predators find you.

DON'T post incriminating information or photos on. This information is available for college admissions counselors, employees, etc. Schools have even been known to cross-reference Facebook profiles with character-based scholarships!

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND

WHO HAS BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

1. Offer shelter: See that the victim has a safe place to stay and does not have to be alone until he or she is ready.
2. Be supportive: Offer emotional comfort and support. Encourage expression of feelings without judgment. Don't ask for details, but be willing to listen if the victim wants to talk. If you are not comfortable listening empathetically, help the victim find someone who is.
3. Encourage action: GENTLY encourage getting medical attention, seeking counseling, and / or making a report (even if the assault occurred some time ago). Do NOT attempt to force the victim to file a report. Rape / sexual assault involve a loss of control for the victim; so, do not attempt to take from them any remaining control.
4. Be reassuring. No matter what, rape is NEVER the victim's fault.
5. Some things you can say to someone who has been assaulted:



“I believe you.”

“You survived- you did the best you could under the circumstances.”

“It's not your fault. Nothing you did or could have done could possibly justify what happened.”

“I'm so sorry it happened to you.”

“This does not change how I feel about you.”

“What can I do to help you?”

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REMEMBER THAT SEXUAL ASSAULT HAPPENS IN ALL COMMUNITIES, AND TO ALL TYPES OF PEOPLE.

MALE SURVIVORS, SURVIVORS FROM DIVERSE CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS, LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER VICTIMS OR SURVIVORS MAY EXPERIENCE ADDITIONAL BURDENS OF STEREOTYPES, RACISM, HOMOPHOBIA AND OTHER OPPRESSIONS OFTEN LEAVING THEM FEELING EVEN MORE ISOLATED, CONFUSED OR FRIGHTENED.

The person may be even less likely to come forward for this reason.

SHOCKING STATISTICS

- ◆ LESS THAN 1 IN 20 COMPLETED OR ATTEMPTED CAMPUS RAPES ARE REPORTED.
- ◆ ONLY 1 IN 100 REPORTED CAMPUS RAPES ARE PROSECUTED.
- ◆ 43% OF COLLEGE-AGE MALES ADMIT TO USING COERCIVE BEHAVIOR TO HAVE SEX.
- ◆ 1 OUT OF EVERY 4-COLLEGE AGE WOMEN WILL BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED DURING HER SCHOOL CAREER.
- ◆ 75% OF MALE STUDENTS AND 55% OF FEMALE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ACQUAINTANCE RAPE HAD BEEN DRINKING OR USING DRUGS.
- ◆ WHEN COMPARED WITH NON-VICTIMS, RAPE VICTIMS HAVE BEEN FOUND TO BE 8.7 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO ATTEMPT SUICIDE.
- ◆ AMONG A SAMPLE OF COLLEGE WOMEN, 13.1% HAD BEEN STALKED DURING THE GIVEN SCHOOL YEAR. FOUR OUT OF EVERY FIVE STALKING VICTIMS KNOW OR ARE ACQUAINTED WITH THEIR STALKER.

The information on this page is provided by the United States Department of Justice – Office of Violence Against Women. (www.usdoj/ovw.gov) and “The Sexual Victimization of College Women”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.securityoncampus.org

www.nsvrc.org

www.safefromabuse.com

www.rainn.org

www.mencanstoprape.org

www.usdoj.gov

www.gmu.edu/facstaff/sexual/contact.html

1-800-656-HOPE

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) Hotline

1-800-999-9999

Free, confidential, and immediate crisis intervention for youth and parents.

1-800-FYI-CALL

National Center for Victims of Crime Help Line: Refers callers to crisis intervention, research information, assistance with the criminal justice process, counseling, and support groups.

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888-251-7959 help line