

Preventing Sexual Assault

Primary Prevention methods seek to stop sexual assault before it occurs. These efforts often include changing cultural attitudes about sexual violence. We can all be a part of primary prevention efforts.*

- If a friend, family member, classmate, or co-worker is abusive or disrespectful to girls and women, don't simply ignore it. If you feel comfortable doing so, try to talk to him/her about it. If you don't know what to do, reach out to someone you trust or contact your local rape crisis center for support.
- Recognize and speak out against transphobia, homophobia, and gay-bashing. This abuse has direct links to sexism and sexual violence.
- Support movies, video games, and musicians that promote positive attitudes and behaviors. Speak out against "entertainment" that condones violence against women and sexual violence.
- Communicate your sexual expectations and respect your partner's boundaries. Engaging in one sexual act does not mean consenting to others. If your partner indicates verbally or non-verbally that s/he is not okay with what is happening, it is your responsibility to STOP what you are doing and check-in with your partner.


Victims do not decide to be victimized. Rapists decide to rape. Whether you were drinking, doing drugs, on a date, or can't remember all of the details, you have the right to get help and to decide whether or not to report the crime.

* Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004.

For more information about sexual assault, contact your local center:

Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault

1120 Lincoln St., Suite 700
Denver, CO 80203
ph. 303.839.9999 • f. 303.839.0019
info@ccasa.org • www.ccasa.org

 <http://www.facebook.com/ccasa.colorado>

 @CCASAColorado

 <http://www.youtube.com/user/CCASAPreventSA>

 <http://www.ccasacolorado.blogspot.com/>

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About Sexual Assault





Sexual violence can affect women, men and children throughout their lives and can be devastating for individuals, families, and communities. However, help is available. Together, we can change the conditions that contribute to sexual violence (NSVRC, 2011).

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault occurs when someone forces or manipulates someone else into unwanted sexual activity without their consent. Sexual assault often does not involve physical injuries (NSVRC, 2011).

There are many forms of sexual violence, including...

- Unwanted touching of body parts or genitals, by someone brushing up against you or direct contact.
- Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors that directly affect your job, school performance or other consequences if rejected; and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Sexual contact of any kind by a helping professional (teacher, doctor, therapist, priest, police officer, and others) toward a client.
- Unwanted or forced sexual intercourse or sexual acts with a friend, partner, spouse, other acquaintance, or stranger when you did not give consent. A previous or current relationship with the person does not matter—if you did not give consent to have anal, vaginal or oral sex, this is sexual assault.

FACTS About Sexual Assault

MOST RAPISTS KNOW THEIR VICTIMS

85% of incarcerated sex offenders knew the person they victimized (Colorado Dept. of Corrections).

90% of college campus rape and sexual assault victims knew their attacker prior to the assault (US Dept. of Justice, 2000).

6 out of 10 rapes are reported by victims to have occurred in their own home or the home of a friend, relative or neighbor (US Dept. of Justice, 1997).

Child victims knew the offender before the attack 90% of the time (Greenfeld, 1996).

RAPE IS A CRIME THAT IS PLANNED AND PREMEDITATED

Rape is not an accident—rapists plan and premeditate their attacks by establishing trust, isolating the victim, providing drugs or alcohol, or otherwise creating vulnerability.

RAPE CAN BE COMMITTED BY A PARTNER OR SPOUSE

Over 50% of sexual assaults against women are perpetrated by current or former partners (NISVS, 2010).

76% of the women who reported being raped after the age of eighteen were victimized by a current or former husband, cohabitating partner, boyfriend or date (National Women's Study, 2006).

49% of transgender survivors of sexual violence were assaulted by a dating or intimate partner (FORGE, 2005).

SEXUAL ASSAULT IS A PREVALENT CRIME THAT AFFECTS ALL PEOPLE

According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 1 in 2 women and 1 in 4 men in Colorado have experienced sexually violent crimes in their lifetime (NISVS, 2010).

Over 50% of transgender individuals are survivors of sexual violence (FORGE, 2005).

Persons with a disability had an age-adjusted rate of rape or sexual assault that was more than twice the rate for persons without a disability (US Bureau of Justice, 2009).

Approximately 80% of female victims experienced their first rape before the age of 25 and almost half before the age of 18--30% between ages 11-17 and 12% before age 10 (NISVS, 2010).

28% of male victims were first raped when they were 10 years old or younger (NISVS, 2010).

If You or Someone You Know Has Been Sexually Assaulted

First steps...

- Get to a safe place and address medical needs.
- Be patient with yourself and/or your loved one. Dealing with this crime can be a long process.
- Understand that there are many responses to this traumatic event. Victims may experience anxiety, depression, panic attacks, flashbacks, memory loss, rage, sleep disturbances, etc.

There are options...

- The victim can call the police and make a report.
- A forensic medical exam collects evidence at a hospital. The victim does not have to cooperate with a police investigation in order to get an exam. The medical forensic exam is at no cost for the victim, but there may be costs for additional services. S/he can also be examined for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or pregnancy.
- If the victim chooses to go to the police, campus security, and/or the hospital, s/he can be accompanied by a friend and/or a victim advocate.
- A victim advocate can confidentially explain options, including victim compensation, the reporting process, forensic exams, counseling and other services. Working with an advocate is of no financial cost to the victim.
- Join a free or low-cost support group or talk to a counselor. Many victims/survivors report feeling better when discussing their assault with others or a trained professional. You can contact CCASA or visit ccasa.org for information about your local resources and Rape Crisis Center.



"Got Consent?" T-shirt available at www.alongwalkhome.org