

# PREVENT SEXUAL ASSAULT

**Primary Prevention** seeks to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. These efforts often include changing cultural attitudes and harmful norms about gender roles and aggression that allow sexual violence to occur. We can all be a part of primary prevention efforts.

- If someone you know is abusive or disrespectful, **don't ignore 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 oppressive attitudes and beliefs. This has direct links to sexual violence.
- Support movies, video games, and musicians that **promote positive attitudes and behaviors**.
- Communicate your sexual expectations and **respect** your partner's boundaries. The responsibility for getting consent falls on the person initiating sexual activity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT,  
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CENTER:



FREEDOM FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**COLORADO COALITION  
AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT  
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UNDERSTANDING  
*unwanted*  
sexual experiences

**WWW.CCASA.ORG**

# WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual assault is **any**  
unwanted sexual experience.\*

It is most often inflicted upon victims through the use of force, threats, manipulation or coercion.

## There are many forms of sexual violence, including:

- Unwanted touching of body parts or genitals.
- Unwelcomed sexual advances; requests for sexual favors that directly affect your job, school performance or other parts of your life, if rejected; and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Unwanted sexual intercourse or sexual acts with a friend, partner, spouse, or another person when you did not give consent.
- Sexual contact of any kind by a helping professional (teacher, doctor, therapist, priest, police officer, and others) toward a client.
- Sexual contact inflicted on someone who is legally unable to grant consent.

\* This is a broad definition. Legal definitions may vary.

## GET THE FACTS

### 1 MOST PERPETRATORS KNOW THEIR VICTIMS

- 90% of college campus rape and sexual assault victims knew their attacker before the assault.<sup>i</sup>
- 3 out of 4 adolescents who have been sexually assaulted were victimized by someone they knew well – a family member, friend, or intimate partner.<sup>i</sup>

### 2 SEXUAL ASSAULT IS A CRIME THAT IS PLANNED & PREMEDITATED

- Sexual assault is not an accident – perpetrators often plan and premeditate their attacks by establishing trust, isolating the victim, using drugs or alcohol, or otherwise creating vulnerability.

### 3 SEXUAL ASSAULT CAN BE COMMITTED BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER

- Over 50% of sexual assaults against women are perpetrated by current or former partners.<sup>iii</sup>
- 49% of transgender survivors of sexual violence were assaulted by a dating or intimate partner.<sup>iv</sup>

### 4 SEXUAL ASSAULT IS A PREVALENT CRIME THAT AFFECTS ALL PEOPLE

- 1 in 2 women and 1 in 4 men in Colorado have experienced sexually violent crimes.<sup>v</sup>
- 28% of male victims were first raped when they were 10-years-old or younger.<sup>vi</sup>
- Over 50% of transgender individuals are survivors of sexual violence.<sup>vii</sup>

## GET SUPPORT

### First Steps

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

### Know Your Options

- If the victim chooses to go to the police, campus security, and/or the hospital, they can be accompanied by a friend and/or a victim advocate.

- A forensic medical exam provides medical care and collects evidence. The victim can also be examined for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or pregnancy. In order to get an exam, the victim does not have to participate with law enforcement. The medical forensic exam is at no cost to the victim, but there may be costs for additional services. Colorado has programs that can help with these costs.
- A victim advocate can confidentially explain options, including reporting options, victim compensation, forensic exams, counseling and other services.
- A victim can visit [ccasa.org](https://ccasa.org) to learn about local resources. Many victims/survivors report feeling better after discussing their assault with others or a trained professional. A local Rape Crisis Center may offer support groups and counseling resources.

### NOTES

<sup>i</sup> US Dept. of Justice, 2000.

<sup>ii</sup> NIJ, 2003.

<sup>iii</sup> NISVS, 2011.

<sup>iv</sup> FORGE, 2005.

<sup>v</sup> NISVS, 2011.

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>vii</sup> FORGE, 2005.