

WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual assault is **any** type of sexual activity to which you **do not consent**.
This can include, but is not limited to, penetration, touching, or
the dissemination of, or exposure to, sexually explicit images.

What is consent?

- Consent is a mutual and clear “yes” to any activity, in this case, sexual activity.
- This includes verbal *and* nonverbal cues.
 - Nonverbal cues include: body language, eye contact, and consciousness.
- Consent is impacted by:
 - Age
 - Sobriety
 - Power imbalance
- Coercion is *not* consent.
 - Coercion is persuading someone to do something using force or threats.
 - If the initial answer was no.... the answer is NO!

DID YOU KNOW?

1 in 3 women



& 1 in 6 men



have experienced some
form of contact sexual
violence in their lifetime



Sexual activity without consent is sexual assault.

WHY DIDN'T THEY FIGHT BACK?

Fighting back may not be an option for a victim. Fight, flight, **and freeze** are all instinctual responses. There is no one right way to respond to sexual assault.

What are some common **myths & facts** about sexual assault?

Myths

- Only women can be sexually assaulted.
- Victims lead on their perpetrators.
- Drinking is a cause of sexual assault.
- A person cannot be sexually assaulted by a spouse or a partner.
- Wearing revealing clothing, behaving provocatively, or drinking a lot means the victim was “asking for it”.
- If a victim of sexual assault does not fight back, they must have thought the assault was not that bad or they wanted it.

Facts

- Sexual assault can happen to anyone, and be perpetrated by anyone, REGARDLESS of gender or sexual identity.
- Sexual assault is NEVER the fault of the victim. Consent is ongoing and can be changed at any time by any party.
- Drinking or drug use can create a vulnerability that a perpetrator can choose to exploit. However, choosing to drink or use drugs does not equal choosing to be sexually assaulted.
- Consent is mandatory — no matter your relationship, even if there has been prior sexual activity.

How can sexual assault **impact** survivors?

DID YOU KNOW?

63%

of sexual assaults are not reported to the police.

- Having experienced an assault can impact a survivor's life no matter when the assault took place; each survivor reacts in their own way.
- Common emotional reactions include guilt, self-blame, fear, shame, shock, numbness, vulnerability, and feelings of isolation.
 - These emotional reactions may be expressed openly or can be controlled by the survivor.
- Physical impacts can include physical injuries, potential for pregnancy, and risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection.
- As people do in other crisis situations, victims of sexual assault may react with fear and confusion. They may have difficulty in problem solving and in mobilizing the strength to accomplish daily tasks. The ability to absorb new information is greatly impaired. People may also make a quick change in living arrangements, may stay in various places, or change their phone number.

Wellspring cares. We are here to help.

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