



## Resources and Frequently Asked Questions

### Resources For You:

Do's and Don'ts in supporting a survivor

<http://knowyourix.org/i-want-to/support-survivor/>

Help Someone You Care About

<https://rainn.org/get-help/help-a-loved-one>

Self-Care for Friends and Family

<https://rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-recovery/tips-for-friends-and-family>

For Friends, Family, and Partners of Rape and Sexual Abuse Survivors

<http://www.pandys.org/secondarysurvivors.html>

College Sexual Assault Prevention: A Parent's Guide

<https://www.noodle.com/articles/college-sexual-assault-prevention-a-parents-guide>

### Resources For Your Student:

Not Alone (*sexual assault*)

<https://www.notalone.gov/>

Stalking Resource Center (*stalking*)

<http://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>

GLBTQ Domestic Violence Project (*domestic violence, sexual violence, LGBTQ*)

<http://www.glbtdvp.org/>

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (*domestic violence*)

<http://www.ncadv.org/>

Men Can Stop Rape (*sexual violence, healthy masculinity*)

<http://www.mencanstoprape.org/>

National Dating Abuse Helpline (*dating abuse*)

<http://www.thehotline.org/2013/02/dating-abuse-resources-for-teens/>

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Love Is Respect (*dating violence, 24-hour hotline*)

<http://www.loveisrespect.org>

One Love Danger Assessment App (*dating violence*)

[http://www.joinonelove.org/my\\_plan\\_app](http://www.joinonelove.org/my_plan_app)

## **Legislation and Legal Resources:**

Know Your IX

<http://knowyourix.org/>

Victim Rights Law Center

<http://www.victimrights.org/>

Office of Civil Rights (OCR)

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

- *Sexual assault can be a difficult topic. How do I begin the conversation with my student?*
- *What should I do if a loved one experiences sexual assault or relationship violence?*
- *Why don't all survivors report?*
- *How common are false accusations?*
- *What are the consequences of sexual assault for the survivor?*
- *What are the consequences of sexual assault for the perpetrator?*
- *What are the consequences of sexual assault for the community?*
- *What should I review at my student's school to understand their policies and resources?*

***Sexual assault can be a difficult topic. How do I begin the conversation with my student?***

Some helpful questions to start the discussion could be:

- Do you know anyone that it has happened to?
- Why do you think it happens so frequently in college?

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- Have you ever had to step in or intervene in a situation? How did you feel? What did you do to intervene?
- Do you and your friends talk about violence on your campus? How?
- What do you think a healthy relationship looks like?
- How do you think you'd know if you were in a relationship that wasn't healthy?

## ***What should I do if a loved one experiences sexual assault or relationship violence?***

As a family member, your loved one may come to you and disclose an experience that they have had. This can be extremely difficult to hear, and you may find yourself experiencing a variety of emotional reactions. While it may be tempting to act on behalf of your loved one, it is important to allow the process to be their own. We encourage you to review the Supporting Survivors section for helpful and validating responses.

## ***Why don't all survivors report?***

Sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are often underreported. Regardless of a why an individual chooses not to report, it is still important to respect their choices and support their process. Taking the step forward to report is ultimately the decision of the survivor.

Reasons for non-reporting vary. Some may include:

- They may be ashamed or embarrassed
- They may consider the incident a personal matter and want to deal with it on their own
- They may not want others to find out
- They may blame themselves for the assault
- They may not want the perpetrator to get into trouble
- They may fear retaliation by the perpetrator
- They may fear not being believed
- They thought they may be blamed for what happened
- They may not consider the assault to be serious enough to report
- They may fear insensitive or negative treatment by authorities
- They may belong to communities that are frequently targets of police violence and do not see law enforcement as a supportive option

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- They may fear that they or others would be punished for other infractions, such as underage drinking
- They may be confused about how to report
- They may not want others to find out what happened
- They may not want to go through the trauma of reliving the assault
- They may not want to participate in the adjudication process

## ***How common are false accusations?***

Research suggests that the prevalence of false accusations of sexual assault is between 2-10%<sup>1</sup>, less than that of burglary. If law enforcement officials factually prove a reported crime never occurred, it is considered a false report. Understanding victim behavior is essential to understanding why false rape claims are not a common problem. There are many legitimate reasons a survivor may give confusing statements to investigators.

Why might a survivor's account have so many inconsistencies?

- Sharing details of the assault may be uncomfortable
- The effects of trauma on the brain, as well as drug or alcohol intoxication, could lead to a foggy memory of the assault
- Survivors may leave out details that they believe could question their credibility, such as drinking
- Survivors may fear incriminating oneself if the assault involved illegal activity
- Survivors may not trust authorities
- Survivors may want to protect the perpetrator if they had a prior relationship or are members of the same group
- Survivors may want to make their report seem more believable and include false details

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<sup>1</sup> National Sexual Violence Resource Center, *False Reporting*, 2012  
[http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications\\_NSVRC\\_Overview\\_False-Reporting.pdf](http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Publications_NSVRC_Overview_False-Reporting.pdf)

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## ***What are the consequences of sexual assault for the survivor?***

Sexual assault can have a range of effects on the survivor. Of immediate concern is a survivor's physical health and safety. Through analyzing EverFi's anonymous student climate surveys, we found that 14% of campus sexual assaults resulted in physical injury, and 5% resulted in sexually transmitted infections.

Long-term effects of sexual assault can be just as serious. We found that 39% of survivors reported that the incident had a negative impact on their schoolwork. Survivors may hold back from participating in class, or they may miss classes, assignments, and tests. These difficulties can result in dropped courses, transfers to other institutions, or withdrawals from school. Consequences also extend beyond the classroom.

According to EverFi data, 48% of survivors reported a negative impact on their social/recreational activities, 56% reported a negative impact on their social relationships, and 64% reported a negative impact on intimate relationships. Mental health can also be affected. Survivors have an increased risk of depression, personality disorders, and suicide. They are also more likely to develop eating disorders and issues with substance abuse and self-harm. Post-traumatic stress can be common.

Given the consequences experienced by survivors, support resources for survivors are vitally important. We encourage you to review the Supporting Survivors section for helpful ways to show support.

## ***What are the consequences of sexual assault for the perpetrator?***

Data from the U.S. Justice Department's Office on Violence Against Women shows that institutions expel 10 -25% of perpetrators found "responsible" for sexual assault.<sup>2</sup> Outside of institutions of higher education, the Department of Justice reports that out of every 100 cases of sexual assault, 32 will get reported to the police, 7 will lead to an arrest, 2 will lead to a felony conviction, and 2 perpetrators will spend one or more days in prison.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, *Report to Congress on the 2012 Activities of Grantees Receiving Federal Funds Under the Grants to Reduce Violent Crimes Against Women on Campus Program*. (2013)

<sup>3</sup> Department of Justice, *Felony Defendants in Large Urban Counties*. (2009)



### ***What are the consequences of sexual assault for the community?***

Sexual assault can greatly impact the college community. It threatens the trust students place in their administrators, and questions their commitment to protecting students. Students may reevaluate how safe they feel on campus, affecting engagement and participation.

Sexual assault can also place a large financial burden on an institution. Title IX and Clery Act requirements ensure that reasonable accommodations be provided to survivors upon request, contributing to potentially substantial administrative overhead and personnel costs for counseling, healthcare, and academic services. Add to this the increased staff time required to investigate sexual assault cases, the costs of litigation that may ensue from these cases (upwards of \$200,000 per suit), and the negative publicity associated with high-profile incidents, and it becomes clear that institutions of higher education have both moral and practical reasons for reducing rates of sexual violence.<sup>4</sup>

### ***What should I review at my student's school to understand their resources and policies?***

- What kind of sexual assault prevention work is the school currently doing?
- What services are offered on campus? Is there a crisis hotline or referrals to off-campus organizations that help students?
- What is the sexual assault policy? (To find, go to the school's website and search for "sexual assault", "sexual assault disciplinary procedures," and "annual crime statistics".)
- Is the process for reporting sexual assault easy to understand? Can students report anonymously?
- What is the judicial process? Is the process explained clearly in the school's policy and procedures?
- Can survivors receive necessary accommodations?
- Who is required to receive sexual violence prevention and response training? How often?
- Does the institution inform students of their rights? How do they do this?
- Do the students have a voice in prevention? Programming? Policy?

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<sup>4</sup> EverFi, *Improving Campus Sexual Assault Prevention: A Best Practice Guide for Administrative Leadership*, 2016 <http://info.everfi.com/rs/410-YCZ-984/images/Guidebook%20-%20Improving%20Campus%20Sexual%20Assault%20Prevention%20-%20A%20Best%20Practice%20Guide%20for%20Administrative%20Leadership.pdf>