



FACT SHEET

SEXUAL ASSAULT

“What is Sexual Assault?”

Sexual violence is any act (verbal and/or physical), which breaks a person's trust and/or safety and is sexual in nature. The term "sexual violence" includes: rape, incest, child sexual assault, ritual abuse, date and acquaintance rape, marital or partner rape, sexual contact, sexual harassment, exposure, and voyeurism.

Sexual assaults are acts of violence where sex is used as a weapon. Assaults are motivated primarily out of anger and/or a need to feel powerful by controlling, dominating, or humiliating the victim. Victims/survivors of sexual assaults are forced, coerced, and/or manipulated to participate in unwanted sexual activity. Victims/survivors do not cause their assaults and are not to blame; offenders are responsible for the assaults.

“How Many Women are Victims of Sexual Assault?”

- In 2000, the National Violence Against Women Survey found that 1 in 6 women has experienced an attempted or completed rape at some time in their lives.
- The 2000 National College Women Sexual Victimization Study estimated that between 1 in 4 and 1 in 5 college women experience completed or attempted rape during their college years.
- Most offenders know their victims. According to the 2000 National Crime Victimization Survey, 62% of rape and sexual assault victims knew the offender.
- Fewer than half (48%) of all rapes and sexual assault are reported to the police (Department of Justice, 2001)

“Sexual Assault in New Mexico.”

- In 2002, there were 2,815 sex crimes reported by participating law enforcement agencies. During the same calendar year, service providers from rape crisis centers and mental health centers served 1,132 victims of sexual assault. (New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository)
- Law enforcement reported that 44% of victims of sexual assault were victimized by age 12 and 79% of attempted sexual assault victims were victimized by age 12. (New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository)
- Acquaintances and boyfriends comprised the greatest proportion of known offenders reported by both law enforcement and services providers. (New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository)

“Where to go for help”

Albuquerque Rape Crisis Center: 266-7711

Santa Fe Rape Crisis Center: 986-9111

Community Against Violence (Taos): 758-8082

Daybreak Center (Aztec): 334-3444

La Pinon Sexual Trauma and Recovery Center (Las Cruces): 526-3437

New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (Albuquerque): 883-8020
Statewide: 1-888-883-8020



For more information on sexual assault prevention and services-

Contact the NM Injury Prevention Section:
(505) 476-7925