

146610

ACQUAINTANCE

RAPE

WHEN THE RAPIST IS SOMEONE YOU KNOW

146610

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TERMS

Victim — The words “victim” and “survivor” are both commonly used to describe a person who is raped. In this booklet, the word “victim” is used, as it is more often associated with a person who was recently assaulted.

Attacker — In this booklet, the person who raped the victim is referred to as the “attacker.”

“She” — In this booklet, the sexual assault victim is referred to as “she” because women are most commonly the victims of sexual assault. Men are also sexual assault victims, and this booklet is for both male and female victims.

Sexual Assault and Rape — The terms “sexual assault” and “rape” are used interchangeably in this booklet.

Photos by Ginny Lee



ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY

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What Is Acquaintance Rape?

Acquaintance rape is a sexual assault crime committed by someone who knows the victim. As a sexual assault crime, acquaintance rape includes forced, manipulated or coerced sexual contact. If someone has forced you to have sex, that is rape — even if you know the attacker.

Here are some facts about acquaintance rape:

- It can happen any time and any place.
- The rapist may be a date, neighbor, boss, colleague, delivery person, repair worker, spouse or anyone else you know.
- A woman is four times more likely to be raped by an acquaintance than by a stranger.
- Most acquaintance rape victims are age 15-24.
- One in four college women were victims of rape or attempted rape while they were students. Eighty-four percent of them knew the rapist. Fifty-seven percent of the rapes happened during a date. (Dr. Mary Koss, researcher at Kent State University)
- Acquaintance rape is rarely reported to police. Less than 2% of acquaintance rape victims report the assault; 21% of women raped by strangers report the crime to police.
- Twelve percent of college men reported that they had physically restrained a woman to gain sexual advantage.

If you are a victim of acquaintance rape, it is important that you take action and tell someone about the assault or abuse. This is an initial step toward recovery. The information in this booklet is intended to aid you with further decisions you will be making.

What Can I Do...

If I Am Raped?

If you have been raped, here are some things you can do.

- Remember that it is not your fault.
- You may want to call a rape crisis center about the assault. A crisis worker can go with you to the hospital, police station and court appointments. The center will also have counselors to talk with you in person or on the phone.
- You may want to get medical attention. If you go to a hospital emergency room within 72 hours, the hospital can collect evidence of the assault. Regardless of when you go to the hospital, you can be examined for injuries and tested for infections and pregnancy.
- You may want to report the crime to the police and pursue prosecution of the offender.

If I Know a Rape Victim?

If you know someone who has been raped, there are ways you can help.

- Be supportive. Do not blame the victim for what has happened to her.
- Listen. Respond to what she says she needs — not what you think she needs.
- Support her in calling a rape crisis center and getting medical attention.
- Offer to help make phone calls for her and drive her to the hospital, police station and rape crisis center.
- Stay with her during the medical examination and interviews, if she wants.
- Do not tell her when she will be “over” the rape.

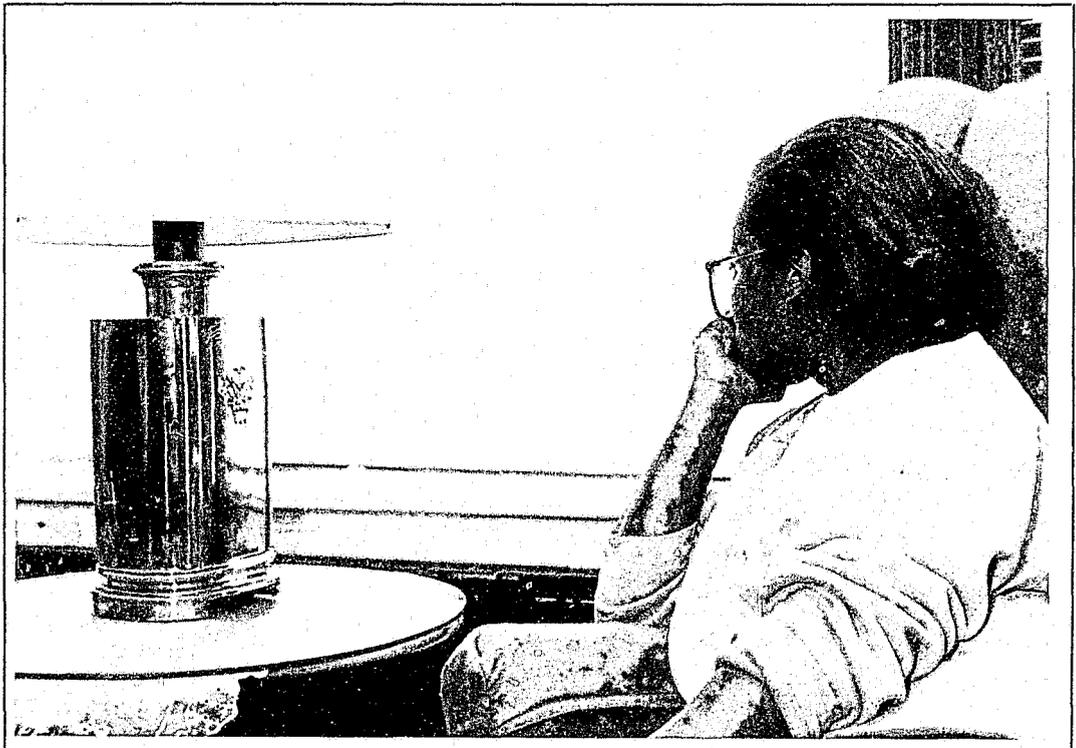
How Does Acquaintance Rape Affect The Victim?

Every victim reacts differently to being raped. Some people think that rape by a stranger is more traumatic than rape by an acquaintance. Research has shown that this is not true.

In cases of acquaintance rape, the victim's trust in someone she knows has been destroyed. Likewise, her trust in her own judgment about people is shaken. A victim may blame herself because she accepted a ride from a friend; because she attended a certain party; because she stopped for a casual conversation; or because she allowed someone into her apartment, dorm room or house. This is why it is so important to be supportive of the victim and to remember the rape is not her fault.

The victim may suffer sleeplessness, nightmares, poor concentration, anxiety, loss of appetite (or over-eating), loss of self confidence, stress-related illness, grief and despair. She may become depressed and withdrawn. She may experience fear and a generalized loss of trust. If she is a student, she may transfer to another school or drop out of school altogether.

Many victims may try to forget about the rape. They may fear that they will not be believed if they tell someone, or they may not identify what happened as rape. Some victims are afraid to report an assault because they were drinking. Often, the victim does not ask for support or counseling as she struggles to recover from the assault.



What If I Am A Male Victim?

As a man, you can be sexually assaulted by an acquaintance. You may be pressured or forced into unwanted sex by a friend, relative, date or other acquaintance. If this happens to you, you are a victim of sexual assault. You are entitled to the same services and legal remedies as any other victim.

If you are sexually assaulted, you may fear that your masculinity is in question. You may ask: Why couldn't I protect myself? Has this ever happened to any other man? If the attacker is a female, you may fear that no one would believe your story or that you would be laughed at.

It is important to remember that sexual assault is a crime. You are not at fault. You are entitled to support — to medical care, legal assistance and counseling. You may want to call a rape crisis center to request assistance in getting these services.

Why Does Acquaintance Rape Happen?

Acquaintance rape happens because the attacker *chooses to force* sex on the victim. There are many reasons why he may do this. He may want to control, punish or humiliate the victim. He may believe he is entitled to sex regardless of what she wants. He may think he can get away with it.

Some men think they have the right to force sex on another person. Research studies reveal that men who rape do not always consider forced sex to be a crime. They often believe they have a right to force sex with a woman they know, even if she says "no."

What About The Role Of Alcohol?

Women should be able to drink or go to a party without fear of rape. Women have as much right as men to go to a party, go out alone, go on a date and drink.

However, women's use of alcohol and drugs is judged to be different from men's. If a woman is raped at a party where she drank too much, she is often blamed for the assault. If she is under the legal drinking age, she may even be arrested. The rapist, on the other hand, is often not held accountable for his violent behavior. He uses drinking as his excuse: "I didn't know what I was doing."

Unfortunately, women are more vulnerable to sexual assault when they are drinking. To be safer, a woman may want to drink moderately and know her limits. She may also want to ask a friend along when going to a party or bar.

Men can also make parties and bars safer for women. Men can stay sober and control their behavior. They can intervene if a woman is being harassed. They can be sure that a woman is not isolated from the group by other men. They can refuse to go along with plans for "getting the woman drunk." They can help an intoxicated woman get home safely.



What Is The Law?

Acquaintance rape is a crime in Illinois. There is no legal difference between sexual assault by a stranger and sexual assault by an acquaintance.

All forms of sexual violence are covered by the Illinois Criminal Sexual Assault Law. *Forced sexual penetration* is a crime. This includes forced intercourse, oral sex and penetration with an object. *Forced sexual conduct* (forced touching and fondling) is also a crime under Illinois law.

Under this law, consent is one thing and one thing only: a clear "YES" to the sexual act in question. If the victim does not fight back, or escape, or endanger her life by resisting the attack, the law does not presume that the victim consented. If the victim knows the offender, the law does not presume consent in that case either.

A sexual assault victim can talk with the police and State's Attorney about prosecution of the case. The sexual assault law gives the State's Attorney many options for prosecuting sex offenders. An attacker can be taken to court for sexual assault regardless of his relationship with the victim.



What Rights Do I Have . . .

In a relationship:

- I have the right to a life without violence.
- I have the right to reject unwanted attention.
- I have the right to change my mind whenever I want to.
- I have the right to be myself without changing to please others.
- I have the right to dress and act seductively without promising to have sex.
- I have the right not to want physical closeness.
- I have the right not to be dominated.
- I have the right to an equal relationship with anyone I choose.
- I have the right to start a relationship slowly.
- I have the right to say, "I want to know you better before I get more involved."
- I have the right to change a relationship when my feelings change. I have the right to say, "We used to be close, but I want something different now."
- I have the right to say "NO."

After an assault:

- I have the right to medical treatment at a hospital emergency room.
- I have the right to report the assault to police.
- I have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity during the criminal justice process.
- I have the right to be notified of court proceedings related to my case.
- I have the right to bring an advocate or other support person to all court proceedings.
- I have the right to restitution.

How Can Communication Help?

Communication between men and women can help stop acquaintance rape. Being aware of what you want, talking together, understanding each other's needs and respecting limits are all part of the struggle to stop sexual assault.

What women can do:

- Know your sexual desires and limits.
- State your desires and limits clearly.
- Be assertive.
- Be aware that your nonverbal actions may send messages that you do not intend to send.
- Pay attention to what is happening around you.
- Trust your intuition. If you feel afraid, say so and get out of the situation.
- Be aware that nothing you do is a guarantee against sexual assault.

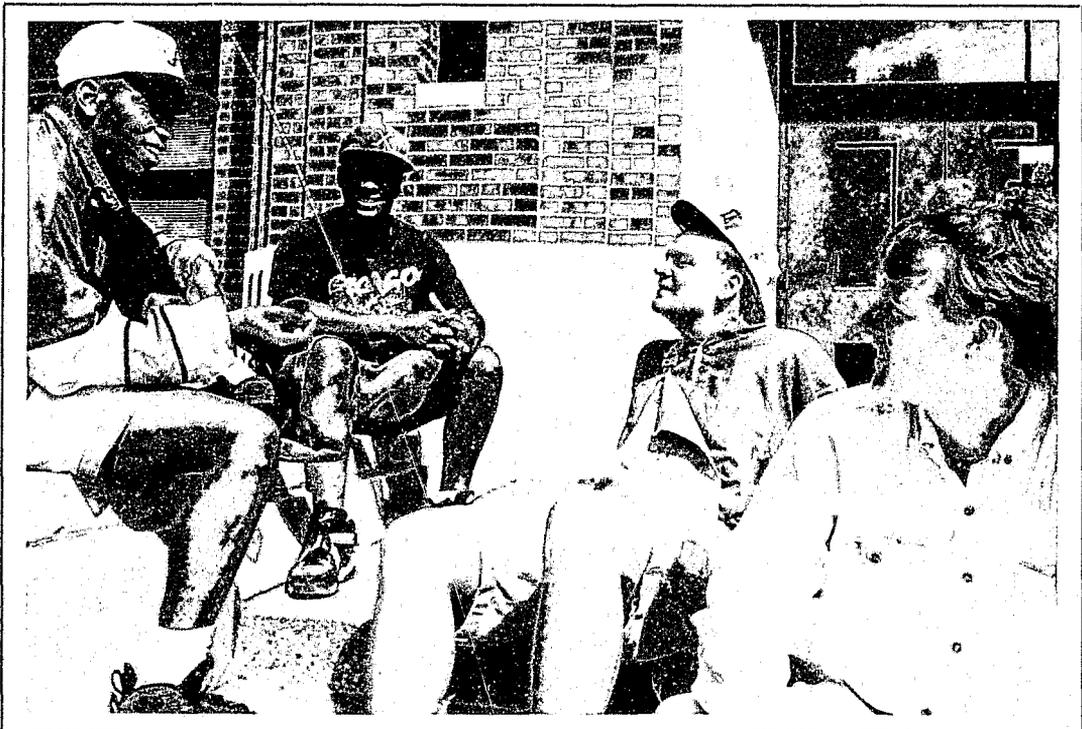
What men can do:

- Know your sexual desires and limits.
- State your desires and limits clearly.
- Accept the woman's limits. Listen to her. Assume she means what she says.
- Do not assume that previous permission for sexual contact means she wants to have sex with you again.
- Understand that being turned down for sex is not a rejection of who you are as a person. It means your partner does not want sex with you at that time.

What Can Men Do To Stop Acquaintance Rape?

We often assume that women are supposed to stop sexual assault. We expect them to change their clothes or behavior or social habits so they will be "safe." But more and more men and women are asking what men can do to make the world safer for women. Here are some ideas for men who want to help stop sexual assault.

- Be sensitive to others. Do not use force to get what you want.
- Don't always assume that you have to start sexual activity. Don't initiate sex if you don't want it.
- Listen to your partner. Believe that "no" means "no."
- Stop woman-hating jokes, sexual harassment and any other form of sexual violence. Spread the message that violence against women is not okay.
- Help stop abusive behaviors which may lead to acquaintance rape. For example, don't use drugs and alcohol at parties. Interrupt conversations that focus on sexual exploitation of women. Speak against peers who brag about their sexual "conquests."
- Participate in activities to stop rape, such as Take Back the Night Marches and peer education programs.
- Volunteer at your area rape crisis center.



What Can Individuals And Communities Do?

All of the following can make communities safer for women:

- Support the victim of acquaintance rape by believing her story and taking the crime seriously.
- Encourage police and campus security officers to take the crime seriously. Urge them to arrest offenders and follow through with prosecutions.
- Encourage State's Attorneys to prosecute acquaintance rape cases to the full extent of the law.
- Encourage media coverage of sexual assault cases, including acquaintance rapes.
- Conduct educational programs in schools to raise student awareness of myths about sexual assault, prevention strategies and the need for clear communication.
- Support your local rape crisis center.

To set up an acquaintance rape education program for your school, religious group, civic organization or place of business, contact the nearest rape crisis center.



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ICASA Member Programs

• NORTH

Aurora

Mutual Ground
24 hrs. 708/897-8383

Elgin

Community Crisis Center
24 hrs. 708/697-2380

Glen Ellyn

YWCA of DuPage
24 hrs. 708/971-3927

Gurnee

Lake County Council Against
Sexual Assault
24 hrs. 708/872-7799

Kankakee

Kankakee County Center
Against Sexual Assault
24 hrs. 815/932-3322

Matteson

YW C.A.R.E.S.
24 hrs. 708/748-5672

Moline

Quad Cities Rape/Sexual
Assault Counseling Program
24 hrs. 309/797-1777

Rockford

Rockford Sexual Assault
Counseling
24 hrs. 815/964-4044

Schaumburg

NorthWest Action Against Rape
24 hrs. 708/228-0990

Sterling

YWCA/COVE
24 hrs. 815/626-7277

Summit

Des Plaines Valley Community
Center
24 hrs. 708/482-9600

• CHICAGO

Community Mental Health
Council
24 hrs. 312/734-4033

Community Counseling
Centers of Chicago,
Rape Victim Services
24 hrs. 312/769-0205

Harris YWCA Services to
Rape Victims
312/955-3100

Women's Services, Metro YWCA
312/372-4105

Rape Victim Advocates
312/733-6954

• CENTRAL

Bloomington

Rape Crisis Center of
Mid-Central Illinois
24 hrs. 309/827-4005

Charleston/Mattoon

Sexual Assault Counseling
and Information Service
24 hrs. 217/348-7666 Charleston
24 hrs. 217/234-6405 Mattoon

Danville

YWCA Sexual Assault Crisis
Services
24 hrs. 217/443-5566

Decatur

Growing Strong: Sexual Assault
Center
24 hrs. 217/428-0770

Macomb

Western Ill. Regional Council,
Community Action Agency
Sexual Assault Program
24 hrs. 309/837-5555

Peoria

The Center for Prevention of Abuse
InnerStrength
24 hrs. 309/691-4111

Quincy

Sexual Assault Prevention and
Intervention Services
24 hrs. 217/223-2030

Springfield

Rape Information and
Counseling Service
24 hrs. 217/753-8081

Urbana

A Woman's Fund/Rape Crisis
Services
24 hrs. 217/384-4444

• SOUTH

Belleville

Sexual Assault Victim's Care
Unit
24 hrs. 618/397-0975

Carbondale

Rape Action Committee
24 hrs. 618/529-2324

East St. Louis

Volunteers of America
618/271-9833

Edwardsville

Rape and Sexual Abuse Care
Center
24 hrs. 618/692-2197

Vandalia

Sexual Assault and Family
Emergencies
24 hrs. 618/283-1414

*For services and information in your community
concerning sexual assault or sexual abuse,
contact:*

