

FROM VICTIM TO SURVIVOR

Rape is a traumatic experience. The pain may go away, but the mental anguish may linger on . . .

Anger
Helplessness
Fear
Shame

If someone you know has been raped, encourage her to talk and to seek counseling.

The rape victim needs . . .

Support
Love
Comfort

from friends and family to work through the crisis and emerge a survivor.

NOW . . . IT'S UP TO YOU

Get the message out

- Create your own posters with eye-catching graphics.
- Print Stall Stories for restroom reading to heighten awareness of rape issues.
- Rape Awareness Week—Plan something special—a play, lecture, film.
- Use the media—panel discussion on a radio talk show, awareness column in the campus or community newspaper, a cable TV documentary.
- Invite local experts for a lecture series on HOT issues, such as

Societal and Attitudinal changes
Sexual Stereotyping
Rape as a People Problem—men and women

Get Involved—

- Volunteer at your Rape Crisis Center.
- Form a campus organization to reduce sexual victimization of all kinds—link up with Student Health Services.
- Perform a skit on the myths and facts of rape at a local high school. Tape it for cable TV.
- Take the message to a “captive” audience: Freshmen orientation, sorority/fraternity meetings, any class.
- Jump on the bandwagon of an already scheduled event, like a parade or rock concert on the green. Set up a display with posters, flyers and buttons.



TOUGH QUESTIONS NO EASY ANSWERS

It can't happen to me . . .
or could it?

Who would believe me?

What did I do to turn that nice
guy into a sex maniac?

Could it have been my fault?

Was I too spaced out?



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It couldn't happen to me . . . or could it?

Most of us don't want to even think about rape. We say to ourselves, "It's not going to happen to me." But it can happen—at home, at school, at a party—anywhere.

A rapist can attack anyone, anytime, anywhere. No one is immune from rape or its shattering aftereffects.

Don't try to protect yourself with half-truths and myths. And, please don't pass them on to your friends. Get the facts! Talk about them! Awareness is the first step.

THE FACTS OF LIFE

Myth: Rape is a crime of passion.

Fact: Rape is an act of violence, not passion. It is an attempt to hurt and humiliate, using sex as the weapon.

Myth: Rape only happens to women who ask for it.

Fact: No one asks to be a victim of sexual violence . . . It can happen to anyone—children, grandmothers, students, working women, mothers, wives, the rich and poor. Rapists tend to prey on women who look vulnerable, appear to be easily intimidated, or seem to be daydreaming.

Myth: Most rapes occur as a "spur of the moment" act in a dark alley by a stranger.

Fact: Rape often occurs in one's home—be it apartment, house or dormitory. Very often the rapist is known by the victim in some way and the rape is carefully planned.

Myth: Most rapists only rape one time.

Fact: Most rapists rape again, and again, and again—until caught.

WHAT CAN I DO?

There's no perfect way to protect yourself, but there are simple things you can do to minimize your risk. Just take a minute to think about what you do . . . And remember—

Be Alert!

- Show that you're in control—walk with confidence.
- Be aware of your surroundings—who's out there and what's going on.
- Don't let alcohol or other drugs fog your judgment.
- Be assertive—don't let anyone violate your space.

Trust Your Instincts!

- Uneasy? Uncomfortable? Get Out!
- Don't be embarrassed to make a scene. You know what's best for you.

Make It a Habit . . .

Inside

- Don't prop open self-locking doors! It may be a hassle, but the security's worth it.
- Lock your door (and your windows), even if you leave for a few minutes. Don't leave an open invitation.
- Watch your keys. Don't lend them. Don't leave them. Don't lose them. And don't put your name and address on your key ring.
- Watch out for unwanted visitors—know who's on the other side of the door before you open it.
- Uninvited guests? Demand they leave, or you leave quickly.
- Watch those isolated spots—laundromat, library stacks, labs, locker rooms, computer centers, especially late at night. Go with a friend or use your campus escort service.

Outside

- Avoid walking or jogging alone, especially at night. Vary your route; stay in well-traveled, well-lighted areas.
- Have your key ready before you reach the door—home, car, work, or dorm.
- Park in well-lighted areas and lock the car, even if you'll only be gone a few minutes.
- Drive on well-traveled streets—doors and windows locked.
- The best advice on hitchhiking? Don't! It's very risky business. Never pick anyone up, no matter how nice they seem and look.
- Keep your car in good shape with plenty of gas in the tank.
- In case of car trouble—Hood up, doors locked, "Help, call police" banner in rear window.

WHAT IF SOMEONE TRIES?

Use your head to protect your body. Calm down—play for time. Every situation is different—there are no easy answers.

- Know yourself and your capabilities.
- Assess the circumstances—look for an out.
- Try to read the rapist—motivation, personality, what might work to get away.

And, remember, once you use violence, there's no place to go but more violence.

AFTER THE ASSAULT

- Be a good witness—remember every detail you can.
- Do not shower, bathe, douche, or throw any clothing away.
- Call the police and a friend or your rape crisis center if you need additional support.
- Seek medical attention and counseling.
- Remember, it's not your fault.

