

# SURVIVOR'S GUIDE

Information & Resource Guide  
for Survivors of Sexual Assault



center for advocacy,  
resources & education

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The **UC Davis Center for Advocacy, Resources & Education (CARE)**, is the on-campus, confidential resource for any student, staff member, academic appointee, or faculty member who has experienced sexual harassment or any form of sexual violence, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, and/or stalking. We provide 24/7 emergency response, advocacy and accompaniment, crisis intervention and support services. Additionally, we offer care and guidance to family members, friends, and other concerned persons close to you.

Our mission is to reduce sexual violence and sexual harassment using a multi-faceted approach, including primary prevention, education, awareness, and trauma-informed services. We work to broaden the public consciousness about the nature of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and their impact on people of all genders, to reinforce the necessity of healthy communication, including healthy sexual communication and consent, and to mitigate the trauma you have experienced.

This booklet is intended to help you, a survivor, understand the reporting process – both law enforcement and university reporting options, your rights regarding your experience, and to help dispel myths about sexual assault that may be negatively impacting you. Additionally, there is information within these pages to help your friends or family members better understand how they can help.

Disclosing sexual assault is a brave first step; what happens next can be up to you. We are here to help make any decisions and actions you decide to take as easy as possible.

If nothing else, please know that what happened is not your fault and hopefully you will find some assistance within the pages of this resource.

Sincerely,  
*UCD CARE Victim Advocates*

## Common Myths and Facts

**MYTH:** Sexual assault only happens to certain people.

**FACT:** Regardless of gender, age, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, etc... Sexual assault can happen to anyone. Sexual assault is about power and control. If there is someone who wants power and control, we are all equally a target. It's non-discriminate.

**MYTH:** Rape is only committed by a stranger.

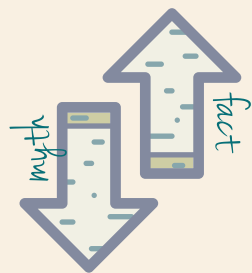
**FACT:** The majority of sexual assaults are committed by someone we know. This could be a friend, family member, date, acquaintance or even your partner. Additionally, most assaults do not involve a weapon and offenders use little additional force. It's common to not have any injuries (serious or otherwise) from your assault.

**MYTH:** If you don't fight back, it's not rape.

**FACT:** If you submit to a sexual assault to save your life, to keep from being hurt further or because you were afraid, you did the right thing. A crime has been committed against you, and you did what was necessary to survive. Submission is not consent. Sexual assault is never your fault.

**MYTH:** Sexual assault is a consequence of drinking too much.

**FACT:** Sexual assault is NEVER your fault. You have the right to be safe at any time and any place, no matter what. If you were assaulted while incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol, the only factor responsible is that you were in the presence of a rapist. Therefore, the offender, not you, is the person responsible for the crime.



**MYTH:** Risk reduction is prevention.

**FACT:** There are risk reduction strategies people can engage in to feel more empowered in their environment, but there is nothing you can do to guarantee that you will never be a victim. You may have utilized all your risk reduction strategies in a situation and may have still been assaulted; the onus is not on you to prevent sexual assault, it's the responsibility of potential offenders to not assault.

## Sexual Assault Defined

### Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is any unwanted, non-consensual sexual act in which a person is threatened, forced, coerced or under duress to comply against their will, or where a person is unable to give consent because they were a minor, unconscious, asleep or incapacitated due to drugs and/or alcohol.



Sexual assault is an umbrella term that covers all various sex acts. If any of the following are attempted or committed without your consent, a sexual assault has occurred:

- Touching of breasts, buttocks or genitalia (Over clothes or skin to skin).
- Oral sex
- Vaginal sex
- Anal sex
- Penetration with a foreign object (i.e. fingers, sex toys, etc.)

Sexual assault is a crime that is based on power and control and it is **NOT** your fault.

### “Date Rape” or “Acquaintance Rape”

There is no difference between a “date/acquaintance rape” and just “rape.” Seventy-five percent of sexual assault survivors know their perpetrator. If the person who assaulted you is not a stranger to you, please know the definitions of sexual assault do not change just because you knew each other.

Perpetrators come in many forms to us: family, friend, acquaintance, partner, date, spouse and stranger. A relationship of any kind (or lack of) does not minimize or change what happened to you.

## Consent

### California has defined consent as:

- Positive cooperation in act or attitude
- It has to be given freely and voluntarily
- All participants must have knowledge and understanding of the act

### Consent cannot be given where:

- Force, threat of force, coercion/duress or fraud is used to gain compliance
  - » **Force/threat of force** includes using physical force or creating reasonable fear that force will be used and therefore creates the physical removal of free will.
  - » **Coercion / duress** requires some form of pressure or obligation that removes your free will to consent.
- Someone is incapacitated due to alcohol and/or drug use
  - » **Incapacitation** is the inability to exercise free will
- Someone is asleep or unconscious
- Someone is under the legal age of consent (18 years old in California)

Consent can also be revoked, even in the middle of a sex act. If someone physically or verbally communicates to the other person that they no longer wish to continue with the sexual act or encounter, that other person must immediately stop. If they do not stop, when asked, any sexual contact after consent is revoked is considered assault.

### Lastly . . .

Consent to one act is not consent to all acts. You have to re-establish consent with each sex act.

There is no such thing as “implied consent.” No matter how many times you may have engaged in sexual acts with the same partner, they must receive your consent every time.

## What If I Was Drinking?

Working on a college campus, CARE hears this question a lot. **The bottom line is a survivor is NEVER responsible for a sexual assault.** No one has the right to have sex with you without your consent no matter what you were doing prior to the assault.

Many of the sexual assaults experienced by college students occur in situations or settings that involve drinking by the offender, you, or both.

Often, we see survivors who had been drinking and/or using drugs at the time of the assault have feelings of guilt and self-blame. These feelings can keep you from accessing support services or telling anyone about your assault. You are also more likely to encounter blaming responses from other people. Please remember you are not alone and what you are going through is not uncommon for the vast majority of survivors.

Even if the person who assaulted you had been drinking, they are still responsible for their behavior. Being drunk is not an excuse for committing any criminal acts, including sexual assault.

**REMEMBER:** Whatever you did to survive was the right thing. **You are NOT to blame.** The assailant committed a crime. Going on a date, having fun with your friends, or giving someone your phone number is not a crime!

### Immunity:

Both law enforcement and University officials understand that survivors who were drinking or using drugs at the time of their assault may be reluctant to come forward out of fear of getting in trouble. You should know that disclosure of voluntary drug or alcohol consumption by you, or any of your witnesses, at or near the time of the assault, will not be used to punish you or your witnesses.

An overview of the University’s immunity policy can be found on page 7 of the UC Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy. This policy can be accessed by visiting the UC Davis sexual violence website at <http://sexualviolence.ucdavis.edu>.



## What To Do If You Have Been Assaulted

- **Please know this was NOT your fault.**
- Make sure you are in a safe place.
- If there are injuries, you can go to the hospital or the Student Health & Wellness Center. The Student Health Center can also complete STI testing for you.
- If the assault has occurred within the past 7 days, you have the option of an evidentiary exam which can collect any evidence of the assault.
- **Please know that evidentiary exams (also known as rape kits) are NOT conducted at the Student Health & Wellness Center or the local hospital. This is a specialized process that is conducted at one clinic in Sacramento called the Bridging Evidence Assessment & Resources (BEAR) Clinic. To get more information, please contact CARE at 530-752-3299 or 866-515-0155 for after hours.**
- To speak confidentially about your options within the first 7 days, a CARE Advocate is on call 24/7.
- To reach an Advocate for after-hours emergencies, call **866-515-0155**.
- If the assault was more than 7 days ago, please call **530-752-3299** or email [ucdcare@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ucdcare@ucdavis.edu) to request the first available appointment with the Advocate.

### If possible, try not to:

Shower, bathe, eat / drink, or brush your teeth until you've had a chance to discuss your options immediately after the assault. These activities may eliminate the presence of DNA evidence potentially found through the Evidentiary Exam process described on the next page.



## Medical Options

**Survivors have three medical options immediately (7 days) following a sexual assault.**

1. Evidentiary Exam
2. VAWA Exam
3. Check-Up Exam

### Evidentiary Exam – Requires a Police Report

Also referred to as a “Rape Kit,” this option is available if you wish to report to law enforcement first and within 7 days of your assault. An evidentiary exam is intended to collect evidence from your body for the purposes of prosecution. It is a head to toe exam that includes emergency contraception and STI preventative medications. The exam is conducted by a specially trained medical practitioner.

### VAWA Exam – Does Not Require a Police Report

The federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) allows you to have a modified version of the evidentiary exam without reporting to law enforcement first. The evidence is collected and preserved to give you up to two years to decide if reporting to law enforcement is the right option for you. The exam is conducted by a specially trained medical practitioner.

### Check-Up Exam – Does Not Require a Police Report

This is not an evidence collection option. If you seek assistance outside of the 7 day window for an evidentiary or VAWA exam or if you know that reporting to law enforcement is not a desired option, you should see a health care provider (your doctor, the Student Health & Wellness Center or Planned Parenthood) to obtain information about the risks of STIs, unwanted pregnancy, and ask what treatment options are available to you. This will help you make informed choices about your health and well-being.

**Please know that evidentiary exams (also known as rape kits) are NOT conducted at the Student Health & Wellness Center or the local hospital. This is a specialized process that is conducted at one clinic in Sacramento called the Bridging Evidence Assessment & Resources (BEAR) Clinic. To get more information, please contact CARE at 530-752-3299 or 866-515-0155 for after hours.**

## Reporting Options

First and foremost, reporting or not reporting is a personal choice. There are several confidential resources that can help you make an informed decision regarding reporting. You may choose to report the assault right away, after taking some time to get support and taking care of yourself, or you may choose to never report the assault... It's entirely up to you. Additionally, you DO NOT need to file a report in order to receive services from CARE.

Typically, you have two reporting options available:

- (1.) Report to Law Enforcement
- (2.) Report to the University

You can choose to report to one or the other, both, or neither.

### Reporting to Law Enforcement

The first step in reporting to the police, is determining which law enforcement agency to report to.

*The CARE advocate can help you to determine which law enforcement agency to contact if you wish to report to the police.*

Local Law Enforcement Agencies include:

- UCDPD (If the assault occurred on campus property; i.e. dorms)
- Davis Police Department (If the assault occurred in the City of Davis)
- Sacramento Police Department (If the assault occurred in the City of Sacramento)
- Sacramento County Sheriff (If the assault occurred in Sacramento County)

Generally, a report to the police will involve speaking with a first-response patrol officer who will make sure you are safe, gather basic information about the assault, and evaluate the need for a medical exam to collect evidence. You might also be contacted by a detective for a follow up.



**If you would like the victim advocate to accompany you to make a report, contact the Center for Advocacy, Resources and Education (CARE) at 530-752-3299 or [ucdcare@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ucdcare@ucdavis.edu).**

### Reporting to the University

As a reminder, the choice to report is completely up to you. You can choose to report to law enforcement, the University, to both, or to neither.

If the perpetrator is affiliated with the University as a student or employee, the university process is an option for you. To begin the University process, a CARE advocate can arrange for a meeting with someone from the Harassment and Discrimination Assistance and Prevention Program (HDAPP) to help process your report.

The information provided in your meeting with HDAPP will be reviewed to determine if a formal Title IX investigation should be conducted. Most sexual violence cases are handled through a formal investigation and you will be notified with your investigator's contact information for the investigative interview.

If you wish to contact HDAPP directly, you can call 530-752-9255 to report.

**Please note that HDAPP is not confidential, so if you are not sure about this process or would like to discuss it confidentially, you can contact CARE.**

### Accommodations / Interim Measures

Whether or not you choose to report to the University, CARE can assist in getting some accommodations or interim measures granted to help address your safety while on campus. These accommodations can include:

- Campus No Contact Order
- Address concerns regarding shared classrooms or buildings
- Housing accommodations

**If you would like the victim advocate to accompany you for any part of your reporting process, contact the Center for Advocacy, Resources and Education (CARE) at 530-752-3299 or [ucdcare@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ucdcare@ucdavis.edu).**

## Common Reactions to Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is a traumatic event first and foremost. Everyone reacts to trauma and / or stress in all different ways. Due to that fact, please know **there is no “normal” or “correct” way to respond to sexual assault.**

### Immediately following an assault, you may react in the following ways:

- Shock / Disbelief
- Feeling numb
- Withdrawn and / or distant from others
- A desire to forget about what happened and avoid anyone or anything that reminds you of the assault.

Many survivors experience intense emotions after a sexual assault. At times, you may feel angry and at other times you may feel anxious and / or depressed. Your thoughts and feelings may be preoccupied with the assault or you may have flashbacks and nightmares. When you think about what happened, you may re-experience the sensations, thoughts, and feelings you had during the assault, such as fear and powerlessness.

### There can be some physical symptoms like:

- Loss of appetite
- Headaches, stomachaches
- Difficulty sleeping / being tired
- Have difficulty concentrating on your studies or focusing in class. It's not uncommon to struggle academically after a sexual assault.

Fears about personal safety can also be a response to a sexual assault. You may become fearful or anxious in settings where you were never frightened before. In many sexual assault situations, the survivor feels powerless and / or terrified of being killed or seriously harmed. Afterwards the feeling of vulnerability may persist. If you're feeling like this, please remember these are normal reactions and there is nothing weird or wrong in how you are feeling.

### Feelings of guilt and shame may also be reactions.

#### Due to misconceptions about rape, you may:

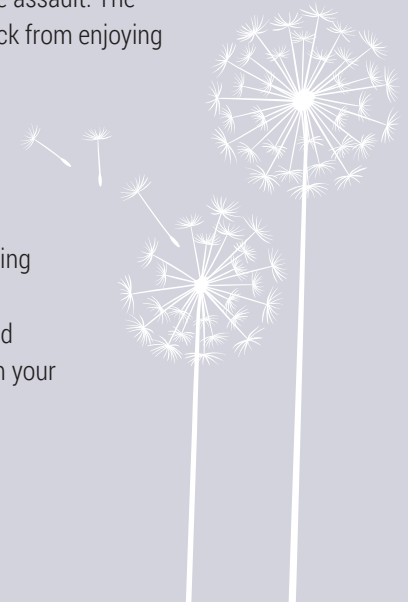
- Blame yourself,
- Doubt your own judgment,
- Wonder if you were in some way responsible for the assault.

Feelings of guilt and self-blame may be reinforced by the reaction of others, who, because of prevalent myths about rape, may blame or criticize your behavior leading up to the assault. Shame may be related to the helplessness experienced during the assault. Some survivors have describe feeling defeated and humiliated. These feelings of guilt and shame are sometimes a reaction to being forced by the perpetrator to participate in the crime.

As a survivor, you may experience some or all of these symptoms. They may happen immediately, or there may be a delayed reaction for weeks or months later. Certain situations, such as seeing the perpetrator, may intensify the symptoms or cause them to (re)occur after a period during which you have been feeling better.

Some survivors think that if they avoid talking about the assault, they will be able to forget about what happened to them. Most survivors who try this approach eventually realize that they need to talk about the assault. The unresolved feelings and fears may hold them back from enjoying their lives and participating fully in relationships.

Talking about the assault can help relieve some of the control it has over you and can help you begin the process of recovery. We recommend that survivors seek professional counseling as soon as possible to begin the healing process. Therapy provides a safe, private, non-judgmental place to talk about your reactions and feelings as well as receive support separate from your family and friends.





## Counseling

When ready, you may find like many survivors that counseling can be a healing and empowering experience. Counseling can help you cope with the emotional and physical effects of an assault. Counselors can also help support you as you think about if and how to discuss the assault with family members and friends. Getting help is always an option; it is never too late to discuss your feelings and reactions to a sexual assault. Even if you experienced an assault some time ago (including multiple years), counseling may still be very helpful.

## Finding Help

### On Campus:

Student Health and Counseling Services offers both urgent care and appointments. Additionally, there are counselors who work within certain student communities called CAN Counselors. ASAP is the counseling service provided for staff and faculty. Counselors in any one of these capacities are confidential resources for you.

- **Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS)** ..... (530) 752-2349
- **Community Advisory Network (CAN) Counselors** ..... (530) 752-2349
  - » African American Studies, Transfer, Re-Entry, Veterans Center
  - » Asian American Studies, Cross Cultural Center
  - » Chicana/o Studies, Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)
  - » Services for International Students and Scholars (SISS), Middle Eastern/South Asia Studies Program (ME/SA)
- **Academic and Staff Assistance Program (ASAP)** ..... (530) 752-2727

### Off Campus:

If you would prefer to speak with someone off campus, there are agencies in both Yolo and Sacramento county that provide confidential counseling services to survivors:

- Empower  
Yolo: Yolo County's 24 Hour Support Line ..... (530) 662-1133
- WEAVE: Sacramento County's 24 Hour Support Line ..... (916) 920-2952

## Taking Care of Yourself

Recovering from a sexual assault is a process that is different for everyone. You may respond by appearing very upset or by appearing calm and controlled; Remember there is no right or wrong way to respond. However, you may also be unsure of who to tell or what to do and may not even be sure of how or what to feel.

As time passes, you may begin to work through your experience in your own way. Some survivors may feel the need to make adjustments to their lifestyle in order to gain a sense of control and safety. For example, some survivors opt to take earlier classes so they don't have to walk across campus later, or change the locks on their doors.

If you feel you are sliding backward or are unable to cope with the sexual assault, it is important for you to remember that what you are going through is a very common reaction of many survivors. Have patience and be kind toward yourself; this can be a very difficult process and there is no timeline for recovery.

### Some things you can do for yourself include:

- Express your feelings in writing. Some survivors keep a journal of their healing.
- Get counseling, and / or join a support group with other survivors.
- Talk about the assault with people who are supportive and nurturing.
- Find supportive people and relationships where you can get hugs and feel loved.
- Use physical exercise as therapy: ride your bike, run, walk, swim, or go horseback riding.
- Spend time in nature or being creative.
- Seek justice: Some victims find that reporting the incident helps them feel empowered.



## Helping A Friend\*



Friends and family can make a huge difference in how a survivor copes with a sexual assault. Many survivors worry about how their family and / or friends will react. It is important to let your friend know right away that you care and want to help. Here are some suggestions:

- **Believe:** Believing what a survivor tells you is such an important step. Survivors are often met with victim-blaming attitudes and it can create a fear of disclosing their experience. How you, as a friend, respond to the disclosure will likely impact what they do next and how they cope with their experience.
- **Listen:** You don't need to be the detective and ask all the who, what, when, where, or why questions. Simply listen, and don't press for details. Let your friend decide how much detail they are comfortable sharing about the assault and its impact.
- **Support:** Deciding on next steps is a big decision. There may be a course of action you think the survivor should follow, but understand if they aren't ready or don't want to do that. Support your friend's decisions about whom to tell and how to proceed. For example, you can offer to accompany your friend if they decide to seek medical care or go to the police but don't tell them that is what they "have to" or "should" do.
- **Validate:** Make it clear that you know your friend is not responsible in any way for their assault, no matter what the circumstances. For example, if your friend was intoxicated, they are not to blame. The responsibility for the assault belongs completely to the perpetrator.
- **Respect:** Don't reveal what the survivor has told you to other people. Let your friend decide who they wish to confide in.
- **Self Care:** Being a support person for a friend in this situation is very difficult. Make sure you have someone you can talk to and help you through this process.

*Take care of you as well!*

## CARE Services

**You have the right to have a victim advocate with you every step of the way.**

Immediate, confidential and supportive response to survivors is a priority, as is advocating for victims of violence. Confidential crisis intervention and advocacy is available to recent survivors, as well as to those working to recover from a past incident. We also provide support to friends, family, housemates and co-workers of a survivor.

All services are free and available to any person who needs them regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, religion, ability or sexual orientation.

**You do not have to report to law enforcement or the University in order to receive services through CARE.**

Services are available to students, staff, and faculty of UC Davis.

### Confidentiality

Your communications with a CARE Advocate are confidential and may not be shared without your written consent. This only applies, however, when the advocate meets privately with you. If a third person is present (i.e. friend, family member, police, etc..) no confidentiality protection is in effect for that contact unless that person is your medical provider, your private attorney or a licensed therapist.

### Confidential Services Include:

- Crisis Intervention
- Advocacy with law enforcement, Office of Student Support and Student Judicial Affairs (OSSJA), Housing and academic assistance
- Accompaniment to court, OSSJA Hearings, and the hospital
- Assistance with restraining orders and Victim Compensation applications
- Referrals to campus and community services

**For more information or to speak with a victim advocate, please call (530) 752-3299 or email: [ucdcare@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ucdcare@ucdavis.edu). If you have a situation that is urgent and you need to speak with an advocate right away, please call (866) 515-0155 to speak with the on-call victim advocate.**

*\*Please note that all employees at UC Davis, including student employees, **except those who work in a confidential resource**, are considered to be Responsible Employees and are required to notify the Sexual Harassment Officer of any disclosure of sexual violence or sexual harassment they receive while they are working. For more information about Responsible Employees, please feel free to contact the CARE office at (530) 752-3299 or [ucdcare@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ucdcare@ucdavis.edu). Information about Responsible Employees can also be found on page 6 of the UC Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy.*



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