

Being a Friend to a Victim of Sexual Assault

- **Listen**— Do not ask a lot of questions. Let your friend take his/her time to share details of the assault.
- **Believe**— People rarely make up stories about sexual assault. Do not express skepticism. Expect a friend in crisis to be confused.
- **Do Not Blame**— Reinforce that your friend is not to blame. Whatever your friend did to survive the attack was exactly what she/he needed to do.
- **Empower**— Help your friend understand and consider her/his medical, legal, and psychological options.
- **Share**— Educate your friends about the common reactions of sexual assault in order to help normalize her/his experience.
- **Be Patient**— Recovering from sexual assault trauma is slow. Let the person proceed at his/her own pace.
- **Support**— Assure your friend that you will be available to provide support throughout the process of recovery.
- **Know your Limits**— There are times where professional help is best. A trained therapist may be essential to helping your friend work through trauma associated with the assault and find more effective ways of coping.

“Every person has the right to live in a peaceful family environment.”

Turning Abuse Around

Locations

Weiser Office

27 W. Commercial Street
Weiser, ID 83672
(208) 414-1231

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Payette Office

1520 1st Avenue South
Payette, ID 83661
(208) 642-1025

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Council Office

204 Council Avenue
Council, ID 83612
(208) 253-4949

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Emmett Office

126 N. Washington
Emmett, ID 83617
(208) 208-365-1615

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Sexual Assault

Sexual Violence affects victims, families, friends, and communities. It can happen to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

24 CRISIS LINE
HOUR (208) 414-0740

ROSE Advocates Family Resource Center for Southwest Idaho: Adams, Boise, Gem, Payette and Washington county

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual violence may include:

- Rape (Forced: oral, anal, or vaginal penetration)
- Marital or partner rape
- Sexual mutilation
- Incest
- Alcohol/drug facilitated sexual assault
- Statutory rape
- Coerced participation in the commercial sex industry
- Sexual exploitation
- Stalking
- Dating violence
- Sexual harassment
- Child sexual abuse
- Sexual battery (Unwanted touching)
- Indecent exposure

If You Are A Victim of Sexual Assault

- Go to a **SAFE PLACE** immediately. Contact someone to be with you who will be emotionally supportive.
- **SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT.** Do not wash, shower, douche, go to the bathroom, brush your teeth, change clothes, or clean up in any way. (You don't want to tamper with any evidence)
- **CALL 911.** Report the sexual assault to authorities, even if you are unsure about filing charges.
- **SEEK COUNSELING.** Even if you do not report or file charges, you should contact ROSE Advocates Hotline for information about counseling.
- Remember, **IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT.**

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

occurs anytime a person is forced, coerced, and/or manipulated into any unwanted sexual contact, attempt or completed

Myths about Sexual Assault:

- **Rape victims were “asking for it” by dressing provocatively or engaging in risky behavior.** No one deserves to be raped
- **Husbands cannot rape their wives.** Regardless of marital or social relationships, if a woman does not consent to sexual activity, she is being sexually assaulted.
- **A person who has really been assaulted will be hysterical.** Victims can exhibit a spectrum of emotional responses: calm, hysteria, laughter, anger and apathy. Every person copes with trauma in different ways.
- **It is impossible to assault a man.** Men can be victims of sexual assault for the same reasons as women, they are overwhelmed by threats or acts of physical and emotional violence.
- **Sexual assault is a crime of passion/lust.** Sexual assault is a crime of violence. Perpetrators seek to dominate/control their victims.
- **Sexual assault is an isolated, infrequent event that only happens to certain kinds of people.** Anyone can be sexually assaulted regardless of age, race, sexuality, gender, and economic or social background.

Common Reactions following Sexual Assault:

- **Physical**– Trouble sleeping, nightmares, headaches, loss of appetite, overeating, stomach problems and muscle tension.
- **Emotional**– Denial, fear, sadness, anger, guilt, shame, embarrassment, crying spells, flashbacks, irritability, depression, suicidal thoughts and rapid changes in mood.
- **Social**– Fear of being in public or in social situations, withdrawing from friends and family, difficulty trusting others and trouble with physical intimacy in relationships.
- **Academic**– Lack of concentration, impaired memory, missing classes, and lack of motivation.