



SEXUAL ASSAULT

Information for victims of sexual
assault and their families and friends

We are very sorry that you have
been hurt.

No one deserves to be
sexually assaulted.

NO ONE.

This handbook is meant to give you information about sexual assault. You can read it as you need to. Due to the assault, you may feel like your life is out of control, and we realize the need for you to regain control. This book provides information for you to use to make choices about what you would like to do next. You may want your family and friends to read it to learn about what you are experiencing and offer support in ways that are helpful to you.

If you would like to talk to someone about how you are feeling, what your options are, or to learn about services in your area, contact the program serving your area in the back of the book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at **1-800-656-HOPE (4673)**. **You do not need to give your name or any information about who you are if you don't want to. Services are free and confidential.**

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Why me?

You may be wondering why this happened to you—why would a person assault another person in this way? Why were you victimized? It is normal to want to find a reason why this has happened.

You did not do anything to prompt the attack. You didn't "lead someone on" by the way you were dressed, what you said, or what you did. Sexual assault is not committed out of a sexual urge or need. It is a way to gain power and control over another human being in the most personal way.

Perpetrators of sexual assault (also referred to as rape and sexual violence throughout this booklet) choose to rape and this choice has nothing to do with anything you did. They may assault someone they do not think will report them or someone who may be vulnerable (because of age, disability, or if using alcohol and drugs).

Questioning your own actions is normal. You may wonder about choices you made and how they made you more vulnerable. You may have heard in the past that there are things you can do to "prevent" being sexually assaulted. You may have even been doing some of these things before you were attacked and they were not effective. Even if you were not doing these things you may be blaming yourself or feel like you somehow deserved what happened. The truth is that only the perpetrator can ultimately "prevent" a sexual assault – and only then by not committing it. The things you may or may not have been doing to avoid a sexual assault were not flawed or wrong. Rapists surprise their victims by catching them off guard, tricking them, taking advantage of normal behaviors, or by lying. There is no way for you to "prevent" these things.

You are not to blame! You did not cause the assault to happen. If you could have avoided it, you would have. **Place the blame for the assault where it belongs – with the rapist.**

Nebraska's coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault agencies provide access to safety and shelter across the state. To speak with a local crisis advocate, contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault program from the listings at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Some facts about sexual assault

- Sexual assault can happen to anyone, at any time, in any place. People of all ages, all economic classes, all races, all levels of education, and who live in all types of neighborhoods are victimized.
- Rape and sexual assault is not a spontaneous act or an uncontrollable sexual urge. It is a deliberate action used to make another person feel helpless, humiliated, and degraded, and in turn, make the rapist feel powerful.
- According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, nearly 1 in 5 women have been raped in their lifetime while 1 in 71 men have been raped in their lifetime.
- In 2008, there were 203,830 victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault in the United States. That averages to approximately 1 every 2.5 minutes.**
- Most sexual assaults (more than 69%) are committed by someone the victim knows. **
- Nearly one-third of rape victims will develop stress disorders as a direct result of the assault at some point in their lifetime. This in turn increases their risk for serious alcohol and drug abuse problems. **
- Nearly 60% of all sexual assaults are never reported to the police.**

Sources of Statistics

- * National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, Centers for Disease Control, 2010
- ** Michael Rand, "Criminal Victimization, 2008," (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009), 1, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv08.pdf>

Nebraska's sexual assault laws

In this booklet you will see the terms “rape,” “sexual assault,” and sexual violence used interchangeably. Nebraska law does not use the term “rape.” Legally, in Nebraska, all rapes are called sexual assault.

Nebraska defines sexual assault as vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a person's body without consent. This includes situations when you may not have the mental or physical ability to give consent or understand what was happening to you (e.g., drunk, asleep, or under the influence of a drug).

Nebraska law defines penetration as: “Any vaginal, oral, or anal penetration of any part of the body without consent.”

Nebraska law also includes situations when one of you is under 16 years of age and the other is 19 or older. It doesn't matter if you 'wanted' the sexual contact in this situation. The law says anyone under 16 cannot give consent to sex. It also doesn't matter if the female is 15 and the male is 19 OR the female is 19 and the male 15. In either situation, the older person could be charged with a crime.

You can be sexually assaulted even if nothing or no one penetrated or entered your body. The law also covers any unwanted sexual contact. Under Nebraska law, sexual contact is defined as “intentional touching over or under clothes of person's intimate parts.” This could include touching of your breasts, genitals, or genital region for sexual purposes.

What law enforcement and the county attorney are going to look for is whether or not the person who assaulted you:

- used force, or
- used the threat of force, or
- used coercion, or
- disregarded verbal and/or physical refusals.

Sometimes it is useless for you to try to refuse the sexual contact by fighting back or saying no. If you thought that it would have been useless to fight back or say no, this doesn't mean you wanted the contact (gave consent). The other person can still be arrested and charged with a crime. If you had consented to the interaction, you would have been a willing and equal participant. Lack of fighting back does not equal consent.

Defining your experience

Many people find it difficult to call what happened to them “rape.” Rape is a powerful word, and using it may bring a level of reality to what has happened to you that you may not be comfortable with.

People who are sexually assaulted are powerless over what is happening to their body. Being out of control of your safety in this way is frightening. Many victims report that they were afraid they would be killed or permanently disfigured by the rapist. This level of fear, combined with the intensely personal sense of violation, can affect you for many years.

Any unwanted sexual contact can be experienced as intrusive and violating. It is common to think that acts which involve penetration are “the most serious,” but many people feel extremely violated by other types of physical contact, such as being fondled, rubbed up against or kissed. There are also many other forms of sexual violence that involve no physical contact at all, such as leering, stalking, obscene phone calls, or having someone expose their body to you.

Trust your instincts. If you feel like you have been violated, you have.

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Nebraska’s coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault agencies provide access to safety and shelter across the state.

I should have...

Replaying the incident and wondering what you could have done to stop the assault is normal. One of the scary things about a sexual assault is that someone else had control over what happened to you. It is a terrifying experience.

Maybe your voice or your body froze. Maybe you believed that struggling would have only made the rapist hurt you more. Maybe you weren't conscious to know what was happening. Maybe the other person was just too big, too strong, or there were too many of them. Maybe you were so shocked that it was nearly over by the time that you realized what was happening.

Even if you froze, were scared, or didn't feel like you could fight off the attack, it was not your fault. You were still raped. "Freezing" is a normal response that helped you survive the experience. Remember, Nebraska law does not require that you physically or verbally resist if you feel that it is useless.

There is no right or wrong way to react to being sexually assaulted. Your reactions were completely normal and you did the best you could to survive the assault.

After an assault: medical care

It is important to get medical care after a sexual assault as soon as possible. It is best if you do not shower, brush your teeth or drink anything prior to receiving medical attention. This could remove evidence of the assault.

Following an assault you can be examined for injuries (some of which you may not be aware), receive antibiotics to prevent bacterial sexually transmitted infections and get medication to protect against pregnancy. You can also have baseline tests for other sexually transmitted diseases.

The age of majority in Nebraska is nineteen years. However, persons age eighteen years are able to give consent to evidence collection, examination, and treatment in cases of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Hospitals are mandated by law to call the police or local law enforcement whenever they treat a victim of sexual assault. However, the decision to make a formal statement to the law enforcement officer is still yours. This can be a hard decision. Staff from domestic violence/sexual assault programs are available 24 hours a day to meet you at the hospital or police station. They can provide information and offer resources, support and assistance. For your local domestic violence/sexual assault program, see the listing at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

If the sexual assault occurred within the past 72-96 hours and you are considering telling the police about the rape, a sexual assault forensic exam, sometimes called a “rape kit,” may be completed. This exam is solely for the collection of possible evidence from your body and not to treat injuries you may have received. A sexual assault forensic exam is usually done at a hospital. In some communities, there are organizations called child advocacy centers that conduct exams on adult and child victims of sexual assault.

In a few communities, you can make an anonymous report, which would allow you to have evidence collected without identifying yourself or contacting police. The police can hold the evidence for a specific amount of time in the event that you change your mind and decide to report later. An advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program will be able to let you know if this option is available in your area.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Infections

Chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, HIV and other infections can be contracted during a sexual assault. Once discovered, they can be treated. Let the health care provider know which areas of your body were assaulted in order to test appropriately for infection. It is important to have a follow-up appointment with the hospital or a private doctor 2-3 weeks after your first visit. A sexually transmitted disease may not show up for several weeks. Keeping your body healthy is part of healing from the assault.

Emergency Contraception

Emergency Contraception (EC), also called “morning-after” contraception or Plan B, is a medication that can be taken to prevent pregnancy after unprotected, vaginal intercourse. If you experienced vaginal penetration during the sexual assault, you could become pregnant and this medication can prevent a pregnancy. In order to be effective, the pills must be started within 120 hours after the assault (or 5 days). The best results are seen when it is started within 72 hours. Emergency contraception does not cause an abortion nor does it affect an existing pregnancy. It simply prevents fertilization. Some hospitals and health clinics with religious affiliations may not offer EC due to their religious beliefs. However, an advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program can provide information.

Evidence collection

If you decide to have evidence collected, it will be collected by a doctor, nurse or possibly a specially trained SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner). Regardless of who conducts the exam, they will ask you what happened so they have an idea of what kind of evidence and injuries to look for.

Remember, the evidence collection kit is a legal procedure, not a medical one. While the medical staff will treat any injuries, the primary purpose is to collection evidence. You may refuse any portion of the sexual assault forensic evidence collection. Refusing to participate in any part of the process won't stop the overall collection process.

The examiner will ask you to remove your clothing and place each piece into a separate paper bag. Next they will examine your body for external injuries. Photographs of any injuries from the assault (bruises, scratches, tears) may be taken. This could include injuries to your breasts and genitals. Let them know if you are sore or hurting anywhere.

DNA samples and other potential evidence will then be collected. DNA samples may be taken to help identify the perpetrator, or if you already have identified the perpetrator, confirm that information. Such evidence may also corroborate your report of where the assault occurred, and what kinds of assault occurred. Your DNA may be tested to distinguish it from other DNA they find. You can, at any time, change your mind and stop the process or ask that some parts of the evidence collection not be completed.

To collect other potential evidence, the examiner may:

- Comb through your hair and collect any debris
- Pull or cut approximately 20 strands of hair from several areas of your scalp
- Ask you to suck on a little piece of paper or cotton swab for DNA
- Run a cotton swab along your gum line and across the crevices between your teeth
- Comb through your pubic hair and collect any stray pieces or debris
- Pull or cut approximately 20 pubic hairs from several areas of your genital region
- Scrape under your fingernails and/or possibly clip them
- Swab any other areas of your body where the perpetrator may have left body fluid, such as a bite mark

The nurse examiner or a doctor will then perform an internal examination by inserting a speculum into your vagina to look for injuries. Then, the examiner will use cotton swabs to take samples from inside your vagina, as well as your rectum.

Some hospitals may have a colposcope, which is a specialized camera that can take internal photographs. When your examination is over, the evidence and photos will be given to the police who will do the investigation.

Ideally, evidence will be collected from your body within the first three days after the assault. The longer you wait to receive a forensic exam, the more likely it is that the evidence will be lost or will be less effective in proving your case in court.

If you are not sure if you want to report to the police, you may want to have evidence collected now to have it available, just in case. In some areas, law enforcement will not want an evidence collection kit completed if you do not plan to make a report.

Keep in mind that evidence does not prove that the assault happened – it is only one part of the legal case, and may be helpful during a trial. You will still need to tell your story in court if the prosecutor requests this.

The investigating law enforcement agency should pay the cost of the evidence collection and kit. You could be billed for other expenses related to treatment such as medications for injuries (antibiotics, pain killers), X-rays , MRIs, etc.

An advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program can help you through this process. For the program nearest you, see the listing at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Talking to law enforcement

You may want to contact local law enforcement to make a report about what happened. If you sought medical treatment for the assault at the hospital or medical facility, law enforcement may have been called. You still have the right to decide whether or not you want to speak to them. You also still have the right to medical treatment whether you talk to the police or not.

Should you decide to make a statement to law enforcement, this can feel embarrassing, difficult and scary. You can ask the officer to call an advocate from the nearest crisis center to be with you, or you can call the local program yourself and arrange to have an advocate meet you.

You and the perpetrator are probably the only people who know what happened. If questioned, the perpetrator may say that he/she wasn't with you, didn't have sex with you, or had consensual sex with you. It is up to you to tell the police what happened, including if alcohol or drugs were used by either of you before or during the assault. It is important to not hide or change any facts when you talk to the police.

After your first official statement, investigators working on your case may need to talk to you several more times. It is not unusual for you to be confused about details and the order of events – a traumatic event makes it difficult to remember things as clearly as you normally do. Take your time and do your best. As things become clearer, let the investigators know what else you remember. Though it may not always seem like it, the police are on your side. You are working together to hold the perpetrator accountable.

What if drugs or alcohol were involved?

It is illegal to “have sex” with someone who is unable to consent, and this could be due to drug or alcohol use that is voluntary or involuntary. A perpetrator may view any use of drugs or alcohol as an act that makes you an “easy target.” It is more difficult to defend yourself or make safe decisions when you are under the influence of substances. However, the rapist is always responsible for their own behavior and decisions.

Rapists often use drugs to increase someone’s vulnerability. Alcohol is by far the most commonly used drug for this purpose. Other drugs such as Rohypnol (roofies), Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB), and Ketamine (Special K, Liquid K) can be easily slipped into a beverage without being detected. They are tasteless, odorless, act as a quick sedative, and usually cause amnesia, and/or a loss of consciousness that may last anywhere from several hours to several days. Although cases of the use of these drugs to facilitate rapes have caused much public awareness, these substances are also used recreationally to achieve a high just like other drugs.

Alcohol use is reported in the majority of sexual assaults in which the victim and perpetrator knew each other. When alcohol or any drug is involved in a sexual assault, additional concerns or problems may be present for the survivor. Memory impairment may leave a person wondering exactly what did and did not happen to them. It leaves open questions that they cannot answer, and feelings of vulnerability may linger for a long time.

If the victim voluntarily used drugs or alcohol before the assault, they may later blame themselves for what happened. A survivor may also be reluctant to report the assault to the police for fear that she/he will be arrested for the drug use.

Drugs and alcohol do not cause rape. Even if the rapist was drunk or using substances, he/she decided to rape. Alcohol and drugs may lower a person’s inhibitions but this does not excuse a sexual assault.

Slipping a drug to someone without his/her knowledge is an illegal act. Committing a sexual assault against a person who has been intentionally drugged carries criminal penalties for both the sexual assault and the drugging. These cases are sometimes difficult to prosecute because victims may be confused about what happened, afraid to report to the police with little memory, and often do not report to an emergency room. The only way to be sure that a person has been drugged is by urine or blood tests. These tests will show all drugs in the person’s system. Law enforcement will have to specifically request testing for GHB and Rohypnol as many labs do not have this capability. However, many of these substances metabolize very quickly and may not be detected in your blood or urine if too much time has passed.

What happens next?

This is a difficult question to answer. It can depend on whether or not you told anyone about the assault - friends, family, law enforcement, etc. After a report to law enforcement, decisions about moving forward with a legal case are up to the criminal justice system.

The course of a criminal investigation will vary with each case. If the police are able to make an arrest, it is not unusual for a sexual assault case to take 6 months to a year to move through the court system. DNA processing can take a long time and delay the progress of the case. The investigators will probably be in touch with you frequently during the first month after the report is made. The police may ask you to take a polygraph (lie detector test).

However, it is important to know that by law, the police or prosecutor cannot force you to take a lie detector test in order to continue the investigation. You may refuse and the investigation should still continue unless there may be other reasons they cannot move forward. Once the preliminary hearing is done, you will probably not hear from the prosecutor until a court date is set.

You can talk to someone at your local domestic violence/sexual assault program to find out what is likely to happen next. The Victim/Witness Unit in the county where your case is being investigated can offer assistance as well.

Many survivors of sexual assault have found preparing to testify in court is a difficult task. You may want to use the time between court proceedings to talk with someone about the assault, discuss your fears about going to court, and prepare for all the possible outcomes. An advocate from your local domestic violence/sexual assault program can help you prepare emotionally for the trial. Staff from a Victim/Witness Unit and the County Attorney assigned to your case may also assist in trial preparation.

Regardless of whether or not an arrest is made, you may want to consider things that you can do to increase your safety. Advocates from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program can assist you with safety planning. This could include identifying people whom you trust and can call when you want to talk, changing locks on your residence, and locating numbers for additional services.

For more information, or to locate the local domestic violence/sexual assault program, visit www.ndvsac.org or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline, 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

I feel so alone

Many people don't talk about being sexually assaulted. It may be painful to relive the experience, and scary to trust that other people will react in a supportive way. But many other people have survived what you have been through, even if no one has ever told you about their experience. Talking about the experience can reduce your feelings of isolation. You may want to talk to someone you are close to, or someone at the local domestic violence/sexual assault program.

The first appointment with an advocate may be hard. Talking about such a personal and upsetting event with a stranger may be difficult. But advocates and counselors are there specifically for you to have a safe person to talk to in a safe place. Many programs offer groups for sexual assault survivors in addition to individual meetings. Again, going to a group may be uncomfortable at first, but groups have been helpful to thousands of people who have been through experiences similar to yours. Talking with others may help you realize that you are not alone, not going crazy, and that you will move on to better times in your life.

Your conversations with an advocate from the local program are confidential, which means that they will not share the information with anyone else. Communication with a sexual assault advocate is also considered "privileged" by law. This means that the advocate cannot share your information with anyone unless you give her/him permission to do so. This privilege does not apply to advocates employed through criminal justice services, such as Victim/Witness Units.

There are exceptions to confidentiality and privilege. These exceptions include if the advocate believes there is a serious threat to you or someone else, or if there is a life threatening medical emergency. Advocates are also mandated reporters if they learn of any child or vulnerable adult abuse or neglect. If you are a minor, the advocate may need to share information with your parent or guardian. You can call the hotline and receive services anonymously if you'd prefer.

The role of the domestic violence/sexual assault advocate is to provide you with support and information. The advocate will not give you advice on what steps you should take, but will provide you with referrals for counseling and other services, as well as accompany you through any court procedures that may be involved. The advocate will not judge the choices that you make or try to persuade you in any way. They will help you weigh the pros and cons of the options and help you identify which options are the best for you.

To contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault program from the listings at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (4673).

The effects of sexual violence

Sexual violence can have long-lasting effects on victims and their families. Fear, anger, and feelings of helplessness may take a long time to heal. It is not uncommon for victims to experience rape related fears for years following an assault. The healing process may be complicated by other circumstances such as having experienced previous sexual assaults or repeated assaults by the same perpetrator. Feeling isolated or being made to feel ashamed of or responsible for the sexual assault can also impact the way a person heals. Whatever the circumstances, sexual assault is a life-altering event that challenges the way we think about the world.

People who have been traumatized often alternate between feeling overwhelmed by and feeling relatively detached from the experience. This may seem unmanageable and confusing, but it is a natural and expected response to trauma. Be assured that for most people, the effects will become more manageable after time. However, emotional pain and feelings of being overwhelmed may come and go for a long time after the assault.

Many survivors experience a grieving process similar to when there is a death of a loved one. For example, you may mourn the loss of a relationship or the loss of feeling safe in your home and/or community. It is helpful for both the survivor and those who love them to get as much support as possible.

Some survivors may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is an anxiety disorder that may develop after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal, such as war, natural disasters, domestic violence or sexual assault. Other mental health issues may also occur, such as panic attacks or depression. In these instances, working with a therapist may be beneficial.

For more information or to speak with a local crisis advocate, contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault program from the listings at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Other common reactions

Some common reactions to sexual assault include:

- Feeling like people can tell that something happened just by looking at you
- Thinking or talking about the assault constantly
- Not wanting to think about it or talk about it at all
- Re-living the experience through nightmares and flashbacks
- Trying to forget and live life as if it never happened
- Not being able to concentrate
- Being easily startled or jittery
- Not sleeping – or sleeping too much
- Not eating – or eating too much
- Increasing use of drugs or alcohol
- Suicidal thoughts
- Feeling irritated
- Feeling angry
- Nervousness or anxiety attacks
- Depression
- Feeling isolated and different from everyone else
- Grieving
- Feeling guilty or responsible
- Trying to figure out how it could have been stopped or prevented

The long-term effects of a sexual assault are not always negative. In fact, some survivors have found that the assault changed their lives in ways they felt were positive. For instance, some people feel stronger and more prepared to handle a crisis because they were able to handle the sexual assault. Others feel safer and have more confidence in their decisions because they have learned to trust their “gut instinct” instead of questioning it. Some people feel that they have better friendships now than they did before the assault because they learned who their true friends were during their time of crisis.

After an assault you may think of your life in terms of “before the assault and after the assault.” As healing occurs the assault will no longer be the defining moment in your life; rather it will be integrated into the landscape of your life experiences.

Everyone has their own way of coping with traumatic events. There is no one way to recover from an assault, nor is there a set amount of time. What is important for you to know is that many people who have experienced sexual violence have come through the experience and live full lives. You can too.

If this isn't the first assault

Some people experience multiple sexual assaults by the same person, or multiple assaults by different perpetrators during their lives. You may be wondering why this has happened to you again. Maybe you are thinking that you led someone on, or maybe you feel you somehow deserve the assaults because of choices you made. No matter how many times you have been assaulted, and no matter what the perpetrators may have told you, **you did nothing to deserve what has happened to you**. Only the perpetrator knows why he/she made the choice to assault you, but be sure that you did not invite the assault.

It is common for people who have had these experiences to have difficulty coping. The effects of each new assault compound the problems from prior experiences. Depression, anxiety, addictions, eating disorders, and other problematic reactions are common among people with a history of sexual abuse. Other methods of coping that may appear healthy, but may not be, are also common. These may include perfectionism, obsessions about exercise and diet, and avoidance of certain places or people. While all of these behaviors are normal coping responses to abnormal events, they can create more problems for the survivor. In fact, some of these methods of coping, such as using drugs and alcohol, may have more serious effects on health and well-being.

Many other people who have had similar experiences have found working with a counselor or a support group to be helpful. For more information or to speak with a local crisis advocate, contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault program from the listings at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Self care

Being a victim of sexual assault can have a lasting impact on you. Consider things that you can do to take care of yourself, physically and emotionally. Think back to another time that has been very upsetting/overwhelming/traumatic. What kinds of things helped you through that time? Things that worked in the past can work for you now.

Some options include:

- Talking with friends and family
- Talking with an advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program
- Attending a support group
- Seeing a therapist
- Prepare yourself by thinking about what may trigger memories of the assault, how you'll react, and who you can call
- Journaling
- Expressing yourself through the arts (i.e. drawing, painting, dance)
- Spending time in nature
- Exercise

When talking with friends and family, recognize that they struggle with knowing how to best support you. They may blame you for the assault, due to a lack of information about sexual violence. The local domestic violence/sexual assault program can assist you with disclosing to friends and family. For the program nearest you, see the listing at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Remember, you are resilient and can draw on your strengths and supportive people in your life to help you move forward from the assault. Being a survivor of sexual violence may be a part of you, but it does not need to define you.

Who commits sexual crimes?

Sex offenders can be of any sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, occupation, economic status, or religious ideology. However, most sex offenders are male, (regardless of the gender of the victim) and usually identify themselves as being heterosexual. They are married, single, divorced, live in all communities, and come from all types of families.

Women do commit sexual assaults against both males and females of all ages. However, these situations are much less frequent than assaults perpetrated by males. These assaults are most often committed against children. As with all sexual assaults, assaults by women are underreported.

Sex offenders are most likely to sexually assault someone who is of the same race and who is known to them. In cases that involve sexual abuse of children, perpetrators are often people the child knows and trusts - family members, surrogate parents, or other relatives and caregivers. Stranger sexual assault is the least common type of sexual assault.

Most sex offenders will continue to commit sexual offenses until they are caught.

It should be noted that while the majority of sexual assault perpetrators are men, most men do not condone sexual assault.

Notifying communities

All 50 states have some form of sex offender registration and community notification, otherwise known as “Megan’s Law.” The law requires sex offenders to register with their local police department after they are released from prison. In some cases, parts of the community will be notified of the person’s identity and residence. The state has guidelines about who will be notified depending on each offender. Most offenders are known only to police and to select businesses near the home of the offender.

The success of this system is dependent upon prosecutions of sex offenders and databases with up-to-date addresses on offenders. **However, most sexual assaults are not reported to police.** Of the cases that are reported and make it to the court system, many are pled out to a lesser offense that does not carry sex offender status. Perpetrators who go before a jury are not always found guilty. Thus, a very small percentage of sex offenders are identified by the courts and convicted of sexual offenses. Some offenders are convicted of lesser charges that do not require inclusion in the sex offender registry.

In Nebraska, the sex offender registry is maintained by the Nebraska State Patrol, www.nsp.state.ne.us. As of 2010, all sex offenders in Nebraska are required to register. The only exception is juvenile offenders. The length of time on the registry depends on the category of the offense.

Some communities have implemented residency restrictions for sexual offenders, limiting how close they can live to schools and other facilities that serve youth. Whether we are alerted to their presence or not, everyone shares their community with sex offenders - most of whom are not identified by this system.

If the perpetrator is your partner

In many cases people are sexually assaulted by a partner as part of an on-going pattern of control and abuse. Intimate partner sexual violence could happen in a dating relationship, when people are living together, or in a marriage. Sometimes this is confusing, especially if other parts of the relationship do not include violence.

It doesn't matter if you had intimate contact or sex with your partner in the past. Past actions do not equal consent for future interactions. No one has the right to force you to do something you don't want to do, or to coerce you into doing something. Sexual assault is against the law, regardless of the type of relationship. Marital rape is a crime in Nebraska.

Often this type of violence occurs throughout the relationship, in a variety of ways. Some of these include:

- Accusing you of being unfaithful
- Unwanted touching
- Withdrawing affection as a “punishment”
- Making derogatory comments about your body, your sexuality, your ability to be a good partner, etc.
- Forced exposure/viewing of pornographic material
- Making you feel like it is unsafe to refuse the sexual advances of your partner
- Coercing you into having sex in order to have other needs met (i.e. paying rent, buying groceries)
- Forced sex with your partner
- Forced sex with others
- Forced sex or sexual contact in front of children

Another common tactic is controlling access to reproductive health care and/or birth control options. This could include not allowing you to become pregnant, sabotaging birth control options (i.e. hiding pills, poking holes in condoms, not providing funds to purchase birth control), forcing you to get pregnant, forcing you to get an abortion, or forcing you to take birth control even though you want to become pregnant. Some survivors have also been denied access to annual exams, and/or to prenatal services when pregnant.

An advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program can provide emotional support and information about options, including shelter. For the program nearest you, see the listing at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Male victims of sexual assault

Men are also victims of sexual assault. As many as one in seven boys are sexually abused before age 18.* Accurate statistics on men who are raped during their adult life are much harder to find because the crime is likely under reported. However, **adult men can be raped** and should be offered the same validation, information and support as women.

Sexual assault is not a sexually motivated act. Sexual feelings or attractions do not motivate a rapist to commit an assault. A need to dominate, control or humiliate another person in the most personal way is what motivates a rapist - regardless of the gender of the victim.

The culture in the United States expects men to never be vulnerable and to be able to protect themselves against any kind of attack. A man who is raped may feel ashamed of himself for “not being a man” because he could not stop the attack. Because he was vulnerable, he may also be afraid that others will question his sexual orientation. Feelings of guilt, shame, isolation and anger are likely to be intensified due to the social stigma about being a male victim. However, it is important to remember that no one deserves to be sexually assaulted and that blame for the assault belongs with the rapist, not the survivor.

Homophobia (fear or hatred of gay and lesbian people) keeps many male victims from coming forward for assistance after an assault. Many people in our society believe that rape is a sexual act, and not one of violence, which has an additional effect on male victims of male perpetrators. Heterosexual men who are raped are often afraid that others will think they are gay or may wonder if something about themselves attracted their perpetrator.

Adult male victims, regardless of their sexual orientation, often have more reservations about reporting to the police than do other victims. Myths about masculinity such as “men should be able to defend themselves” and “a real man would never let that happen” increase their fear that they may not be believed, may have their actions questioned, and may experience discrimination due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Male victims of a female perpetrator, most often adolescent males, may feel too embarrassed and ashamed to report a sexual assault committed by a female. Many aspects of United States mainstream culture give mixed messages about sex between adults and adolescents. While it is seen as inappropriate for an adult man to have sex with a teenage girl, a sexual relationship between a teenage boy and an adult woman is portrayed as an acceptable or an “ideal introduction” to sexual experiences. Fears about not being believed or having their sexual identity questioned because they did not welcome the sexual contact play a part in keeping victims quiet.

In fact, teenage boys are coerced and made to feel uncomfortable about declining sexual advances from older women. Such an experience may feel very violating, and have long lasting effects on victims, just as do other forms of sexual assault. The age limitations in Nebraska’s law apply to all people. An older woman who “seduces” an adolescent male is committing sexual assault.

Male rape victims sometimes have difficulty obtaining resources for help. The rest of the information in this book may be helpful for men who have experienced sexual assault. Men may believe that local domestic violence/sexual assault programs only offer services for female victims and may be hesitant to call for help. While male victims may have some different needs than female victims, the domestic violence/sexual assault program in your area provides crisis intervention and support services to men as well as to women. It is also possible that they will be able to make referrals to other professionals in the area.

For more information or to speak with a local crisis advocate, contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault program from the listings at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Sources of Statistics

* Dube, S.R., Anda, R.F., Whitfield, C.L., et al. (2005). Long-term consequences of childhood sexual abuse by gender of victim. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 28, 430-438.

Assaults on people who identify as GLBTQ

People who are identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer (GLBTQ) are not free from sexual assault. Violence between intimate partners occurs in all kinds of relationships. Men and women in same-sex relationships experience intimate violence at the same rate as the rest of the population. Sexual assault is often a component of this violence.

However, many crimes against people in the GLBTQ community go unreported. Those in violent relationships have the same fears about reporting that all victims of sexual and domestic violence have. Additionally, they may fear the reactions of others who learn about their sexual orientation, regardless of who the attack was perpetrated by, and fear having other acts of violence committed against them.

In addition to sexual assault that occurs within the context of violent relationships, people who are part of the GLBTQ community also experience high levels of violent acts perpetrated by people who are heterosexual. Many people are not tolerant or accepting of same sex relationships. Sexual assaults may be perpetrated against people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender as a way of “punishing” them or “teaching them what they are missing” (a heterosexual man raping a lesbian woman) or “giving them what they want” (a heterosexual man raping a gay man). These types of assaults can be very violent, resulting in serious injuries. **These acts are hate crimes.**

You may think that the assault occurred because of your sexuality and may experience difficulties in your sexual and emotional relationships as a result. You may be afraid that you will not be believed or will be blamed for the assault due to pervasive myths about same sex relationships, gender identity and sexual assault. You may not have come out publicly due to fear of having your sexuality discovered or made the center of questioning instead of the actions of the perpetrator and the assault. You may also be fearful of further acts of violence by homophobic people. This could be a barrier to accessing services. This fear is realistic, and should be respected by anyone to whom you confide.

It should be noted that you may need to disclose your physical sex as part of receiving some services. For example, if you seek medical treatment or if an evidence collection kit is completed, your physical sex may be noted in the medical records. However, the local domestic violence/sexual assault program provides services regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Assaults on older persons

People of any age can be a victim of sexual assault. For older survivors, this could be part of an on-going relationship, part of a new relationship, or an assault by a caregiver, family member, or acquaintance. People who need supervised care or assisted living are particularly vulnerable to physical and sexual assault.

In some cases the perpetrator is a stranger. Strangers may also target elderly people and people with developmental and physical disabilities who live alone because they are less able to physically defend themselves, less able to hear a perpetrator enter the home, or less likely to have anyone in the home to interrupt the assault.

It may be more difficult for older survivors to share what happened. You may feel uncomfortable discussing the assault, and “airing your dirty linen” to someone else. You may also worry that service providers won’t understand what you’re going through – especially if they are younger than you.

You may find it harder to report what happened, or may be worried about not being believed. Sometimes family, friends, law enforcement, and social service agencies discount reports from older victims due to societal beliefs about older persons. For example, reports of rape from an elderly person may be brushed off as something they have made up – perhaps they are “going senile” or are “just lonely.” However, according to the FBI, false reports of sexual assault are only approximately 2-8% of all reports.

Sexual assault against anyone is a crime, regardless of age. An advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program can provide emotional support and information about options. For the program nearest you, see the listing at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Assaults on people with disabilities

Perpetrators of sexual assault look for vulnerable people to victimize. Sexual assault of people with disabilities occurs at higher rates than with people without disabilities. However, you may worry about being believed due to societal beliefs about people with disabilities.

Unfortunately, many people do not see people with physical or mental disabilities as sexual beings. Due to this lack of understanding and the mistaken belief that rape is sexually motivated, they find it hard to believe that anyone would “want to have sex with” a person who is physically or mentally disabled. Victim blaming comments such as “they’re just crazy anyway,” “they make up things,” “they’re just looking for attention,” or “it’s something they saw on TV” make it more difficult to disclose what happened.

If you have been sexually assaulted, consider telling someone that you trust. This could be a friend, family member or caregiver. You can also call a hotline and remain anonymous.

Most people do not make up stories about sexual assault. According to the FBI, the percentage of falsely reported sexual assaults is the same as the percentage of reports of all other serious crimes that are false – only between 2 and 8 percent. The likelihood of a report from a person who has a disability being false is even lower because people from these populations are victimized at a higher rate than the rest of the population. Perpetrators realize that it is unlikely the victims in these groups will be believed if the abuse is disclosed.

Sexual assault laws protect people with disabilities, both physical and mental. The law recognizes that perpetrators will prey on those who are vulnerable and trusting and will establish a “consensual” sexual relationship, which is actually abusive due to the imbalance of knowledge and power. In this context, we most commonly think of “statutory rape” cases between a teenage girl and an adult man. The law states that some adult individuals cannot truly consent to sexual interactions due to their mental disability. This issue may be complicated by the fact that an adult body may enjoy encounters that are not physically violent or painful – but the bottom line is that such a relationship is inappropriate and against the law.

In some cases, the abuse may also be considered vulnerable adult abuse, if you fit the definition of vulnerable adult under Nebraska statute 28-348 through 28-387. This statute defines vulnerable adult as “Any person eighteen years of age or older who has a substantial mental or functional impairment or for whom a guardian has been appointed under the Nebraska Probate Code.” In those instances, a report can be made to Nebraska’s Adult Protective Services, 1-800-652-1999.

Group rape

Group rape is when two or more people act together to sexually assault another person. Sexual assaults perpetrated by a group are different than an assault by one person against another. The intention of an individual rapist is to feel powerful by demeaning and terrifying another person. Men who rape in groups see themselves as taking part in a male ritual that is about bonding, performing for each other, and symbolically asserting their power.

Men participate in group rapes to build trust and solidarity – everyone has to participate or they are not accepted in the group. Everyone must keep the secret or they have betrayed the entire group. In some instances, group rape is linked to gang activity. Gang rape is often seen as an initiation or a rite of passage to manhood or inclusion in a specific group.

If you are a victim of group rape, you may have an intense fear that the group will retaliate or “get even” with you for reporting the assault. You may have first hand experience of the solidarity among the group who committed the assault, and may fear that one or more of the perpetrators will return to make sure the survivor does not turn any of them in. Additionally, members of the group who did not participate in the assault (e.g. other team members or fraternity brothers) may retaliate on behalf of the perpetrators.

People who survive a group rape are likely to sustain numerous physical injuries. In addition to trauma done to the genital region, they are likely to have injuries resulting from being restrained by the group. Men who are assaulted by groups are also more likely to be beaten during the assault.

When someone reports a rape to the police, it often becomes a matter of one person’s word against another’s. In cases of group rape, the group of perpetrators outnumber the victim. You may feel that it would be impossible to be believed under these circumstances. However, other survivors find that reporting the assault is empowering and offers them a way to regain some control in their lives.

The local domestic violence/sexual assault program can provide support and assistance, regardless of whether or not you choose to report the assault. To find the program nearest you, visit www.ndvsac.org or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673).

If the abuse happened when you were younger

You are not alone. National studies have found that about 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 7 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 17.* However, many survivors do not disclose the assault for years due to confusing memories of the abuse, fear of being believed, or an on-going relationship with the perpetrator. The majority of child sexual assault is done by someone known to the victim and trusted by them.

Sometimes people who were abused as children disclose and seek help as adults. This could be because new memories have surfaced, a new assault triggers memories, or because you are in a place in their lives where it feels safe to confront those memories.

As a survivor of childhood abuse, you may experience a variety of emotions and effects linked to the abuse. Some of these include:

- Difficulty setting limits and boundaries
- Flashbacks and unexpected memories of the assault, including fragments
- Anger – at the perpetrator, at family members, at yourself
- Grief over the loss of parts of your childhood
- Feeling betrayed by the perpetrator and/or others that were in the home during the assault
- Difficulty trusting others
- Developing medical concerns, both physical and mental health

You may have developed a variety of coping skills. These may include healthy coping skills, such as talking with others or journaling. You may also have developed some unhealthy coping skills, such as drug or alcohol use, eating disorders, or self-harming behaviors such as cutting.

Child sexual assault can have a long-term impact on you. Sometimes survivors experience more abuse later in life by the same perpetrator or someone else. Building a strong support system can help mitigate the effects of the abuse.

An advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program can provide emotional support and information about options. For the program nearest you, see the listing at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

*Source: Briere & Elliott, 2003, as cited in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention, National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2011.

Some information adapted from Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network, www.rainn.org, retrieved June 21, 2011.

For families & friends

Sexual assault is a devastating experience for both victims and those close to them. Family members and friends experience a wide range of emotions and reactions after someone they love is assaulted.

You need support too

You are probably angry, confused, and feeling helpless. You may feel anger at the perpetrator or even at the survivor, especially if she/he put themselves in a high-risk situation. Remember, no one deserves to be sexually assaulted.

Things may seem like they are out of control or that the person you knew has changed. Perhaps you are having feelings of guilt and self-blame because you weren't able to protect the person you love from the assault; or have urges to go out and find the person who did this to your loved one and take matters into your own hands.

Understand that you are experiencing feelings similar to those of the victim. These feelings and reactions are normal. You are in crisis too, and your concerns for the victim's well being and safety are understandable.

It is also possible that hearing the experience of your loved one could trigger memories of your own past experiences that may have been similar. Perhaps you made a promise to yourself that you would make sure it never happened to your loved one and are now feeling angry or guilty because it has. You may have also thought it was "all behind you" and not understand why it is bothering you now. Regardless, the local domestic violence/sexual assault program can help you process your own feelings, reactions and memories.

Please remember that preventing the assault was not your responsibility and not within your ability. Remember, you did not cause the assault, nor could you have prevented it from happening. The only person responsible for the rape is the perpetrator.

Supporting your loved one

Wanting to find the perpetrator and "make them pay for what they have done" is a common feeling or urge for those close to the victim. Your feelings of rage and wanting to hold the perpetrator accountable are completely understandable. However, acting on this urge will not be helpful to the victim. Many victims will experience added stress because they fear for the safety of their loved ones. Though it may not seem fair to you, you are legally responsible for any harm you intentionally cause to another person. Any actions you take against the perpetrator will be viewed separately from the rape. The person you love needs you to be safe and to be supportive. Find alternative ways to release your anger that do not put you at risk of arrest or physical harm.

One of the most common feelings that victims experience is the loss of who they were and what life was like before the assault. Those close to the victim also experience this loss. The person you love has been changed by this experience, and life as you knew it may also be changed. Feeling sad and mourning are normal and healthy responses.

Sexual assaults may occur under circumstances where the victim was involved in activities others may disapprove of (drinking, breaking a curfew, accepting a ride, or lying about where they were going or who they were with). Any decision to participate in these behaviors is separate from the sexual assault. Risky behavior does not give someone else the right to rape. No one expects to be the victim of a sexual assault, even if they are intoxicated or with people they just met. Perpetrators will create and take advantages of opportunities to commit these acts. Whatever the circumstances of the assault, the rapist decided to hurt the person you love, and they did so by trickery, surprise, coercion or force. Rape is not a consequence or a punishment for breaking a rule.

Because rape is an awful experience, most of us would like to find a way that it could have been avoided. We often do that by attempting to find something that the victim did wrong. Though it may be difficult, work on accepting that the only person responsible for the rape is the perpetrator. Searching for clues in the victim's behavior will only frustrate you, and may make the person you love feel like you are blaming them for what happened, even if that is not your intention. Remember that breaking rules and testing boundaries are normal behaviors, especially for young adults. You probably have done similar things.

Those close to the victim often feel guilty because they were not able to protect the person, and may also feel helpless because they are not able to take away the pain after the assault. You may try to put extra effort into protecting the person now. It is important to talk to the victim about this. Your concern for their safety may be appreciated, but over-protectiveness and rules that restrict her/his freedom may be interpreted as mistrust or indirect blame for what happened.

An important step in healing from sexual assault is allowing the survivor to regain a sense of control in their life. You may also be feeling out of control, and may be experiencing the same need. This is an area where conflict often arises between victims and their loved ones, particularly around whether or not the victim should report the assault to law enforcement. It is important that the victim be the one to make that decision. Going through the court system can take a long time, be very stressful, and ultimately may not result in a conviction. Wanting to make the rapist pay for what happened is normal, but is not guaranteed. Trust that the person you love knows what is best for her/him.

When someone is being sexually assaulted they have NO control over their bodies or the situation they are in, and often experience a fear for their life. After an assault, victims may become easily upset when others make even the simplest decisions for them. The victim should decide when to return to work or school, who to tell about the assault, when to see a counselor, where to sleep, and so on. Let the victim know why you think your ideas would be helpful, but in the end it will be important to support the decisions the victim makes to keep the trust in your relationship.

It may also be difficult if your loved one does not confide in you about the details of what happened or what she/he is feeling. The survivor may be able to discuss this with an advocate from the local domestic violence/sexual assault program or a therapist. Even if you are a parent, therapists will generally honor confidentiality of their minor clients and not tell you what they have discussed, unless what they are told poses a danger to the client or others. It is important to respect that confidentiality and wait until the survivor is comfortable talking to you, which may or may not happen.

Changes in your relationship may be difficult to accept and adapt to. You may find yourself wondering why getting over the assault seems to be taking so long, when your loved one will begin taking care of herself/himself, and how you can be helpful. As one who cares for a survivor of sexual assault, you may need outside support to get through this time, even if the survivor is not yet ready to do the same. You may need to turn to other friends or family members, an advocate, clergy or a therapist to get what you need. This may be a big change, especially if the victim is the person you would traditionally rely on for support. Your loved one is likely overwhelmed with the experience of the assault and will not be able to support you. Also, the survivor may feel badly about being the cause of your pain and grief. Find a separate place to take care of yourself.

If you would like to talk someone about how you feel and how to be helpful to your loved one, contact your local domestic violence/sexual assault program from the listings at the back of this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673). Services are free and confidential.

Additional hotlines

Nebraska's Child Abuse Reporting Hotline - 800-652-1999

Nebraska's Vulnerable Adult Abuse Hotline - 800-652-1999

BoysTown National Hotline - 800-448-3000/800-448-1833 (TDD)

National Youth Crisis Hotline - 800-442-4673

National Mental Health Association - 800-969-6642

Alcohol and Drug Treatment Hotline - 800-234-0420

Websites for additional information

National Sexual Assault Hotline
(Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network – RAINN)
www.rainn.org

Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
*Note this website offers online counseling through chat and instant messaging.
www.loveisrespect.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline
www.ndvh.org

National Sexual Violence Resource Center
www.nsvrc.org

National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)
www.ncvc.org

Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition
www.ndvsac.org

Male Survivor
www.malesurvivor.org

Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse
www.ascasupport.org

Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse
<http://nwnetwork.org>

Additional reading

Below are some books, articles and videos that may be helpful. Some items may be available through the lending library of the Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition. Please call the Coalition at 402-476-6256 to check for availability.

Teen/Young Adult Survivors

Dating Violence: Young Women in Danger. Levy, B. 1991.

Ending Violence in Teen Dating Relationships: A Resource Guide for Parents and Pastors. Miles, Al. 2005.

How Long Does It Hurt?: A Guide to Recovering from Incest and Sexual Abuse for Teenagers, Their Friends, and Their Families. Mather, C. & Debeye, K. 1994.

I Never Called It Rape. Warshaw, R. 1988.

The Me Nobody Knows: A Guide for Teen Survivors. Bean, B. & Bennett, S. 1997.

Recovery: How to Survive Sexual Assault for Women, Men, Teenagers, and Their Friends and Families. Benedict, H., & Brison, S. 1994.

The Survivor's Guide: For Teenage Girls Surviving Sexual Abuse. Lee, S. 1995.

Adult Survivors of Sexual Assault

After Silence: Rape and My Journey Back. Raine, N.V. 1998.

Cry Rape: The True Story of One Woman's Harrowing Quest for Justice. Leudders, B. 2007.

Free of the Shadows: Recovering from Sexual Violence. Adams, C. & Fay, J. 1990.

If You are Raped. Johnson, K.M. 1985.

I Never Called It Rape. Warshaw, R. 1988.

License to Rape: Sexual Abuse of Wives. Finklehor, D. & Yllo, K. 1987.

Recovering from Rape. Ledray, L. 1988.

Recovery: How to Survive Sexual Assault for Women, Men, Teenagers, and Their Friends and Families. Benedict, H., & Brison, S. 1994.

Resurrection After Rape: A Guide to Transforming from Victim to Survivor, Atkinson, M. 2008. Available to download online.

Surviving the Silence: Black Women's Stories of Rape. Pierce-Baker, C. 1999.

Telling: A Memoir of Rape and Recovery. Francisco, P.W. 1999.

Trauma & Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence – From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror. Herman, J. 1992.

Male Survivors

Broken Boys/Mending Men: Recovery from Childhood Sexual Abuse. Gruban-Black, S. 1997.

Male on Male Rape: The Hidden Toll of Stigma and Shame. Scarce, M. 1997.

Recovery: How to Survive Sexual Assault for Women, Men, Teenagers, and their Friends and Families. Benedict, H., & Brison, S. 1994.

Victims No Longer: Men Recovering from Incest and Other Sexual Child Abuse. Lew, M. & Bass, E. 1990.

Friends and Family

Allies in Healing: When the Person You Love Was Sexually Abused as a Child. Davis, Laura. 1991.

If She Is Raped: A Book for Husbands, Fathers, and Male Friends. McEnoy, A. & Brookings, J. 1999.

If He is Raped: A Guidebook for Partners, Spouses and Friends. McEnoy, A., Rollo, D., & Brookings, J. 1999. Available to download online.

Ghosts in the Bedroom: A Guide for Partners of Incest Survivors. Graber, K. 1991.

Recovery: How to Survive Sexual Assault for Women, Men, Teenagers, and Their Friends and Families. Benedict, H., & Brison, S. 1994.

Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Assault

Breaking Free: A Self-Help Guide for Adults Who Were Sexually Abused as Children. Ainscough, C & Toon, K. 1993. Fisher Books.

The Courage to Heal. Bass, E. 1994.

Crossing the Boundary: Black Women Survive Incest. Wilson, M. 1994.

I Never Told Anyone: Writings by Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse. Bass, E. & Thornton, L. 1991.

Secret Survivors: Uncovering Incest and its Aftereffects in Women. Blume, E.S. 1991.

The Sum of My Parts: A Survivor's Story of Dissociative Identity Disorder. Trujillo, O. 2011.

Prevention

Helping Teens Stop Violence: A Practical Guide for Counselors, Educators, and Parents. Creighton, A. & Kivel, P. 1990.

Men's Work: How to Stop Violence That Tears Our Lives Apart. Kivel, P. 1992.

Stopping Rape: A Challenge For Men. Funk, R.E. 1993.

Transforming a Rape Culture. (Rev.) ed. Buchwald, E. 2007.

Services Provided by the Network of Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Programs

Nebraska's coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault programs provide access to safety and shelter across the state. To find the program nearest you, see the listing in this book, visit www.ndvsac.org, or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673).

The network is designed to provide emergency services, information and assistance to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Below are the core services provided by every program.

24-Hour Crisis Line

Every program offers a 24 hour hotline that offers confidential support, information and access to services. There is also a statewide crisis line for Spanish speaking victims. This can be reached by calling 1-877-215-0167.

Emergency Shelter

A safe place for victims and survivors of violence to escape further violence is available 24 hours a day.

Transportation

Transportation to shelter, court proceedings, medical services or other community agencies is available whenever necessary.

Medical Advocacy and Referrals

Staff and volunteers are available upon request to accompany survivors to hospital emergency rooms and local medical offices for treatment of injuries or a rape exam.

Legal Advocacy and Referrals

Advocates can provide assistance with obtaining a domestic abuse protection order or a harassment order, emotional support through court proceedings, and referrals to local attorneys. Victims of sexual assault may be involved in a relationship with or otherwise harassed by the perpetrator. If so, a protection order may be of assistance.

On-going Support

Individual and group support for survivors of sexual assault, adult survivors of child sexual abuse and domestic violence is available in many communities. Some programs also offer groups specifically for teens and children.

Education and Prevention Programs

Prevention programs on child sexual abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, sexual harassment and other forms of gender based violence are available for all age groups.

Nebraska's Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Programs (Counties Served)

Bright Horizons

(Antelope, Boyd, Holt, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Stanton)
Norfolk, NE
877-379-3798

Catholic Charities - The Shelter (Domestic Violence Program)

(Douglas)
Omaha, NE
402-558-5700

Center For Survivors

(Boone, Butler, Colfax, Nance, Platte, Polk)
Columbus, NE
800-658-4482

Crisis Center for Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault

(Burt, Cuming, Dodge, Saunders, Washington)
Fremont, NE
888-721-4340

The Crisis Center, Inc.

(Hall, Hamilton, Howard, Merrick)
Grand Island, NE
866-995-4422

Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault Services

(Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Red Willow)
McCook, NE
877-345-5534

DOVES

(Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, Sioux)
Gering, NE
866-95-DOVES (36837)

Friendship Home (Domestic Violence Program)

(Lancaster)
Lincoln, NE
402-437-9302

Haven House Family Service Center
(Cedar, Dakota, Dixon, Thurston, Wayne)
Wayne, NE
800-440-4633

Healing Hearts and Families
(Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Loup, Sherman, Valley, Wheeler)
Broken Bow, NE
800-942-4040

Heartland Family Services – Domestic Abuse Program
(Cass, Sarpy)
Papillion, NE
800-523-3666

Hope Crisis Center
(Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline, Seward, Thayer, York)
Fairbury, NE
877-388-4673

North Central Quad County Task Force
(Brown, Cherry, Keya Paha, Rock)
Valentine, NE
877-376-2080

Parent-Child Center
(Dawson, Gosper)
Lexington, NE
English Crisis Line: 877-215-3040
Spanish Crisis Line: 866-351-9594

Project Response
(Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson)
Auburn, NE
800-456-5764

Rape/Domestic Abuse Program
(Hooker, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Thomas)
North Platte, NE
888-534-3495

The S.A.F.E. Center
(Buffalo, Franklin, Harlan, Kearney, Phelps)
Kearney, NE
877-237-2513

Sandhills Crisis Intervention Program (SCIP)
(Arthur, Deuel, Garden, Grant, Keith, Perkins)
Ogallala, NE
308-284-6055

Spouse Abuse/Sexual Assault (SASA) Crisis Center
(Adams, Clay, Nuckolls, Webster)
Hastings, NE
800-322-7272

Voices of Hope
(Lancaster)
Lincoln, NE
402-475-7273

Women's Center for Advancement (WCA)
(Douglas)
Omaha, NE
402-345-7273

24 Hour Crisis Lines

Línea de Crisis en Nebraska (en español)
1-877-215-0167

National Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
1-866-331-9474

Nebraska's coalition of domestic violence
and sexual assault agencies provide access
to safety and shelter across the state.

To locate the program nearest you, visit
www.ndvsac.org.

Nebraska Domestic Violence
Sexual Assault Coalition
402-476-6256
www.ndvsac.org

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