

Myths & Facts About Sexual Assault

MYTH: Some girls are “asking for it” by dressing in short skirts, or by coming on to guys too strong, or by “acting like sluts” and “giving guys the wrong idea.”

FACT: If you wear a short skirt and flirt with someone, it doesn't mean you are giving them permission to violate you. It's your body: no one ever has the right to touch you without your permission. No person asks to be hurt or degraded.

MYTH: Guys can't stop if they get really turned on; she can't change her mind in the middle of it.

FACT: Guys don't “need” sex any more than girls do. All of us can control our behavior and can choose to respect other people's wishes, even if we are sexually excited.

MYTH: If a girl has been drinking or goes to a party, she deserves what she gets. She should have known better.

FACT: Many rapists target girls who have been drinking or using drugs because the use of alcohol or other drugs leaves us less able to protect ourselves. No one ever deserves to be raped, and only the rapist is responsible for the crime.

MYTH: Rapists are just guys who need a lot of sex.

FACT: Rape is a violent act that is committed to express anger and dominance, not passion, lust, or sexual attraction. Rapists are motivated by a desire for power and control.

MYTH: If she didn't really want it, she could have screamed or fought him off.

FACT: There are many reactions to rape. Some people freeze, some cry out, some fight back. Silence is never equal to consent.

Services Available at SACA

SACA offers:

- 24-hour hotline providing counseling, advocacy, information, and referrals
- SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) services during medical exams for teens and adult rape survivors
- Accompaniment to police stations, DA's offices, and court hearings
- Individual and group counseling for survivors of rape, incest, and adults molested as children
- Prevention education programs emphasizing awareness and self-protection to schools, colleges, community organizations, and others

All SACA services are free. All direct services are confidential and culturally sensitive. Services are available in English, Spanish, and ASL.

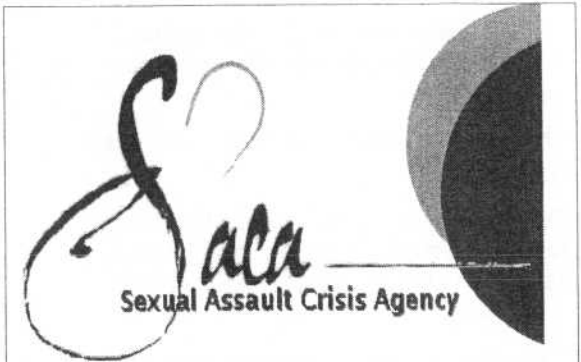
Volunteer/ Internship Opportunities Available

Want to do something to help fight against rape and sexual abuse? SACA is always looking for volunteers and interns to help with their services.

If you are interested in a position, please call Mary Vasquez, Volunteer Coordinator at 562-989-0309 x102 or mvasquez@sacastopraper.org. Service Learning Hours available.

3711 Long Beach Blvd., Suite 815
Long Beach, CA 90807
Office: (562) 989-0309
Fax: (562) 989-5578
24-Hour Hotline: (562) 989-5900
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Teen Safety

What every teen needs to know about rape and sexual abuse.

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The Stats

- Rape is one of the most underreported crimes; only 26% are reported to the police.
- Among female rape victims, 61% are under the age of 18.
- Teens 16-19 are three and one-half times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault.
- 77% of rape victims know their attacker.
- 60% of rapes take place in the victim's home or at the home of a friend, relative or neighbor.
- Not all rapes are violent; sexual assault victims 13-17 were less likely than adult victims to have their assault involve weapons or physical coercion.
- A survey of high school adolescents showed that 17% of the girls were physically abused and 12% were sexually abused.
- A study of 1,000 female students indicated that 12% of unwanted sexual acts were perpetrated by casual dates and 43% by steady dating partners.

Rape Facilitating Drugs

The most commonly used drug is one that is used by most young people: alcohol.

Other drugs like Rohypnol ("roofies") & GHB are used to incapacitate the victim 15-30 min after ingesting them. They are colorless and tasteless and are often slipped into the victim's drink. If you feel more intoxicated than usual or are feeling "fuzzy," tell a friend.

What We Can Do To Stop Rape

FOR GUYS:

Accept responsibility for your own actions. Never force yourself on a girl, even if:

- You've paid for dinner or given her expensive gifts
- You have had sex with her before
- She has been drinking or using drugs
- She says 'no' but you think she means 'yes'
- She "leads you on" by dressing or acting provocatively

If you are unsure about what your partner wants—stop and ask! If she is unsure or sending mixed messages, back off and talk it over. Never assume that you know what she "really" wants.

Silence does not mean consent; she does not have to verbally say "No" for it to meet the legal definition of rape.

Don't accept the myth that to be a man, you must be sexually aggressive. Forcing sex on someone doesn't make you a man, it makes you a criminal.

Intervene when you see other boys tricking, drugging, or lying to a girl to make her easy prey for rape. Don't participate in rape or other forms of sexual abuse by remaining silent. Think of the girl as if she was your sister.

FOR GIRLS:

Know your own boundaries and be firm and assertive in expressing them. Don't feel obligated to do something you don't want to do to avoid awkwardness.

Be constantly aware of your surroundings (i.e. watch your drinks at bars and parties, be careful whose home you are in and who you invite into your home, etc.)

If someone tries to rape you, try to stay calm and assess the options. You can say "Stop, this is rape" or yell "fire" instead of "help."

There is no correct way to respond to this; do what you need to in order to survive the experience, this can include not resisting.

What We Can Do To Help Survivors

FOR FRIENDS & FAMILY:

- Listen to the survivor. Let the survivor tell you their story at their own pace without asking questions to satisfy your own curiosity or trying to "fix it."
- Believe their account of what happened. It is very rare for anyone to lie about being raped; only 2% of rape reports are false.
- Say "it's not your fault." Survivors tend to blame themselves for the rape, even though the rapist is the one who decided to rape.
- Provide information about legal, medical, and counseling services and offer choices, but do not make decisions for the survivor. During the rape, all of her control was taken away. It is important for her to make her own decisions and regain a sense of control over her life.

Call SACA's 24-hour hotline at (562) 989-5900 when you need support or information.

FOR SURVIVORS:

- Get information about what has happened to you. There are many misconceptions surrounding rape. Contact SACA for the information you need.
- Consider getting medical attention to make sure that you are ok. Also, consider reporting the assault. A counselor can help you assess these options.
- Remember that it was not your fault. The rapist is the one who chose to commit the crime.