The Alabama Department of Public Health Injury Prevention Division

The Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama Coalition Against Rape (ACAR) have joined forces to address sexual violence as a public health problem that is seriously impacting our communities. Great strides have been made towards raising awareness on the issue of violence against women, but more has yet to be done. You can join in the fight by arming yourself with knowledge and awareness of how prevalent rape/sexual assault is in our communities and how you or someone you love can reduce the risk of becoming a victim.

The Alabama Coalition Against Rape

The Alabama Coalition Against Rape (ACAR) was founded in 1995. ACAR, comprised of 15 member rape crisis centers, conducts prevention activities and empowers centers to facilitate the humane, consistent, and compassionate care of victims of sexual violence and their families. These are accomplished through community awareness, standardization of member services, education, research, and advocacy activities. ACAR endeavors to continually improve the treatment of sexual violence survivors and to ultimately end sexual violence. A map of centers in your area can be found on the last page.

Services

- Training for allied professionals such as through workshops and conference.
- Community education programs about sexual violence, websites, quarterly newsletters, and other materials.
- Advocacy for sexual assault survivors with statewide agencies and in the formation of public policy.
- Support for sexual assault program staff through training, technical assistance, and a resource library of books, videos, and training materials.
- Networking with other statewide agencies that address issues of violence against women.
- Providing information, technical assistance, and resources to everyone seeking to learn more about the prevalence and prevention of sexual violence.

The 15 rape crisis centers serve all counties in Alabama except: Choctaw, Conecuh, Covington, and Monroe. These counties are served by the State Coalition (ACAR).
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Sexual assault is any sexual contact or sexual attention committed by force, threats, bribes, manipulation, pressure, tricks, or violence. It includes rape and attempted rape, child molestation, incest, and sexual harassment. Sexual assault is a terrifying and often brutal crime. Assailants can be strangers, acquaintances, friends, dates, or family members including spouses.

It is not a crime of passion, but a crime of violence. It is a vicious crime of dominance and aggression with sex as a weapon. Anger and hostility are the emotions of the perpetrator and power and control over the victim are the goals.

**Female Rape Facts**

**Alabama**

- 1,408 women reported being raped in Alabama in 2007. (Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center)
- In 72% of the rapes, the victim knew or was related to the offender.
- There were 588 juvenile female rape victims, representing 42% of the 1,408 rapes reported. (Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center)

**United States**

- 1 in 6 (17.6%) American women have reported an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. (14.8% completed rape; 2.8% attempted rape.) (National Violence Against Women Survey, 2000)
- 1 in 33 American men (3%) reported an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. (National Victimization Survey, 2000)
- In 2005, there were 191,670 victims of rape. 176,540 were female and 15,130 were male. (Criminal Victimization, 2005, BJS)
- Only 38% of sexual assaults were reported to law enforcement. (Criminal Victimization, 2005, BJS)
- 64% of all rapes are committed by someone the victim knows. (Criminal Victimization, 2005, BJS)
- Every 2.5 minutes, somewhere in the U.S, someone is sexually assaulted. (RAINN)
Myths such as these are commonly mistaken for facts. Knowledge is the only thing that can dispel the myths concerning rape.

Female Rape

**Myth:** Girls or women who flirt or dress in sexy clothing are asking for it.

**Fact:** No one asks to be raped and nothing ever gives someone the right to force sex on another, regardless of whether there has been a sexual relationship in the past, what she is wearing, how late it is, or otherwise.

**Myth:** Rape is a street crime; only people who put themselves in bad situations get raped.

**Fact:** Every 8 minutes someone is raped or sexually assaulted, most of the time by someone the victim knows. It can happen anywhere to anyone, even you.

**Myth:** A person can’t be raped by someone with whom she has previously had sex.

**Fact:** Just because you’ve had sex before, doesn’t give him the right to have sex with you whenever he wants.

**Myth:** It’s not rape if she doesn’t resist.

**Fact:** People respond to traumatic situations in a variety of ways. Compliance does not equal consent.

**Myth:** Alcohol causes sexual assaults.

**Fact:** Although alcohol is often involved, it does not cause sexual assault. Sexual assault is a choice like any other behavior.

**Myth:** The victim could have stopped or prevented the rape.

**Fact:** The threat of physical harm, or even death, strikes fear in the victim and can be immobilizing. Confusion, shock, and disbelief resulting from the assault can all make the victim unable to move or call for help.

In many cases, victims fail to identify their experience as rape and in other cases, the stigma associated with the rape hinders victims from reporting. Rape can happen to anyone, it does not discriminate. It crosses all barriers. Victims include women and men, old and young, educated and uneducated, wealthy and poor, and individuals of various races and ethnicities. It can occur anywhere and at any time.

Rape is one of the most under reported crimes in America.

Rape is not about sex, but about power and control. Most people assume that rapists rape because they are unable to control their sexual desire or unable to get a woman or girlfriend, however most rapist have girlfriends or are married.
The range of emotions following an assault can vary from victim to victim. These effects can be and, in many cases, are just as devastating to victims as the actual assault. Some may occur immediately following the assault and others may occur later. It is important for you to remember that these responses are common and that you are not alone. There are people who are willing and very capable of helping you through these tough times. (See last page for the Crisis Center near you).

Lack of feeling/shock/numbness: The numb feelings in many cases occur immediately after a sexual assault. These may include feelings of denial or disbelief that the assault actually occurred. You may have no emotional response or you just may not know how to respond.

Unable to concentrate: Flashbacks concerning the assault may occur frequently. Thinking about what happened and how it happened is normal. Your life will feel totally disrupted. You may even relive the attack to determine how it could have been prevented. Just remember there are always precautions we can take to stay safe, however only a rapist can control his or her actions. Allow yourself some time to recover. Remind yourself that you did nothing to make it happen and that it is not your fault.

The effects of rape don't go away by simply trying to forget them.

Anger and frustration: Anger is expected following a traumatic event such as rape. You may feel anger towards the rapist, anger towards yourself, anger towards the police, and even anger towards your family and friends. You may feel betrayed, frustrated, and even misunderstood. It is natural to feel angry and even feel like getting back at the rapist. It is important for you to understand that these emotions are normal, but you should not act on these thoughts. “Payback” will only make things worse for you.

Relationship problems: Sexual assault in many cases challenges your feelings and emotions regarding trust and intimacy. This may include difficulty getting close to others or believing that others really care about you. You may not want to be sexual at all for fear that it will remind you of the assault. You may also use sex as a way to cope with the assault. This may include having sex with almost anyone and not know why. You may need to be reassured that you are attractive. Just allow yourself time to heal. It is important to discuss what makes you feel comfortable or uncomfortable with your partner. Seeking counseling or a therapist may be helpful in your recovery efforts.

Fear and Anxiety: Sexual assault can lead to increased fear, worry, and mistrust of others. You may even feel unsafe being alone and may look to the people you trust for protection. You may also question your own judgment especially if you were assaulted by someone you know and trusted. Panic attacks or sudden episodes of intense fear and worry may also occur.

Alcohol and drugs: It is not uncommon for some victims to resort to drugs such as alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine following a sexual assault. These substances are often used to help control other symptoms related to the assault. Medications such as sleeping pills, anti-depressants, and pain pills are also used to help victims cope, however these medications are sometimes abused. It is important to use drugs as only prescribed by a physician.
After a rape, immediate emotions of shock and disbelief gradually give way to anger, fear, guilt, distrust, helplessness, denial, and depression. Rape victims need to be able to talk to someone about these feelings and to understand that such feelings are normal.

1. Try to remain calm and alert; get to a safe place.
2. Don’t bathe, douche, brush your teeth, change clothes or do anything else that may destroy physical evidence.
3. Seek medical attention.
4. Call the rape hotline or someone you trust to be with you.
5. Report the rape to the police - even if you do not wish to prosecute later. Your report may assist the police in preventing another incident of this kind.
6. Seek counseling and emotional support from your local crisis center.

What to Do if Someone You Know is Raped

Those close to a victim of sexual assault have a powerful influence in the healing process. Here are some ideas about how to help if someone who has been raped turns to you for reassurance and understanding:

◆ Be supportive. Listen. Show that you care about the victim’s feelings. Emphasize that the rape was not the victim’s fault and that the responsibility for the rape lies with the attacker.
◆ Believe the victim. Provide the opportunity to talk about his/her emotions and reactions without pressure.
◆ Encourage immediate medical attention.
◆ Don’t tell the victim what to do. Instead, help explore the victim’s options. It is up to the survivor to make the choices.
◆ Suggest seeking emotional support. Survivors of rape may experience long-term problems such as fear, depression, anger, guilt, inability to trust, and loss of self-esteem.
◆ Be gentle and sensitive. Support the survivor’s need to feel safe. She/he may want to be comforted or may want to be left alone. Ask before reaching out.
◆ Recognize your own limits. You are also having a wide range of feelings and may need support and a chance to talk. The National Sexual Assault Hotline is open 24 hours per day. Please call 1-800-656-HOPE.

Other Impacts of Sexual Assault

Gastrointestinal disorders
Genital injury
Guilt
Physical injury
Post traumatic stress disorder
Powerlessness
Sexually transmitted diseases
Shock
Substance abuse
Suicide
There are four common stages of sexual assault for victims. Not everyone goes through these stages at the same pace or in the same order. It is common for survivors to vary in their experience of these stages.

◆ Crisis Stage:
Victims experience a variety of feelings or emotions immediately or within hours or days following an assault including: shock, denial, fear, depression, anger, frustration, guilt, shame, distrust, pain, as well as sleeping and eating disruptions. Some victims may want to communicate while others desire to be left alone.

◆ Denial Stage:
Some victims minimize the effect of the assault. Others may make major life changes such as a job, residence, or appearance to move forward following an assault. Some victims turn to harmful things such as drugs or alcohol.

◆ Suffering Stage:
Reality begins to sink in during this stage. Victims experience such things as depression, insecurity, anger, guilt, shame, flashbacks, nightmares, mood swings, difficulty concentrating, loss of interest in normal/usual activities, anger towards the attacker and anger misdirected at loved ones and themselves.

◆ Resolution Stage:
Victims accept that the sexual assault occurred. This stage also includes movement from being a “victim” to “survivor.”
Only a rapist can prevent rape, but the more you know the better your chances are of reducing your risk.

- Remember that you have the right to say “No”.
- Consider going out with a group or in public rather than being alone on a date with someone you do not know very well.
- Be aware of men who invade your personal space, come on too strong, or make you feel uncomfortable.
- Trust your intuition: If you feel like you are being pressured you probably are.
- Learn how date rape drugs, such as Rohypnol and GHB, can be used against you by a rapist.
- Learn more about your risk of sexual assault by your local crisis center.

**Relationship Bill of Rights**

1. I have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
2. I have the right to say no.
3. I have the right to express my feelings.
4. I have the right to feel safe.
5. I have the right to change my mind.
6. I have the right to ask for what I want.
7. I have the right to end the relationship.
8. I have the right to all of my feelings.
9. I have the right to make decisions.
10. I have the right to be content.
SIGNS OF A **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP**

- You trust your partner with your life.
- Your partner likes your friends, encourages you to spend time with them and wants to include them in his/her life as well as yours.
- You make important decisions together.
- You don’t have to lie to protect your partner’s reputation or cover for his/her mistakes.
- Your partner encourages you to enjoy different activities and helps you reach your goals.
- Your partner likes you for who you are—not just for what you look like.
- You are not afraid to say what you think and why you think that way.
- You like to hear what your partner thinks, and don’t always have to agree.
- You have both a friendship and a physical attraction.
- You don’t have to be with your partner 24 hours a day.
Dating Violence

Dating violence is repeated verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse used to frighten, hurt and control a girlfriend or boyfriend. Dating violence is a serious and sometimes deadly reality. Jealousy, possessiveness, and violence do not equal love.

Are you experiencing dating violence?

- Does your partner try to control when you see your friends or which friends you may have?
- Does your partner scare you, boss you around, monitor your every activity?
- Does your partner make all the decisions or sulk when things don’t go his or her way?

If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, YOU could be a victim of dating violence. Call your local crisis center for help (see back page).

WARNING SIGNS

- Threats of violence
- Extreme jealousy or possessiveness
- Insults, humiliates or criticizes you unfairly
- Tells you how to dress and/or what to do
- Abusive to their last girlfriend, boyfriend, or spouse
- History of family abuse

If it hurts... it’s NOT love.

DOMESTIC & DATING VIOLENCE

If you suspect a friend or relative is being abused, confront him or her. Listen and be supportive, but encourage them to get help. Do not accept any excuses!
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SIGNS OF A **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP**

**Safety Tips**

**In Social Situations**
- Keep a clear head.
- Avoid excessive alcohol or drugs.
- Watch your drink.
- Be assertive. Speak up if the situation makes you uncomfortable.
- Express yourself and expect to be respected.

**In Your Home**
- All entrances and the garage should be well lighted.
- Never hide a key outside.
- Do not admit strangers to your home under any circumstances.

**In Your Car**
- Always lock your car when leaving and entering.
- Look in the back seat before entering your car.
- Have your keys in your hand to avoid lingering before entering.

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**Date Rape**

When people think of rape, they often imagine a stranger jumping out of a bush and sexually attacking some poor unsuspecting woman fumbling through her purse for her keys. But it’s not only strangers who rape. In fact, about 67% of all people who are raped know the person who attacked them.

Date rape is a sexual assault by an individual with whom the victim has a “dating” relationship and the sexual assault occurs in the context of this relationship (National Center for Victims of Crime & Crime Victims). Rape is a crime. Rapists are 100% responsible for their actions. Date rape is the most common, least reported, and potentially the most psychologically damaging type of sexual assault.

**Acquaintance Rape**

Acquaintance rape is if someone you don’t know well and are not dating forces you to have sex. Acquaintance rape can happen on a date, at a party, some other social setting, or even in your home.

**Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is any deliberate or repeated behavior or action that is unwelcome, hostile, offensive, or degrading to the other person. Sexual harassment is recognized as a major problem for youth. Four out of every five students have experienced some form of “unwanted and unwelcome” sexual behavior during their school life. Sexual harassment ranges from sexual comments, jokes or gestures, to having clothing torn off. Nothing you do, say, or wear gives anyone the right to assault, abuse or harass you sexually or otherwise.

**Sexual harassment is not about sex. It is used to control and/or degrade another person.**
Alcohol and other drugs are involved in many rape cases. A growing trend is the use of date-rape drugs that are often put into alcohol, soft drinks, water, or other drinks. Some drugs like Benadryl are put into food (such as brownies) to cover up the taste. Many of these drugs are tasteless and odorless. You may not know that you have been drugged until you feel drowsy.

Three drugs that are commonly used are Rohypnol, GHB, and Ketamine. Rohypnol also called “roofies,” is a strong tranquilizer that is illegal in the United States. GHB or Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate is a clear liquid anesthetic. It is also known as “G,” “Grievous Bodily Harm,” and “Easy Lay.” Ketamine is also a liquid animal anesthetic commonly called “Special K,” “Vitamin K,” or “Bump.”

Symptoms of being drugged:

- Suddenly and unexpectedly becoming drowsy.
- Feeling very agitated, jittery or nervous for no known reason.
- Experiencing hallucination (seeing or hearing things that aren’t there).
- Suddenly getting sick or vomiting after having a drink.
- Memory loss for several hours.
- Waking up and not remembering what happened hours earlier.
Myths such as these are commonly mistaken for facts. Knowledge is the only thing that can dispel the myths concerning rape.

**MALE RAPE**

**Myth:** Men can’t be sexually assaulted.
**Fact:** Any man can be sexually assaulted regardless of size, strength, appearance, or sexual orientation.

**Myth:** Only gay men are assaulted.
**Fact:** Heterosexual, gay, and bisexual men are equally likely to be sexually assaulted.

**Myth:** Only gay men sexually assault other men.
**Fact:** Most men who sexually assault other men identify themselves as heterosexual. This highlights that rape is about violence, anger, and control - not lust or sexual attraction.

**Myth:** Men cannot be sexually assaulted by women.
**Fact:** Although the majority of perpetrators are male, men can also be raped by women.

**Myth:** Erection or ejaculation during a sexual assault means you “really wanted it” or consented to it.
**Fact:** These are physiological responses that may result from mere physical contact or extreme stress. These responses do not imply that you wanted or enjoyed the assault and do not indicate anything about your sexual orientation. Some rapists are aware how erection and ejaculation can confuse a victim-this motivates them to manipulate their victims to the point of erection or ejaculation to increase their feelings of control and to discourage reporting of the crime.

### Unique Effects After Male Assaults

1. Idea of being a victim is hard to handle
2. Loss of manhood
   **Examples:** use of drugs and alcohol, increase in aggressive behavior
4. Sexual difficulties
5. For heterosexual men:
   Confusion of sexuality. May be reinforced by ignorance or intolerance.
6. For homosexual men: Feelings of self-blame and self-loathing attached to their sexuality. May be reinforced by ignorance or intolerance.
MALE RAPE STATISTICS

About three percent of American men - a total of 2.78 million men - have experienced an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime according to the 1998 Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women study.

- In 2003, one in every ten rape victims (19,670) were male according to the 2003 National Crime Victimization Study. These victims were assaulted by both strangers and non-strangers.
- In 2004, 6,200 male victims reported being raped (by strangers), according to the 2004 National Victimization Study, Bureau of Justice Statistics. The rate of rapes of males was 0.1 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older, (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2004)
- In one 12 month period, 92,748 adult American men experienced a completed or attempted rape. Because some persons suffer multiple rapes, it is estimated that 111,298 rapes of adult American men occur annually. (Tjaden, Patricia and Nancy Thoennes. “Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Rape Victimization: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey” by Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes.” National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, January 2006).
- 1 in 33 men (3%) reported a completed or attempted rape sometime in their lifetime. (National Institute of Justice Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January, 2006. “Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Rape Victimization: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey” by Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes). The survey also found that 0.1 percent of surveyed men said they experienced a completed or attempted rape in the previous 12 months. These estimates equate to approximately 92,748 men who are forcibly raped each year in the U.S. (January 2006 National Institute of Justice Centers for Disease Control’s National Violence Against Women Survey, 1995-1996).
RAPE IN ALABAMA 2007

The following statistics are based on data compiled by the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center (ACJIC) as reported to law enforcement and from the Alabama Coalition Against Rape (ACAR) as reported by the rape crisis centers.
It is estimated that only 38% of all the rapes committed were reported to law enforcement (Criminal Victimization, BJS, 2005). According to the ACJIC, 1,408 female rapes were reported to law enforcement—averaging 3.9 rapes per day. This means that the actual number of rapes which occurred were 3,900—averaging 10.7 per day – with 2,492 not reporting.
The Rape Crisis Centers (RCC) in Alabama received 8,017 toll-free hot-line calls. The total number of rapes reported was 1,173. 1,117 victims were female, 53 victims were male, and in one case the gender was unknown. In comparison to the Alabama Criminal Justice Information System (ACJIC), the RCC reported 235 less rape cases. The breakdown of victims by race were 60% white (706), 33% black (386), .8% (9) other, and 3% (41) unknown. The ACJIC only reported female victims ranging from 2 to 86 years of age. The average age was 22.5.

**Juvenile Victims**

The ACJIC defines juveniles as persons under the age of 17. Juveniles accounted for 42% (588) of all 1,408 rapes reported. Adults represented 58% (820) of all the rapes. Education is necessary to raise awareness about rape as it relates to juveniles. The rape crisis center prevention educators provided education to middle and high schools, grades 6 through 12. During 2007, 3,472 presentations were provided throughout the state, reaching a total of 72,228 students.

**When and Where Rapes Occurred**

463 (33%) of the victims were raped in their homes; 211 (15%) of the rapes occurred in the offender’s home; 42 (3%) occurred in the offender’s vehicle; and 84 (6%) occurred at the residence of a friend or relative of the victim. 19% of the rapes occurred on a Saturday and 18% occurred on a Sunday.

**The Offender**

Nationally, it is estimated that 67% of all rapes are committed by someone the victim knows (Criminal Victimization, 2004). In Alabama, 72% of the rape victims knew or were related to the offender. The victims’ relationships to the offenders were reported as relative, acquaintance, stranger, unknown and girlfriend or ex-girlfriend.
Services offered by the

RAPE CRISIS CENTERS

24 Hour Crisis Hotline

Emergency Shelter

Child Advocacy

Counseling - individual & group

Court Advocacy

Education and Training (community & professional)

Information and Referrals

Legal Assistance

Parenting Classes

SANE/SART Program

Support Groups

Volunteer Program
Rape Crisis Centers And The Counties Served

- **Standing Together Against Rape (STAR)**
  Crisis Line: (334) 213-1227, Office: (334) 213-1227
  Autauga, Butler, Crenshaw, Elmore, Lowndes, Montgomery

- **Crisis Center Inc., Rape Response**
  Crisis Line: (205) 323-7273, (888) 323-7273
  Office: (205) 323-7782
  Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Walker

- **Daybreak Crisis Recovery Center**
  Crisis Line: (256) 231-0654, Office: (256) 237-6300
  Calhoun, Cherokee, Clebourne, Dekalb, Etowah, Talladega, Randolph

- **Crisis Services of North Alabama**
  Crisis Line: (256) 716-1000, (800) 691-8426
  Office: (256) 716-4052
  Jackson, Limestone, Madison

- **SafeHouse**
  Crisis Line: (205) 664-4357, Office: (205) 664-5930
  Clay, Coosa, Shelby*

- **House of Ruth, Inc.**
  Crisis Line: (334) 793-2232, Office: (334) 793-5214
  Barbour, Bullock, Coffee, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Pike

- **Mental Health Association in Morgan County**
  Crisis Line: (256) 353-1160, Office: (256) 353-1160
  Lawrence, Morgan

- **Rape Counselors of East Alabama**
  Crisis Line: (334) 745-8634, Office: (334) 741-0707
  Chambers, Lee, Macon, Tallapoosa

- **Lifelines Family Counseling Center**
  Crisis Line: (334) 473-7273, (800) 718-7273
  Office: (334) 431-5100
  Clarke, Mobile, Washington

- **Shoals Crisis Center - Rape Response**
  Crisis Line: (256) 767-1100, Office: (256) 765-0025
  Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Marion

- **Turning Point**
  Crisis Line: (205) 758-0808, Office: (205) 758-0808
  Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa

- **Victim Services of Cullman, Inc.**
  Crisis Line: (256) 734-6120 / 734-6100,
  Office: (256) 775-2600
  Cullman, Marshall, Winston

- **Lighthouse-Baldwin Co.**
  Crisis Line: (251) 947-4393, Office: (251) 947-6196
  Baldwin, Escambia

- **Crisis Center of Russell County**
  Crisis Line: (334) 297-4401, Office: (334) 297-4484
  Russell

- **Sabra Sanctuary, Inc.**
  Crisis Line: (334) 874-8711, Office: (334) 877-4645
  Dallas, Perry, Wilcox

Please contact the Crisis Center for your area based on your county of residence.

**Alabama Coalition Against Rape**

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

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