



Sexual Violence

<http://wrc.msu.edu>

517-353-1635

Gender Matters

Sexual violence and abuse affect people of all genders. Typically, women are more likely to experience sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape, but these issues must concern everyone in order to end the violence. Despite the term “sexual” being used in these concepts, sexual violence is an issue of power and control, NOT an issue of sex or sexuality.

What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence is any act of a sexual nature that is unwanted, nonconsensual or perpetuated against someone's will. Actions that are considered sexual violence include, completed nonconsensual acts such as rape, attempted rape, abusive sexual contact such as unwanted touching, and noncontact sexual abuses such as undesired exposure to pornography, nude photographs taken without the person's consent, and/or verbal sexual harassment (Source: *Center for Disease Control*). Sexual violence is never the survivor's fault.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is considered any unwanted sexual advances and/or requests for sexual favors, and any other kind of verbal or physical sexual conduct which the submission to or rejection of can explicitly or implicitly impact an individual's employment or participation in a course, program or activity. Sexual harassment can also create an environment which is hostile, intimidating, or offensive for the individual (Source: *Michigan State University Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives*). Sexual harassment is never the survivor's fault.

What is sexual assault?

Sexual assault is any type of nonconsensual, forced or coerced sexual contact including when the individual is unable to give consent because of mental or physical incapacity or intoxication. According to Michigan State University's Sexual Assault Program, “Sexual assault includes: street harassment, sexual harassment, incest, stranger assault, and acquaintance rape.” Sexual assault is typically regarded as a more severe form of harassment. Sexual assault is never the survivor's fault.

What is rape?

Rape is typically understood as forced sexual intercourse, including vaginal, anal, or oral penetration. Rape is forced penetration by any body part or object. Rape is considered an issue of power and control, rather than a sexual act, where the perpetrator is exerting dominance over his/her victim. People of any gender or sexuality can be victims and people of any gender or sexuality can be perpetrators of sexual violence. (Source: *Michigan State University's Sexual Assault Program*). Rape is never the survivor's fault.

Emergencies, call 911 • 24-Hour Crisis Line, 517-372-6666 • Report on-campus/off-campus assaults, 517-353-3922

What is date/acquaintance rape?

Date/acquaintance rape are forced or coercive acts of a sexual nature imposed by someone the survivor knows prior to the assault, such as an intimate partner or new acquaintance. It is important to note that one's previous relations with an acquaintance, date, or intimate partner does not indicate consent. Sometimes the familiarity with the perpetrator can make reporting the assault and recovering from the assault difficult because of inevitable proximity to the perpetrator, mutual friends not believing the survivor or fear of retaliation and future harm (*Source: Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network*). Date/acquaintance rape is never the survivor's fault.

What is victim blaming?

Victim blaming includes any and all statements, jokes, media influences, social narratives, social norms, news reports, law enforcement officials, etc., that contribute to making survivors of sexual violence believe that they did something wrong to warrant the assault. This includes suggestions that a survivor's provocative clothing, drunkenness or previous sexual behavior meant that she/he "asked for it." Victim blaming ignores the true cause of assault as an issue of power, coercion, manipulation, force and control over the survivor. Sexual assault is never the fault of the survivor.

What is relationship/domestic violence?

According to MSU Safe Place, "Relationship violence, also referred to as domestic violence, intimate partner violence or abuse, is when one person in an ongoing relationship uses a variety of tactics to control another. These tactics include: physical abuse, threats, stalking behaviors, emotional abuse, isolating from family and friends, and economic control. These tactics often result in convincing the survivor that the abuse is her/his fault, silencing the survivor, and keeping the survivor trapped in the relationship."

Where can I find more information about these topics?

MSU Women's Resource Center

<http://wrc.msu.edu>

517-353-1635

332 Union Building

MSU Counseling Center Sexual Assault Program

<http://www.endrape.msu.edu>

24-hour Crisis Line: 517-372-6666

Business Line: 517-355-3551

14 Student Services Building

MSU Safe Place

<http://safeplace.msu.edu>

517-355-1100

MSU Office for Inclusion & Intercultural Initiatives

<http://inclusion.msu.edu>

517-353-3922

101 Olds Hall

Sparrow Hospital Sexual Assault Clinic

Local Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner on staff.

Emergency: 517-364-3729

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)

National anti-sexual violence organization.

<http://rainn.org>

National Sexual Assault Hotline:

1-800-656-4673