

Common Feelings of People Who Have Been Sexually Assaulted

FEAR OF PEOPLE, SENSE OF VULNERABILITY

Survivors of sexual assault frequently fear people and feel vulnerable even when going through the regular activities of life.

LOSS OF CONTROL; FEAR OF THE ASSAILANT

The assailant took power and control from the survivor. Survivors may feel unsure about themselves, and they may temporarily lack their usual self-confidence.

ANXIETY, SHAKING, NIGHTMARES

Survivors may experience shaking, anxiety, flashbacks, and nightmares after an attack.

TALKING ABOUT THE ATTACK THE SECRET

Some survivors may be compelled to tell others about the attack, some feel it must be hidden from everyone or from certain people.

CONCERN FOR THE ASSAILANT

Some survivors express concern about what will happen to the assailant if the attack is reported or prosecuted. It is human to show concern for others, especially those who are troubled, destructive, and confused.

GUILT, SHAME, SELF-BLAME

Most survivors feel guilty and ashamed about the assault. Sometimes blaming oneself helps a survivor to feel less helpless.

Emotional responses to sexual assault will vary with each person. It is important to remember that your daughter's responses are not crazy; they are normal reactions to a very traumatic experience.

The Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education

Sexual Assault * Relationship Violence * Stalking

- 24 hour crisis line at (612) 626-9111
- Walk-in crisis counseling 8-4:30 M-F
- Accompaniment to the hospital
- Advocacy in filing police reports
- Legal advocacy with restraining orders and accompaniment to court
- Academic advocacy
- Safe housing advocacy
- Support groups
- Community resources

407 Boynton
410 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455

24 hour Crisis Line:

(612) 626-9111

Business line: (612)626-2929

TTY line: (612) 626-4279

Email: aurora.center@umn.edu

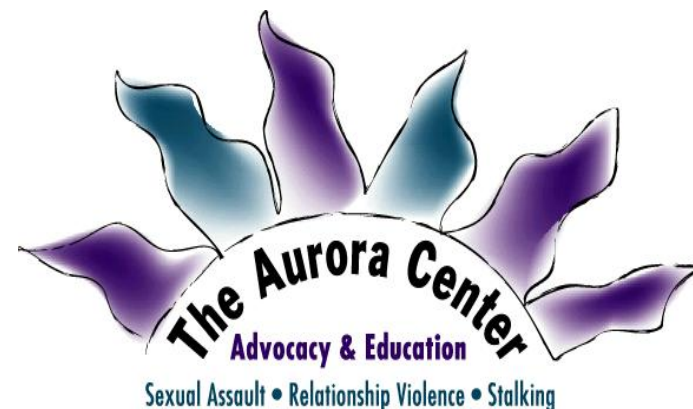
Website: www.umn.edu/aurora

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Concerned Parents:

Strategies and support for talking with your college daughter about sexual assault.



The Aurora Center provides free and confidential services to people who have experienced, or have loved ones that have experienced, sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking.

As parent, what can I do if my child is a victim of sexual assault?

- 🌸 Believe what your child tells you.
- 🌸 Remind your daughter that what happened was not her fault.
- 🌸 Listen to your daughter. Do not tell your daughter what she can and cannot do.
- 🌸 Support your daughter and her decisions. Control was taken away from her during the sexual assault and empowering your daughter will help her regain that control.
- 🌸 Avoid making decisions FOR your daughter; rather, offer guidance and support your daughter's decisions.
- 🌸 Resist your urges to become involved in the work of the police or prosecutor. You are the parent and should focus on providing love and support. Your involvement in the legal process may cause undue anxiety for your daughter.
- 🌸 Connect with a counselor who specializes in recovery from sexual assault. The Aurora Center can help you find counseling resources. Your whole family will benefit from this support.
- 🌸 Caring for loved ones who have been assaulted can be very stressful and emotionally draining. Recognize your own experience of secondary trauma and seek assistance from counseling resources or other support services.

FACTS

90% of rapists are acquaintances of the victim.
The National Institute of Justice, 2001.

Less than 5% of college rape victims report their assault to the police.
The National Institute of Justice, 2001.

1 in 5 college women will be raped or the victim of an attempted rape while in college.
The National Institute of Justice, 2001.

University of Minnesota Policy 2.6.3

Sexual assault and relationship violence are prohibited at the University of Minnesota. Sexual assault and relationship violence, including threats of sexual assault and related relationship violence, are attacks not only on a person's body, but also on the person's dignity, and are not tolerated.

Sexual assault is any sexual contact (including, but not limited to sexual intercourse) when such contact is achieved without consent; or with the use of force, coercion, deception, or threat. Rape is a form of sexual assault.

Consent is informed, freely and actively given, and mutually understood. If physical force, coercion, intimidation, and/or threats are used, there is no consent. If the victim is mentally or physically incapacitated or impaired so that s/he can not understand the fact, nature or extent of the sexual situation, and the condition was or would be known to a reasonable person, there is no consent. This includes conditions due to alcohol or drug consumption, or being asleep or unconscious.

What can parents do to help reduce the risk of sexual assault?

Talk with your daughter about the risks of being a victim of sexual assault...

- 🌸 Know that your daughter could experience a sexual assault or abuse, even if you have discussed the issue.
- 🌸 Make sure your daughter knows that you will believe her if she discloses to you.
- 🌸 Talk with your daughter about healthy relationships and make sure your daughter knows that she deserves equal and respectful relationships.
- 🌸 Talk with your daughter about avoiding people who don't respect their personal boundaries or make sexist jokes and comments.
- 🌸 Let your daughter know that there is no "type" of person who experiences sexual assault. It can happen to anyone.
- 🌸 One of the most salient risk factors for experiencing sexual assault as an adult is having experienced sexual abuse as a child. Recovering from abuse takes time and support. Make sure your daughter has both if she has experienced prior abuse.
- 🌸 Encourage your daughter to trust herself and her ability to make good decisions.