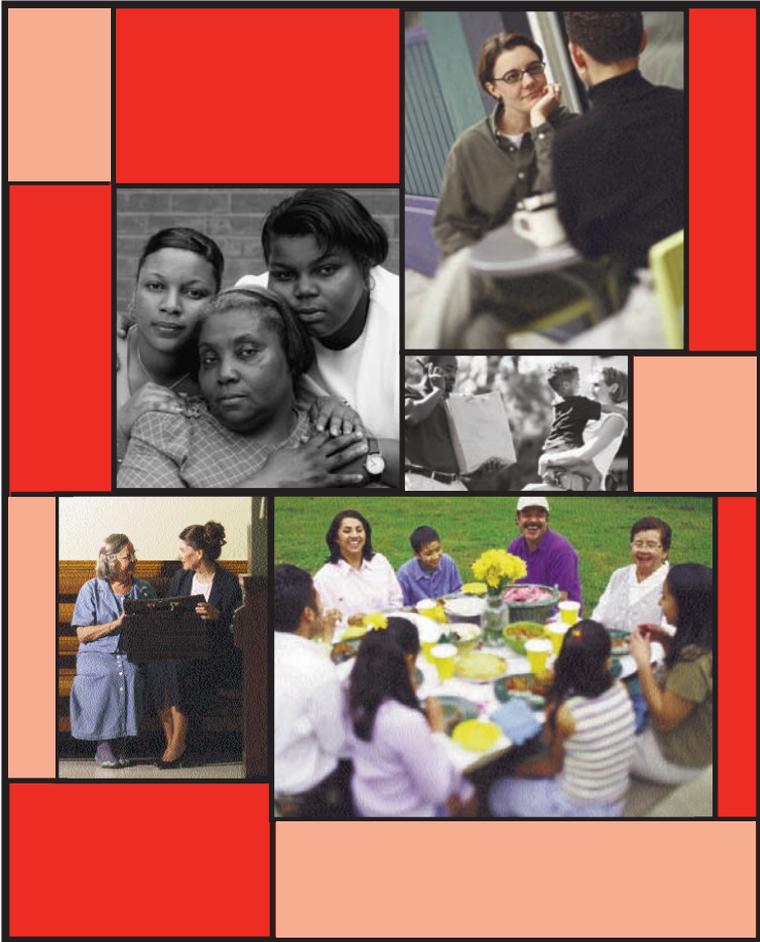


*AFTER SEXUAL ASSAULT*



# *HOW CAN I HELP*

*A GUIDE FOR FRIENDS AND FAMILY*

This booklet focuses on women, the most common victims of rape. However, men can also be victims of sexual assault. The reactions, feelings and needs of sexual assault victims, whether male or female, are very similar. The information and suggestions made in this booklet are equally relevant and helpful to the friends and family of male sexual assault victims.



Published August 2013

This project was supported by Grant #2010-VA-GX-0118, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office for Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, through the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice or the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

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[WWW.ICASA.ORG](http://WWW.ICASA.ORG)



## FROM THE START ...

Rape can traumatize not only the victim, but also her family and friends. One of the greatest hardships is not knowing how to help. Each woman's reaction to being raped is individual. Her pain and her needs will be unique. This pamphlet provides guidance for those whose family member or friend has been raped.

### **LET THE VICTIM TAKE THE LEAD**

A rape victim has experienced a devastating loss of control over her life. She needs to be in control of her decisions – so don't push her in any way.

A few simple rules are:

- If she wants to talk, listen.
- If you are uncomfortable listening, help her find someone who can listen.
- If she doesn't want to talk, don't force her.
- Let her tell you what she wants to do. Ask her, "How can I help you?"

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*HOW CAN I HELP*

# HOW A RAPE CRISIS CENTER CAN HELP

ICASA rape crisis centers are experts in helping victims of sexual violence. Rape crisis center workers are specially trained to help victims of sexual violence. Rape crisis centers:

- Provide free and confidential services for victims, their families and friends of victims.
- Provide advocacy and counseling services.
- Answer the hotline 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week, 365-days-a-year.

A list of centers can be found in the back of this booklet or at [www.icasa.org](http://www.icasa.org).

## IT'S NOT HER FAULT

**Rape is always a crime. The rapist is a criminal.  
Don't blame the victim.  
Victims don't cause their attackers' behavior.**

### Don't Question Her Actions

- Don't second-guess your friend's behavior.
- Don't ask her why. (Why did you go there? Why did you stay? Why did you open the door?)
- Don't say "You should have" or "You shouldn't have" (You should have had locks on the windows... You shouldn't have been doing the laundry at that time of night... You should have fought... You shouldn't have fought...).



Questioning the victim's actions only increases her pain and self-doubt. Don't focus on the victim's behavior. The rapist's behavior is the problem and should be condemned.

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*HOW CAN I HELP*

## FACE THE ISSUE

People often tell a victim of a crisis things like: “Don’t worry,” “Don’t cry,” “Don’t think about it.” This is impossible. And it’s not helpful for someone who has been raped. Neither the crime nor its aftermath will go away by ignoring them. Telling her to deny or downplay the experience she’s just been through might suggest to her that you aren’t concerned.

## BE READY TO LISTEN

Tell her she can discuss her experience with you. Some women need to process the experience by repeating details or talking about their feelings. Try to listen without judgement. Don’t ask specific questions. You don’t need to satisfy your curiosity about the details of the sexual assault.

# SELF-CARE

## FACE YOUR OWN FEARS

There are a number of other feelings you may have that may affect your relationship with the victim.

- You may be uncomfortable thinking about rape.
- You may feel angry with the victim or the offender.
- You may feel fearful.
- You may feel guilt that you could not prevent the attack.

Pay attention to your own feelings. Talk with someone other than the victim about your feelings, so you are able to focus on the victim’s needs and concerns without judgement.

## SEEK COUNSELING IF YOU NEED IT

Rape crisis counselors are aware that sexual assault hurts those who are close to the victim. Counselors can help with your questions and concerns. ICASA rape crisis centers provide free and confidential counseling to the victim's family and friends.

## WHAT MORE CAN YOU DO?

Any assistance, however small it seems to you, will show your concern and care. If you want to help your friend or relative reach out to them. Do not offer more than you can give. If you offer to help be sure to follow through. Knowing and respecting your own limitations is important. Every victim might need or want different support, from housing to daily routine to money. Here are some things you can do:

- Offer to drive her home or go with her on public transportation.
- Offer to help with routine chores.
- Help her install new locks or help her look for a new place to live.
- Consider letting her stay in your home for a while. Or offer to stay with her at her home. Make sure you're prepared to do this commitment before offering.
- Ask if there are financial problems for her after being raped. The victim may not get paid for time lost from work. She may have to pay to move to a new home, or make other lifestyle changes that increase her living expenses. Don't assume that an offer of financial help would seem insensitive.

- Make sure that your friend knows that there are rape crisis services and other community resources she can contact for support.

Your support will be key if the rapist is caught and your friend wants to prosecute the rapist. If the prosecutor charges the rapist and the case goes to trial, there are likely to be many hearing and trial dates. At any point throughout the court process, offer to accompany her or help organize a shift of others to accompany her.

Be patient, after the crisis seems to have passed, you may want things to get back to normal. However, your friend or relative may still be adjusting. Many victims suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder. It is important that you remain supportive for however long it takes.

## SEXUAL INTIMACY

Rape can affect a woman's feelings about sexuality. Some victims find that sex stirs up frightening feelings which they associate with the rape experience and are more comfortable if lovemaking is limited to holding and hugging. Other women experience no difficulty in this regard, distinguishing quickly between rape and consensual sexuality, and might welcome their partner's desire for intimacy. However, a lover must recognize the possibility of temporary change in an intimate relationship.

## ABSTINENCE

If your partner does not want sexual activity, you must honor her wishes. Try to talk openly about this issue even if you have never talked openly about this subject before. As in other aspects of her recovery from rape, your partner's needs should be of primary importance and should guide your actions.

Remember that even though some things change between you and your partner for awhile, most women recover from the trauma of rape and continue loving and full lives.

## IN CONCLUSION ...

Remember rape is never the victim's fault. It is important that you support and believe the victim. This is how you can help the victim the most. Remember also that there is no set timetable for recovery. Be patient. Be supportive.



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*HOW CAN I HELP*

# ICASA RAPE CRISIS CENTERS ...

## ■ NORTH

### ARLINGTON HEIGHTS

Northwest CASA  
24 hrs. 888-802-8890  
[www.nwcasa.org](http://www.nwcasa.org)  
**Outreach Office: Evanston**

Northwest CASA  
24 hrs. 888-802-8890

### AURORA

Mutual Ground, Inc.  
24 hrs. 630-897-8383  
[www.mutualgroundinc.com](http://www.mutualgroundinc.com)

### CHICAGO HEIGHTS

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
South Suburban Center Sexual  
Violence and Support Services  
24 hrs. 708-748-5672  
[www.ywcachicago.org](http://www.ywcachicago.org)

### DEKALB

Safe Passage, Inc.  
24 hrs. 815-756-5228  
[www.safepassagedv.org](http://www.safepassagedv.org)

### ELGIN

Community Crisis Center  
24 hrs. 847-697-2380  
[www.crisiscenter.org](http://www.crisiscenter.org)

### GALENA

Riverview Center Inc.  
Sexual Assault Prevention  
& Intervention Services  
24 hrs. 888-707-8155  
[www.riverviewcenter.org](http://www.riverviewcenter.org)  
**Satellite Office:**

#### **Mount Carroll**

Riverview Center Inc.  
SAP&IS Carroll County  
24 hrs. 877-273-7772

### GLENDALE HEIGHTS

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
Patterson and McDaniel  
Family Center  
24 hrs. 630-971-3927  
[www.ywcachicago.org](http://www.ywcachicago.org)

### GURNEE

Zacharias Sexual  
Abuse Center  
24 hrs. 847-872-7799  
[www.zcenter.org](http://www.zcenter.org)

### HICKORY HILLS

The Pillars Community  
Services  
24 hrs. 708-482-9600  
[www.pillarscommunity.org](http://www.pillarscommunity.org)  
**Satellite Office: Berwyn**  
The C.A.R.E. Center  
24 hrs. 708-482-9600

### JOLIET

Sexual Assault Service Center  
Guardian Angel Community  
Services  
24 hrs. 815-730-8984  
[www.gacsprograms.org](http://www.gacsprograms.org)

### KANKAKEE

Kankakee County Center  
Against Sexual Assault  
24 hrs. 815-932-3322  
[www.kc-casa.org](http://www.kc-casa.org)  
**Outreach Office: Watseka**  
Iroquois Sexual Assault  
Services.  
24 hrs. 815-432-0420

### PRINCETON

Freedom House, Inc.  
24 hrs. 800-474-6031  
[www.freedomhouseillinois.com](http://www.freedomhouseillinois.com)

### QUAD CITIES

Rape/Sexual Assault  
Counseling Program  
Family Resources, Inc.  
24 hrs. 309-797-1777  
[www.famres.org](http://www.famres.org)

### ROCKFORD

Rockford Sexual Assault  
Counseling, Inc.  
24 hrs. 815-636-9811  
[www.rsaonline.org](http://www.rsaonline.org)  
**Satellite Office: Belvidere**  
Rockford Sexual Assault  
Counseling, Inc.  
24 hrs. 815-636-9811  
**Satellite Office: Rochelle**  
Rockford Sexual Assault  
Counseling, Inc.  
24 hrs. 815-636-9811  
**Outreach Office: Rockford**  
Prevention Office  
24 hrs. 815-636-9811

### STERLING

YWCA of the Sauk Valley  
24 hrs. 815-626-7277  
[www.ywca.org/saukvalley](http://www.ywca.org/saukvalley)  
**Satellite Office: Dixon**  
YWCA of the Sauk Valley  
24 hrs. 815-288-1011

### STREATOR

ADV & SAS  
24 hrs. 800-892-3375  
[www.advsas.org](http://www.advsas.org)  
**Satellite Office: Pontiac**  
ADV & SAS  
24 hrs. 800-892-3375  
**Outreach Office: Ottawa**  
ADV & SAS  
24 hrs. 800-892-3375

## ■ CHICAGO

**Chicago 24-Hour Hotline**  
**1-888-293-2080**

### RAPE VICTIM ADVOCATES

[www.rapevictimagadvocates.org](http://www.rapevictimagadvocates.org)  
**Satellite Office: Chicago**  
RVA - Stroger Hospital of  
Cook County  
**Satellite Office: Chicago**  
Austin Community Satellite  
**Satellite Office: Chicago**  
Northside Chicago

### MUJERES LATINAS EN ACCION

[www.mujeerlatinasenaccion.org](http://www.mujeerlatinasenaccion.org)

HOW CAN I HELP

# ICASA RAPE CRISIS CENTERS ...

## YWCA METROPOLITAN

### CHICAGO SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

www.ywcachicago.org  
**Satellite Office: Chicago**  
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
Laura Parks and  
Mildred Francis Center  
**Satellite Office: Chicago**  
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
Englewood  
**Satellite Office: Chicago**  
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
Logan Square  
**Outreach Office: Chicago**  
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
RISE Children's Center

## ■ **CENTRAL**

### BLOOMINGTON

Stepping Stones Sexual  
Assault Services  
YWCA of McLean County  
24 hrs. 309-827-4005  
www.ywcamclean.org

### CHARLESTON/MATTOON

Sexual Assault Counseling  
& Information Service  
24 hrs. 888-345-2846  
www.sacis.org  
**Satellite Office: Robinson**  
Counseling & Information  
for Sexual Assault/Abuse  
24 hrs. 866-288-4888

### DANVILLE

Vermillion County  
Rape Crisis Center  
24 hrs. 866-617-3224  
www.vcrapecrisiscenter.org

### DECATUR

Growing Strong Sexual  
Assault Center  
24 hrs. 217-428-0770  
www.growingstrongcenter.org

## MACOMB

Western Illinois Regional  
Council/Community Action  
Agency Victim Services  
24 hrs. 309-837-5555  
www.wirpc.org/victimservices

## PEORIA

The Center for the  
Prevention of Abuse  
Sexual Assault Services  
24 hrs. 309-691-4111 or  
800-559-SAFE  
www.centerforpreventionofabuse.org

## QUINCY

Quanada Sexual  
Assault Program  
24 hrs. 800-369-2287  
www.quanada.org  
**Satellite Office: Pittsfield**  
Pike County Satellite Office  
24 hrs 800-369-2287  
**Outreach Office: Brown**  
**County**  
Quanada Sexual Assault  
Program  
24 hrs. 800-369-2287  
**Outreach Office: Schuyler**  
**County**  
Quanada Sexual Assault  
Program  
24 hrs. 800-369-2287

## SPRINGFIELD

Prairie Center Against  
Sexual Assault  
24 hrs. 217-753-8081  
www.prairiecasa.org  
**Satellite Office: Jacksonville**  
Prairie Center Against  
Sexual Assault  
24 hrs. 217-753-8081

## URBANA/CHAMPAIGN

Rape, Advocacy, Counseling  
and Education Services  
24 hrs. 217-384-4444  
or 877-236-3727  
www.cu-races.org

## ■ **SOUTH**

### BELLEVILLE

Call For Help, Inc. Sexual  
Assault Victims Care Unit  
24 hrs. 618-397-0975  
www.callforhelpinc.org  
**Satellite Office:**  
**East St. Louis**  
Call For Help, Inc. Sexual  
Assault Victims Care Unit  
24 hrs. 618-397-0975  
**Satellite Office: Granite City**  
Call For Help, Inc., Sexual  
Assault Victims Care Unit  
24 hrs. 618-397-0975

### CARBONDALE

Rape Crisis Services of  
The Women's Center, Inc.  
24 hrs. 618-529-2324 or  
800-334-2094  
www.thewomensctr.org  
**Satellite Office: Marion**  
Rape Crisis Services of  
The Women's Center, Inc.  
24 hrs. 800-334-2094  
**Outreach Office:**  
**Northeast Carbondale**  
Rape Crisis Services of  
The Women's Center, Inc.  
24 hrs. 800-334-2094

### VANDALIA

Sexual Assault and  
Family Emergencies  
24 hrs. 800-625-1414  
www.safecrisiscenter.org  
**Satellite Office: Centralia**  
Sexual Assault and  
Family Emergencies  
24 hrs. 800-625-1414  
**Outreach Office:**  
**Effingham**  
Sexual Assault and  
Family Emergencies  
24 hrs. 800-625-1414

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HOW CAN I HELP

- www.icasa.org -

**FOR SERVICES AND INFORMATION IN YOUR  
COMMUNITY CONCERNING SEXUAL ASSAULT OR  
SEXUAL ABUSE, CONTACT:**

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**100 N. 16th Street  
Springfield, IL., 62703  
(217) 753-4117 [www.icasa.org](http://www.icasa.org)**