The term “sexual violence” includes rape, incest, child sexual assault, ritual abuse, stranger rape, date/ acquaintance rape, partner/marital rape, sexual harassment, exposure, and voyeurism. Sexual violence also includes situations in which a person may be drunk, high, unconscious, or has a disability and cannot consent to sexual activity. Survivors of sexual violence have been forced, coerced and/or manipulated to participate in unwanted sexual activity. Survivors do not cause their assaults and are not to blame. Perpetrators are fully responsible for their actions.

♦ Every two minutes in America, someone is sexually assaulted.

(WEBINR calculation based on 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice.)

♦ It is estimated that 20–25 percent of college women will be victims of an attempted or completed rape during their college careers.


♦ In 9 out of 10 cases, the offender is known to the victim, usually a classmate, friend, or acquaintance.


♦ 52% of participants in a study of sexual coercion in gay/lesbian relationships reported at least one incident of sexual assault.


♦ In this study, gay men reported 1.6 incidents per person on average; and lesbians reported an average of 1.2 incidents per person.


Harvard College Sexual Misconduct Policy

For the purposes of this policy, sexual misconduct is to be understood as encompassing the following behaviors:

♦ Rape includes any act of sexual intercourse that takes place against a person’s will or that is accompanied by physical coercion or the threat of bodily injury. Unwillingness may be expressed verbally or physically. Rape may also include intercourse with a person who is incapable of expressing unwillingness or is prevented from resisting, as a result of conditions including, but not limited to, those caused by the intake of alcohol or drugs. Rape includes not only unwilled or forced vaginal intercourse, but also the sexual penetration of any bodily orifice with a body part or other object.

♦ Sexual assault includes any unwanted touching or fondling of a sexual nature that is accompanied by physical force or threat of bodily injury.

♦ Sexual misconduct may also include other serious or persistent unwanted sexual contact or conduct, such as harassment, threats, intimidations, or unwanted touching or fondling.

Being intoxicated does not diminish a student’s responsibility in perpetrating rape, sexual assault, or sexual misconduct.

Information for Harvard Students

At Harvard:

Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

www.fas.harvard.edu/~osapr

731 Holyoke Center

1350 Massachusetts Avenue

Cambridge, MA  02138

24-Hour Information and Support: (617) 495-9100

OSAPR provides confidential information and support for student survivors of sexual violence, their friends and partners, accompaniment for medical care at UHS / Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital for medical evidence collection, referrals to community agencies and police if requested.

Response (Peer Counseling)

Lowell Basement, Sun-Thurs., 9pm to midnight

(617) 495-9600, 9pm-7am

Response is a peer counseling organization staffed by female undergraduates to respond to issues of rape, acquaintance rape, sexual harassment, and relationship violence. Response welcomes people who are concerned about these issues to drop by and talk and/or browse through the Response library.

Community Resources:

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center

www.barcc.org/

99 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, MA 02139

Hotline: (617) 492-rape

Provides free, 24 hour services to survivors of rape, sexual assault, and their friends and family.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

1 Deaconess way, Boston

(617) 754-2400

To have medical evidence collected within 5 days of a sexual assault.

Victim Rights Law Center

http://www.victimrights.org

18 Tremont St, Suite 220, Boston, MA 02108

(617) 399-6720

Free legal assistance for survivors of sexual assault.

The Fenway Community Health Center

Violence Recovery Program

7 Haviland Street

Boston, MA 20115

(617) 927-6250, (800) 834-3242

Counseling, support groups, advocacy, and referral services for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender victims of bias crime, domestic violence, sexual assault and police misconduct.
Helping a Friend

Some things to consider when talking to a survivor of rape, sexual assault or sexual harassment:

♦ Listen. Often a person in crisis just needs someone to hear their story.
♦ Believe. One of the most important things you can do is to communicate that you believe what your friend is telling you.
♦ Help to clarify what you think your friend is saying. Your friend may be talking about her/his emotions in a way that seems jumbled. You can help by sorting out and repeating back what was said.
♦ Let your friend decide what they want to talk about. Don’t push your friend to talk about something if they are not comfortable.
♦ Avoid asking accusing questions. You may feel angry and frustrated about what happened, but don’t take it on your friend. Don’t ask questions about why your friend did (or didn’t do) a certain thing.
♦ Don’t make decisions for your friend. The experience of rape or sexual assault is one of having complete control taken away. You can help your friend regain power over her/his life by letting your friend make her/his own decisions about what to do next.
♦ Show that you care. Remind your friend that you care, and that this crisis hasn’t changed that fact.
♦ Remind your friend to have self-compassion. Your friend has been through a very difficult experience. Remind your friend to be good to herself/himself.
♦ Take care of yourself. It can be very upsetting and traumatic when a friend is assaulted. You may feel powerless, guilty, shocked, angry, or scared. These feelings are normal, natural responses. Be sure to be kind to yourself and get help managing these emotions.

24 Hour Support and Information line
(617) 495-9100

1. Get to a safe place.
2. If you think you want evidence collected do not bathe, shower, brush your teeth or go to the bathroom. This is important for preserving evidence.
3. Do not change your clothes (if you already have, put your clothes in a clean paper bag such as a grocery store bag and bring them with you to the emergency room).
4. Go to the emergency room at Beth Israel Hospital, 1 Deaconess Way, Boston, (617)754-2400. This must be done within 5 days of the assault. If you would like someone to go with you to the hospital, call the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, (617) 495-9100, or Boston Area Rape Crisis Center hotline, (617) 492-RAPE (7273).
5. The emergency room will page the on-call nurse examiner. The nurse examiner will complete a rape evidence collection kit and treat any injuries that you may have sustained.
6. If you suspect you were given any type of drug you should be tested, ideally within 24 hours of ingestion.
7. If you want to have a pill to prevent pregnancy (“Morning After Pill”), you must begin the medication within 72 hours.
8. If you are concerned about HIV, you can begin a regimen of preventive medication within 36 hours of exposure.
9. The rape evidence collection kit will be held anonymously at the state crime lab (regardless of whether you choose to make a police report) for 6 months. If you make a report within 6 months, the kit is analyzed when it is needed for the investigation. Both the prosecution and defense will have access to the results.

LGBT Sexual Violence

Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender (LGBT) people are subject to the same spectrum of sexual violence as the general population. In general, situations of sexual assault that involve LGBT people are very similar to those that heterosexuals experience. According to research, LGBT people are at approximately the same risk as heterosexuals of being sexually assaulted by someone they know.

However, homophobia in our culture puts LGBT people at greater risk for sexual assault by strangers. It is common for perpetrators to use sexual violence as a way to punish and humiliate someone for being LGBT. This type of violence is considered a hate crime. A common example of this is when individuals who think they can “change” a woman’s sexual orientation and specifically target lesbian and bisexual women for sexual assault. If you think that was happened to you would constitute as a hate crime, help is available. Consult the resources on the back of this brochure for assistance.

In Massachusetts, hate crimes are defined by the Hate Crimes Penalties Act, G.L. c.265, Sec. 39. This section reads, “Whoever commits an assault or a battery upon a person or damages the real or personal property of a person with the intent to intimidate such person because of such person’s race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability shall be punished by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than two and one-half years, or by both such fine and imprisonment.”