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For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures and for inquiries concerning the application of Title IX and its implementing regulation, contact Dr. Victoria Sanders, Assistant Vice Chancellor/PASSHE Title IX Coordinator, 2986 North Second Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110-1201; Phone: 717-720-4061; Email: vsanders@passhe.edu.

Additionally, inquiries concerning Title IX and its implementing regulation can be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, Region III, The Wanamaker Building, 100 Penn Square East-Suite 505, Philadelphia, PA 19107; Phone: 215-656-6020.



# SEXUAL ASSAULT & RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

WHAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW!

**What is Sexual Assault?**

Legal and institutional definitions of sexual assault vary widely but in simple terms, sexual assault refers to any unwanted sexual contact, or in other words, sexual contact against your will, and without consent (womenslaw.org). Sexual violence and intimate partner violence is a problem that plagues our society and college campuses are no exception. In fact, the National Institute for Justice reported (2007) that 20% of women and 6% of men are victims of attempted or completed sexual assault while in college. This booklet has been developed to help educate members of the community about sexual and relationship violence and to provide resource information to help those impacted by violence.

**What to do if you think you have been sexually assaulted.**

**Call the police at 911 if you are in immediate danger.**

Direct calls to the police are the best way to get the assistance you require.

**Get to a safe place.**

After an assault, you may be in a state of shock. Wrap yourself in something warm. To preserve evidence, DO NOT: bathe/shower, eat/drink, smoke, brush your teeth or hair, urinate or wash your clothing. Put the clothes you were wearing into a paper (not plastic) bag.

**Call someone you trust.**

Receiving comfort and support helps restore a sense of safety and contributes to better decision-making.

**Seek medical attention.**

You may have injuries of which you're unaware; you also should be tested for sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy (if applicable). A medical exam for evidence collection (by a qualified forensic nurse examiner) is

strongly recommended and should be done as soon as possible.

**Report the assault promptly.**

Reporting an assault does not commit you to filing charges, and you can decide at any time not to pursue the case. While it is important that perpetrators be held accountable and prevented from doing this to others, you should never let anyone pressure you if you know you do not want to report.

**Talk with a counselor.**

Working with a counselor can accelerate recovery and help you manage post-traumatic symptoms.

**Take care of yourself.**

Rest, eat well, seek social support and engage in activities that are healing for you and your body.

**Ask for accommodations.**

The Title IX Coordinator can assist you with resources and information on accommodations (academic, housing, transportation and work)

**Emergency Numbers:**

In case of emergency call 911\*. Then call Mellon Independence Center Security at 215-238-9777. \*If using a classroom phone, dial 8-911.

**Resources:**

**Ms. Christina Dennis**

Director  
267-386-3003  
cdennis@passhe.edu

**Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape**

1-888-772-7227  
www.pcar.org

**National Sexual Assault Hotline**

1-800-656-4673  
www.rainn.org

**YWCA 24-Hour Crisis Hotline**

1-800-654-1211

**Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

1-800-932-4632  
www.pcadv.org

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

www.ndvh.org  
1-800-799-7233

**Did you know?\***

- **One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.**
- **An estimated 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.**
- **85% of domestic violence victims are women.**
- **Historically, females have been most often victimized by someone they knew.**

\*Provided by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, www.ncdav.org

## How to Report Sexual Violence

Any person or student is encouraged to report rapes and sexual offenses immediately to the police by dialing 911 and then report to Mellon Independence Center Security at 215-238-9777. Security will report the incident to the PASSHE Center City Title IX Coordinator who will then report it to the Title IX Coordinator of that person's university (see listing on opposite page). The university Title IX Coordinator will respond to all questions about, or allegations of, sexual harassment including by persons who are in authority over a student such as a faculty member, staff, or employer.

### Safety Tips

**Don't think that it can't happen to you!** Just being aware that you could be at risk makes you less vulnerable.

**You have the right to set sexual limits in any situation.** Make sure that you clearly communicate these limits.

**Don't invite people into your room that you do not know.**

**Don't be afraid to be assertive.** If someone is doing something you don't like or is not respecting your limits, then leave the situation.

**Consider taking a self-defense course.**

**Trust your instincts.** If you are uncomfortable in a situation, then trust your gut reaction and get out as soon as possible.

**Stay sober.** Drinking or using drugs diminishes your ability to make good decisions and makes you more vulnerable to the possibility of assault.

**Never leave any beverage unattended or accept a drink from someone you do not know well.**

**Don't leave any event with someone you just met or don't know well.**

**Don't walk alone at night.** Avoid being near secluded or wooded areas.

**Be aware of your surroundings.** Know where you are going, look around to see who is near you, walk confidently and always be alert. Use cell phones and MP3 players with caution; they can distract you from your surroundings.

**Always keep your home and car doors locked.**

### What to do if someone you care about has experienced sexual assault or relationship violence.

- **Listen to the victim/survivor** and take what she/he says seriously.
- **Reassure the person** that the assault or violence was not her/his fault.
- **Ask first** before you touch or hug the victim/survivor to show support.
- **Don't judge** or ask questions that could be interpreted as blaming, such as "Why didn't you fight back?" "What were you wearing?" or "How can you stay in that relationship?"
- **Don't press for details.** Allow the person to share information at her/his own pace in a safe environment.
- **Encourage the victim/survivor** to seek assistance and volunteer to go with her/him.
- **Respect the person's right** to make her/his own decision about whether to report the assault/abuse.
- **Maintain confidentiality.**
- **Offer to accompany** the victim/survivor to classes, meals, parking lots, social gatherings, etc.
- **Get support for yourself.** Hearing about or witnessing events that are hurtful to those for whom we care also can produce post-traumatic symptoms.

### Keep in Mind

#### Sexual Assault: Can it happen to me?

Sexual assault and relationship violence are widespread but are widely unreported in communities of every race, culture, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation and socioeconomic class.

- Being raped by a date or an acquaintance is just as serious as sexual assault committed by a stranger.
- An individual incapacitated by alcohol or drugs cannot legally give consent; the legal responsibility for sexual or physical assault rests completely with the assailant.
- Victims/survivors of attempted sexual assaults/physical violence are entitled to the same legal, emotional and medical resources.
- Men can be victims of sexual assault and relationship violence; women can be perpetrators of these crimes. Sexual assaults and relationship violence can also occur when the assailant is the same sex as the victim.

*Violence  
Sexual  
Violence  
& Title IX*

**Sexual Offenses against Students**

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX prohibits student-on-student sexual offenses and requires a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

Sexual harassment of students, which includes acts of sexual violence (including, but not limited to, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual exploitation) is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX and includes physical sexual acts: against a person's will, where a person is incapable of giving consent as a result of his/her use of drugs or alcohol, or where an individual is unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability.

*A Word about Self Blame:*

It is not your fault. While it is important for individuals to take responsibility for protecting themselves, it is critical to note that errors in judgment (e.g., mistaking someone's motives, getting drunk) or failure to stop an attack are NOT the CAUSE of assault or abuse. Persons who assault or abuse other individuals are legally responsible for their actions, even if they themselves are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

*Not Just a Women's Issue:*

In recent years, men's groups and individual men, recognizing the high personal and societal costs of sexual and relationship violence have become active in sexual assault and relationship violence prevention work. Only through the cooperation of men and women is stopping these crimes possible.

*Issues of Race, Culture, Gender, Sexual Orientation and Socioeconomic Status:*

Individuals with less power/status in their families and cultures may risk loss of social support and additional physical or psychological harm as a result of reporting sexual assault or relationship violence. It is critical that family members, friends, colleagues and service providers be sensitive to these issues as they support victims/survivors.

**1 in 4 adult females and 1 in 10 adult males will be sexually assaulted.**

*PASSHE Center City Partner Title IX Coordinators*

The role of the Title IX Coordinator is to oversee investigations involving sexual offenses against students and to ensure University-wide compliance with Title IX.

**PASSHE Office of the Chancellor**

Dr. Victoria Sanders  
Dixon University Center Title IX  
Coordinator  
717-720-4061  
vsanders@passhe.edu

**East Stroudsburg University of PA**

Ms. Doreen Tobin  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
570-422-3463  
dtobin@esu.edu

**PASSHE Center City**

Ms. Christina Dennis  
Director  
267-386-3003  
cdennis@passhe.edu

**Millersville University of PA**

Mr. Hiram Martinez  
Assistant to the President for Social  
Equity & Diversity  
717-872-3787  
hiram.martinez@millersville.edu

**Bloomsburg University of PA**

Dr. Robert Wislock  
Deputy to the President  
570-389-4529  
rwislock@bloomu.edu

**West Chester University of PA**

Ms. Barbara Schneller  
Director, Office of Social Equity  
610-436-2433  
bschneller@wcupa.edu

**Cheyney University of PA**

Ms. Sheilah Vance, Esquire  
Chief of Staff and Deputy to the  
President  
610-399-2430  
svance@cheyney.edu

**Over 75% of all sexual assaults are committed by an acquaintance. Of acquaintance rapes, 57% occur on a date.**