

Chapter 2

Rape Culture

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” ~ Margaret Mead

OBJECTIVES FOR THIS CHAPTER

- Become familiar with the myths and facts about sexual violence
 - Understand how rape myths impact survivors and our work as advocates
 - Understand the difference between rape prevention and risk reduction
 - Learn about some of the historical and cultural aspects of rape
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Rape culture is a complex set of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence, especially against women and children. It is a society where violence is seen as sexy and sex as violent. A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm. In a rape culture, both men and women assume that sexual violence is a fact of life. This violence, however, is neither biologically or divinely ordained. Much of what we accept as inevitable is, in fact, the expression of values and attitudes that can change.

We will continue to live in a rape culture until we stop privileging men over women, Caucasians over other races, heterosexuality over homosexuality, and people with money over people who have less.¹

¹ Buchwald, Emilie, Pamela R. Fletcher, and Martha Roth. *Transforming A Rape Culture*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 1993. Print.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS²

Note: Every state has its own legal definitions of rape and sexual assault. The following are not Iowa's legal definitions, but rather the definitions we use as an agency. You can review Iowa's definitions in Chapter 7, Advocating in the Legal Setting.

Rape: Forcing a person to have sexual intercourse, oral, or anal sex, against their will or by using force, threatening to harm that person, or a third person. Penetration, no matter how slight, is necessary to call the act rape; ejaculation is not necessary. Penetration may be of the vagina, the mouth, or the anus, and may be by the penis, other body part (digit), or an object.

Sexual Assault: Touching someone in a non-consensual manner (making sexual contact) and the touching is offensive to that person. "Sexual contact" is any touching of the sexual or intimate parts of the body (breasts, abdomen, buttocks, inner thighs, pubic or genital areas) of a person.

Consent: Consent means to give permission by saying "yes." Consent is possible only when there is equal power. Giving in because of fear is not consent. To give permission a person must be able to say "yes" or "no" without pressure. Deception or manipulation eliminates the possibility of consent. When alcohol or other drugs are involved, the more alcohol or other drugs are consumed, the greater the impairment of consent. The person who initiates should take responsibility for ensuring that sexual contact is mutual. Alcohol impairment is not an excuse for not obtaining consent. In Iowa, an act of sexual intercourse is considered to be against a person's will if the person cannot use her/his judgment, thereby making the act non-consensual. If a person is asleep or unconscious, they are incapable of consent.

Child Sexual Abuse: The sexual exploitation or victimization of a child by an adult, adolescent, or older child. The difference in age and sexual knowledge between a child and an older person makes informed consent to sexual activity impossible. Sexual abuse includes a range of behaviors including vaginal, anal, or oral penetration, fondling, exhibitionism, prostitution, and photographing a child for pornography. The sexual activity does not necessarily have to involve force. Children are often bribed or verbally coerced into sexual acts.

Assault: Behavior towards a specific person which is intended to cause pain or injury, or which is intended to result in physical contact which will be insulting or offensive to another, or any act which puts another person in fear of immediate physical contact (as

² Berkowitz, Alan. "Guidelines For Consent In Intimate Relationships." *Campus Safety and Student Development* 3.4. 2002: 49-64. Print.

described above), with the ability to carry out such threat; or intentionally points any firearm, or other weapon in a menacing manner towards another.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when: submission to such conduct is made an implicit or explicit condition of an individual's employment; submission to or rejection of such conduct affects employment opportunities; or such conduct interferes with an employee's work or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

RAPE CULTURE IN THE U.S.³

We live in a society in which words are often used to put women down and dehumanize them; where calling a girl or woman a "bitch," "freak," "whore," "baby," or "dog" is common. Such language sends a message that females are less than fully human. When women are seen as inferior, it becomes easier to treat them with less respect, disregard their rights, and ignore their well-being.⁴

Some types of advertising and media also perpetuate a rape culture. Jean Kilbourne, in her *Killing Us Softly* videos, describes how advertising reflects, exacerbates and exploits deep-seated personal and social anxieties about femininity, masculinity, and shifting gender roles, undermining the way girls and women see themselves, while normalizing the violence done to them by men.⁵

Rape feeds off other forms of prejudice, such as racism and homophobia. Beliefs and behaviors, including rape, that promote one group of people as superior to another, deny other groups their full humanity.

RAPE STATISTICS: A HEATED DEBATE

Estimates of rape prevalence vary dramatically for a few reasons.

- People are reluctant to acknowledge to researchers, police, or even to themselves that they were raped.
- Definitions of sexual violence vary. Sometimes, for an assault to be counted as rape it must be reported to police, or even result in a conviction. In these cases, estimates

³ Sanday, P.R. "Rape-Prone Versus Rape-Free Campus Cultures." *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 2 No. 2, June, 1996, pp. 191-208. <<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~psanday/rapea.html>>

⁴ *Men Can Stop Rape*. 2005. Web. 24 Sept. 2010. <www.mencanstoprape.org>.

⁵ Hodgson, Kendra. "Killing Us Softly Study Guide." Ed. Jeremy Earp. Media Education Foundation, 2005. Web. 24 Sept. 2010. <http://www.mediaed.org/assets/products/206/studyguide_206.pdf>

tend to be very low. Asking a victim directly whether she/he was raped, however, produces higher figures, and asking victims about their specific sexual experiences and labeling an experience as rape or not based on her/his answers produces even higher numbers. Rape prevalence figures depend greatly on where the researcher draws the line.

NATIONAL STATISTICS ON SEXUAL ABUSE⁶

- Every 2 minutes, somewhere in America, someone is sexually assaulted.
- In 2006, there were 260,940 victims of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault. Of these victims, 116,600 were victims of completed rape, 75,720 were victims of attempted rape, and 68,620 were victims of sexual assault.

Female-Identified Victims⁷

- 1 in 6 American women have been the victims of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime (14.8% completed rape; 2.8% attempted rape). A total of 17.7 million women have been victims of these crimes. (Rape is defined as forcible rape in this study.)
- In 2002, 7 out of every 8 rape victims were female.

Male-Identified Victims^{8,9}

- About 3% of American men have experienced an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime.
- In 2002, one in every eight rape victims was male.

⁶ U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics. "Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2006, Statistical Tables." *National Crime Victimization Survey*. <<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/cvus06.pdf>>

⁷ Tjaden, Patricia, and Nancy Thoennes. Rep. *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey*. National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998. Web. 24 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/172837.pdf>>

⁸ Tjaden et al.

⁹ U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. *National Crime Victimization Survey*. 2010. <<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=245>>

Child Victims^{10, 11, 12, 13}

- 15% are under age 12
- 29% are between the age of 12 and 17
- 80% are under age 30
- Age 12 to 34 is the highest risk years. Risk peaks in the late teens: girls 16 to 19 are four times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault.
- 7% of girls in grades 5 to 8 and 12% of girls in grades 9 to 12 said they had been sexually abused.
- 3% of boys in grades 5 to 8 and 5% of boys in grades 9 to 12 said they had been sexually abused.
- 93% of juvenile sexual assault victims knew their attacker; 34.2% were family members and 58.7% acquaintances.

Individuals with Disabilities¹⁴

Abuse is a serious threat to many individuals with disabilities. One study estimates that 83% of women and 32% of men with developmental disabilities experienced sexual abuse. Other research documents that between 50% and 99% of persons with disabilities who experience abuse or violence are violated by someone they know (e.g., family member, bus driver, personal care attendant).

¹⁰ Greenfield, L.A. "Sex Offenses and Offenders." *Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)*. U.S. Department of Justice, 1 Jan. 1997. Web. 24 Sept. 2010. <<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=1146>>

¹¹ Schoen, C., Davis, K., and Collins, K.S. "The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls." *The Commonwealth Fund*. 1 Nov. 1997. Web. 24 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Content/Publications/Fund-Reports/1997/Nov/The-Commonwealth-Fund-Survey-of-the-Health-of-Adolescent-Girls.aspx>>

¹² U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. "Child Maltreatment 1995: Reports From the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System." *Administration for Children & Families*. 1995. Web. 24 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/ncands/highlight.htm>>

¹³ "National Statistics: The Dangers of Youth." *Sexual Assault Response Services*. 2000. Web. 24 Sept. 2010. <http://www.sarsonline.org/lawstat_statistics.php>

¹⁴ National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. *Kid&TeenSAFE: An Abuse Prevention Program for Youth with Disabilities*. 2002. Harrisburg, PA.

Race and Sexual Violence¹⁵

Among people 12 and older, about 83.5% of the US population is white, and 82.5% of rape victims are white; 13.3% of victims are black, compared to 12.3% of the population; and 4.2% of both victims and the population is of other races. Blacks are about 10% more likely to be attacked than whites are.

Silent Victims^{16, 17}

The most common reasons given by victims for not reporting these crimes are the belief that it is a private or personal matter, and that they fear reprisal from the assailant.

- The National Women's Study found that 84% of women did not report their rapes to police.
- In 2001, only 39% of rapes and sexual assaults were reported to law enforcement officials — about 1 in 3.
- Of sexually abused children in grades five through twelve, 48% of the boys and 29% of the girls had told no one about the abuse—not even a friend or sibling.

The Perpetrator^{18, 19, 20, 21}

- The average age of rapists at arrest is 31.
- 22% of imprisoned rapists report that they are married.
- Juveniles accounted for about 16% of forcible rape arrestees in 1995 and 17% of those arrested for other sex offenses.
- In about 1 out of 3 sexual assaults, the perpetrator was intoxicated: 30% with alcohol, 4% with drugs.
- In one study, 98% of males who raped boys reported that they were heterosexual.
- In 2001, 7% of rapes involved the use of a weapon: 2% used a gun, and 4% used a knife. 86% of victims reported the use of physical force only, and 7% were unsure.

¹⁵U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

¹⁶Kilpatrick, D.G., Edmunds, C.N., & Seymour, A.K. *Rape in America: A Report to the Nation*. Arlington, VA. 1992. National Victim Crime Center & Medical University of South Carolina.

¹⁷Schoen, et al.

¹⁸Greenfield.

¹⁹U.S. Department of Justice. *Alcohol and Crime: An Analysis of National Data on the Prevalence of Alcohol Involvement in Crime*. 1998. Washington, DC.

²⁰Holmes, W.C. and G.B. Slap. "Sexual Abuse of Boys: Definition, Prevalence, Correlates, Sequelae, and Management." *JAMA*. 2 Dec. 1998; 280(21):1855-62.

²¹U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

- Rapists are likely to be serial criminals. In one study, 46% of rapists who were released from prison were rearrested within 3 years of their release for another crime.

The Punishment^{22, 23}

- If the rape is reported to police, there is a 50.8% chance that an arrest will be made.
- If an arrest is made, there is an 80% chance of prosecution.
- If there is a prosecution, there is a 58% chance of a felony conviction
- If there is a felony conviction, there is a 69% chance the convict will spend time in jail.
- So, even in the 39% of attacks that are reported to police, there is only a 16.3% chance the rapist will end up in prison.
- Factoring in unreported rapes, about **6% of rapists—1 out of 16— will be convicted**. 15 out of 16 will walk free.

Statistics Generally Used at RVAP^{24, 25, 26, 27}

- 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18.
- At least 1 in 3 women in the world has been beaten, coerced into having sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.
- 1 in 4 female college students reported they had been victims of attempted or completed rape since age 14; 80% were victimized by boyfriends or acquaintances.
- Between 1 in 4 and 1 in 5 college women experience completed or attempted rape during their college years.
- About 90% of rape among college students involves alcohol.
- An estimated 91% of rape and sexual assault victims were female, and nearly 99% of the offenders were male.

²² U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

²³ National Center for Policy Analysis. *Crime and Punishment in America: 1999*. <<http://www.ncpa.org/pub/st229>>

²⁴ Russell, D.E.H. The Incidence and Prevalence of Intrafamilial and Extrafamilial Sexual Abuse of Female Children. In *Handbook on Sexual Abuse of Children*, ed., Lenore E.A. Walker. 1988. Springer Publishing Co.

²⁵ Heise, Lori, Mary Ellsberg, and Megan Gottemoeller. "Ending Violence Against Women." *Population Reports* L 11 (1999). Print.

²⁶ Commission on Substance Abuse at Colleges and Universities (1994). *Rethinking Rites of Passage: Substance Abuse on America's Campuses*. New York: Columbia University, Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse.

²⁷ Greenfield.

RAPE MYTHS AND FACTS^{28,29,30,31}

The reality of sexual violence is often very different from what most people believe occurs. Rape myths survive in our culture because they allow people to feel safe by believing that rape rarely happens. They allow us to believe people can prevent future rapes through their behavior and dress. They place blame on the victim and take the focus off the offender's behavior. Because we live in a rape culture, defense attorneys, the media, and society in general often promote these myths as truths.

Prevailing myths affect the way in which a society responds to rape and rape victims. As advocates, we need to be aware of the differences between myth and fact. Our personal beliefs and attitudes toward rape need to be examined and challenged, so that we can provide support in a non-judgmental and non-blaming way. If a victim believes in these myths, gentle education is needed during crisis counseling. Friends or family members may also believe in certain rape myths, and they need to know the facts in order to best support the victim and hold offenders accountable.

Crime of Passion

MYTH: Rape is an expression of passion and lust.

FACT: Rape is a crime of power and control. It is sexualized violence, not violent sex. The major motive for sexual assault is power – to overpower and control another person, using sex as the weapon.

MYTH: Rape is an impulsive, uncontrollable act of sexual gratification.

FACT: Most rapes are planned and motivated by aggression, dominance and hatred. In fact, most offenders have access to consensual sex, and many report being sexually dysfunctional during the assault. Rapists look for availability, vulnerability and accessibility in a potential victim.

FUNCTION: To minimize the violent and criminal nature of rape; to imply the victim was in some way to blame; to minimize rape by connecting it with sexual fantasy, and twist it into something desirable, romantic and passionate.

²⁸ Information was compiled from the following sources: ACCESS Training Manual, Ames, IA., Women Helping Women Training Manual, and other sources

²⁹ Ledray, L. *Recovering from Rape*. Holt Paperbacks; 2nd ed. August 15, 1994.

³⁰ Warshaw, R. *I Never Called it Rape*. Harper Paperbacks. July 8, 1994.

³¹ Greenfield.

The Stranger in the Bushes

MYTH: Rapists hide in dark alleys and bushes waiting to attack women at night.

FACT: Someone known to the victim – a friend, acquaintance, or family member, commits most (about 85%) sexual assaults. Rape can occur at any hour of the day, and half of all rapes occur in the victim’s home. In addition to the trauma experienced by victims of a stranger rape, victims of acquaintance rape must deal with betrayal by someone they know and often trust.

MYTH: Rape only happens at night.

FACT: 43% of rapes occur between 6 pm and midnight. 24% occur between midnight and 6am. The other 33% take place between 6am and 6pm.

MYTH: It’s not rape if the people involved knew each other.

FACT: Sexual assault can be committed within any type of relationship, including marriage, dating, friends, acquaintances, or co-workers. Sexual assault can occur in all types of relationships regardless of sexuality or gender identity. It does not matter if there is a current or past relationship; unwanted sexual activity is still sexual assault.

MYTH: There is no such thing as rape between married couples.

FACT: Forced sex within marriage is rape. Marital rape is often a final violent act following a battering incident.

MYTH: Rape is mostly an inter-racial crime.

FACT: The vast majority of violent crimes, which include sexual assaults and rapes, are intra-racial, meaning the victim and offender are of the same race.

FUNCTION: To deny that rape really happens to people we know, by people we know; we feel safer if we know what rapists look like, and we can avoid them; to feel “immune” or safe from rape.

Victim Blaming

MYTH: Sexual assault is provoked by the victim's provocative dress or flirting.

FACT: Neither provocative dress nor behavior is an invitation for unwanted sexual activity. There is no action or dress that gives one person the right to violate another person. No one ever "asks" to be raped. Forcing someone to engage in non-consensual sexual activity is sexual assault; regardless of the way that person dresses or acts.

MYTH: A person who is raped deserves it.

FACT: No one deserves to be raped. Going voluntarily to someone's residence, room or car does not mean they have agreed to have sex. This "assumption of risk" wrongfully places the responsibility of the offender's actions with the victim.

MYTH: It wasn't rape if she/he didn't fight back.

FACT: Lack of resistance is not uncommon, and is sometimes the way to avoid further injury or death. Not fighting or acting "passive" does not equal consent. There are many reasons why a victim of sexual assault would not fight or resist the attacker. They may feel that fighting or resisting will make the attacker angry, resulting in more severe injury. Many people are too scared, intimidated or shocked to use any physical means to resist. Also, most women and children are brought up to not be physically aggressive, especially toward someone they know.

MYTH: Anyone can prevent a sexual assault.

FACT: This myth asserts that no one can be forced to have sex. Offenders often use physical strength, physical violence, or coercion (intimidation and verbal threats) to overpower the victim. And, as most sexual assaults are perpetrated by someone known to the victim, the offender often uses the victim's trust to create an opportunity to commit the sexual assault. The offender may have intimate knowledge about the victim's life, such as where they live, location of workplace or school, or information about family and friends. This enhances the credibility of the threats.

FUNCTION: To point to something the victim did wrong, so we can feel safer by avoiding "risky" behaviors; to sustain our belief that if you're good, bad things won't happen to you; to find a reason for why it happened – it's easier to put the focus on the victim's behavior than to understand why a man would rape someone; to take the blame off of the offender if we don't want to hold him accountable.

Consent

MYTH: When people say "No" to sex, they really mean "Yes."

FACT: "No" always means "no," and pushing a little harder isn't sexy and won't change someone's mind. No one likes or wants to be raped. The decision to be physical or

sexual is a personal choice. These decisions need to be respected. When someone else makes that choice, that person is taking control over the relationship and abusing their partner.

MYTH: If someone pays for dinner or a date, the other person owes sex.

Fact: No one “owes” sex as a payment to anyone else.

MYTH: Kissing or making out with someone means agreeing to have sex.

FACT: Everyone has the right to say “no” to sexual activity at any point, regardless of what has preceded it, and to have that decision respected. If one person is unsure whether the other person is comfortable with an elevated level of sexual activity, the activity should stop and clarification questions should be asked.

MYTH: Once sexual contact has started, men cannot control themselves, and his partner is obligated to finish it.

FACT: Men don’t physically need to have sex after becoming aroused any more than women do. Men are still able to control themselves even after becoming sexually excited. Stopping will not give them “blue balls” or injure them.

MYTH: You can’t be raped by someone you’ve had sex with before.

FACT: Having sex once, twice, or 100 times is not an open invitation to have sex. Consent is necessary every time.

MYTH: It’s not sexual assault if it happens after drinking or taking drugs.

FACT: Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is not an invitation for non-consensual sexual activity. A person being under the influence does not cause them to be assaulted; the perpetrator chooses to take advantage of the situation and sexually assault because the victim is in a vulnerable position. About 75% of male perpetrators and at least 55% of victims had been drinking or taking drugs before the sexual assault. Iowa law states that someone who is cognitively impaired due to alcohol or drugs is unable to give consent for sexual activity.

FUNCTION: To minimize the importance of communication and negotiation in a relationship; to perpetuate the sex role stereotype of women as the sexual gate-keeper and men as aggressors for sex, which places responsibility on the woman; to excuse the offender for his abusive actions; for some men, to justify their own behavior; to make it seem “confusing” or a gray area if alcohol or drugs is involved.

The Legal Process

MYTH: Many women “cry rape” to seek revenge on a partner or to protect their reputation.

FACT: False reporting is rare. According to the FBI, approximately 8% of rape reports are false, which is no higher than any other felony. It is unlikely that a false report would get as far as criminal trial. Even a woman who recants may not have lied about being raped, but perhaps she is dealing with some aspect she finds particularly embarrassing or humiliating.

MYTH: It's easy for a girl or woman to "cry" or charge rape, and hard to defend against it.

FACT: Rape is highly unreported, for many reasons. The reporting process itself can be long and emotionally difficult for a survivor. Often times, the victim has more to lose than to gain by reporting sexual assault. The victim may experience a second victimization by the criminal justice system, and by the community. A typical defense used is that the sex was consensual, which then brings the victim's word against the perpetrator. If a jury believes rape myths, it can be difficult to find the perpetrator guilty.

MYTH: "Real" sexual assault victims report the crime immediately to the police.

FACT: There are many reasons why a sexual assault victim may not report the assault to the police. It is not easy to talk about being sexually assaulted. Reasons for not reporting include the following: reliving the trauma, retaliation by the offender, not being believed, being blamed for the assault, media coverage, the responses of family and friends, or being re-victimized as the case goes through the criminal justice system. The victim may also want to forget what happened, may not recognize what happened was sexual assault, or may be in shock. A victim is less likely to report a sexual assault by a friend or relative.

FUNCTION: To ignore that "normal men" in our community are rapists; to deny that rape really happens; to excuse the offender for abusive actions; to protect friends, heroes and buddies.

Male Victims

MYTH: Men cannot be raped.

FACT: Men can be overpowered, forced, coerced or tricked into sexual behavior just like anyone else. Approximately 10% of reported rape victims are male. Rape can happen regardless of gender identity, age, race, ability, sexual orientation, and social status. Though some people are at greater risk, anyone can be sexually assaulted, especially if they are a member of a group who is marginalized by society, such as members of LGBTQ or other minority communities.

MYTH: Men who assault other men and boys are expressing their sexual preference.

FACT: Most sexual offenders are heterosexual, regardless of their choice of victims. Victims are chosen according to perceived availability, accessibility, and vulnerability. Assaulting another man may increase the feeling of power an offender has. Rape is often a tool used for humiliation, to establish dominance and to determine “who serves whom.” Ignoring that men can be raped further isolates male victims.

FUNCTION: For heterosexual men to feel invulnerable and safe from sexual assault; to support the “crime of passion” myth, and ignore that rape is motivated by power, control and domination; for men to ignore the social problem of rape and consider it a “woman’s issue.”

RAPE PREVENTION VERSUS RAPE REDUCTION

Many people ask us “How can people stop getting raped?”

This is a great opportunity to address victim blaming and many other rape myths.

Rape Prevention: Stop rape from happening, this happens when a perpetrator chooses not to rape.

Risk Reduction: Steps a person can take to reduce the risk of sexual assault.

Rape prevention efforts need to be focused on educating people about asking for consent, not pressuring or coercing someone sexually, controlling their anger, respecting and listening to others, and having zero tolerance for a rape culture that condones sexual assault.

What Men Can Do – Rape Prevention^{32, 33, 34, 35}

- **Assume that you don’t have consent in intimate situations unless it is given explicitly.** Make sure that all intimacy is active, mutual, non-coerced, and consenting. When initiating sex, be sure that what you want is reciprocal.
- **Listen carefully.** Take the time to hear what your partner is saying. If you feel that your partner is not being direct or giving you a “mixed message,” ask for a clarification.

³² Rape Treatment Center: Santa Monica, UCLA Medical Center.

³³ Berkowitz, A.D. *Working with Men to Prevent Violence Against Women: An Overview*. October 2004. VAWnet Applied Research Forum. <<http://www.alanberkowitz.com/articles/VAWNET.pdf>>

³⁴ Katz, J. *10 Things Men Can Do to Prevent Gender Violence*. 1999. MVP Strategies.

³⁵ Men Can Stop Rape, Inc. *Defining the Rules Information Sheet*. 2007. <http://www.mencanstoprape.org/usr_doc/MCSR_Handout_-_Defining_the_Rules.pdf>

- **If you are emotionally, psychologically, physically, or sexually abusive, or have been in the past, seek professional help immediately.**
- **Remember that date rape is a crime.** It is never acceptable to use force in sexual situations, no matter what the circumstances.
- **Don't fall for the stereotype** that when someone says "no" she/he really means "yes." "No" means "no." If someone says "no" to sexual contact, stop.
- **Don't make assumptions about your partner's behavior.** Don't automatically assume that someone wants to have sex because of alcohol consumption, provocative clothing, or if she/he agrees to go to your room. Don't assume that because someone has had sex with you previously she/he is willing to have sex with you again. Also don't assume that consent to kissing or other sexual intimacies means a willingness to have sexual intercourse.
- **Be aware that having sex with someone who is mentally or physically incapable of giving consent is rape.** If you have sex with someone who is drugged, intoxicated, passed out, incapable of saying "no," or unaware of what is happening around her/him, this is rape. Alcohol and drugs can interfere with your ability to assess situations and to communicate effectively.
- **Be especially careful in group situations.** Be prepared to resist pressure from friends to participate in violent or criminal acts.
- **Get involved if you believe someone is at risk.** If you see someone being forced or pressured, don't be afraid to intervene. You may prevent a sexual assault.
- **Learn about sexual violence and what you can do to stop it.**

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Put the responsibility on rapists to prevent rape.
- Embrace that the victim is not to blame for being sexually assaulted and did nothing to deserve it.
- Risk reduction and safety ideas are a person's choice, not a responsibility.
- Be able to discern between a rape myth and the reality of rape.

FOR FURTHER READING

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