

# How To Help a Friend

## Sexual Violence Resources



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Committee on Sexual Assault Prevention  
Gender Relations Center

## Immediate Needs and Options

- **Make sure he or she is in a safe place.**
- Encourage him or her to avoid washing, douching, brushing teeth, or changing clothes. While this may be difficult, **preserving any evidence is important** in the event that he or she decides to report the assault to the police.
- Call someone. Call a friend, a rector, assistant rector or RA, [Notre Dame Security Police](http://www.nd.edu/~secap/ndspolice/) (574.631.5555), the [University Counseling Center](http://www.nd.edu/~secap/ucounseling/) (574.631.7336), the [Deputy Title IX Coordinator](http://www.nd.edu/~secap/deputytitleix/) (574.631.7728) or [University Health Services](http://www.nd.edu/~secap/universityhealthservices/) (574.631.7497). Or, if she or he prefers to speak to someone **off-campus**, call the **24-hour S-O-S** hotline at 574.289.4357. S-O-S is the local rape crisis center for St. Joseph County.
- **Seek medical attention** at the **Emergency Room** of either **St. Joseph Regional Medical Center (574.335.5000)** or **Memorial Hospital (574.647.1000)**. All tests and procedures are **free of charge** to the victim if he/she seeks medical care **within 96 hours of the assault**; insurance will not be billed. University Health Services can assist by arranging transportation and can provide confidential and professional follow-up medical care.
- **Consider** reporting the assault. He/she may report the assault to the University or to local police. Going to the hospital to seek medical attention does not obligate him/her to report the crime.

It is important to **seek medical attention as soon as possible, ideally within 96 hours** of the sexual assault. **Seeking medical attention does not obligate a survivor to follow through with pressing charges.** Also, an anonymous exam may be performed, and **all evidence collected will be held for a one-year period**, giving her/him **time to decide whether or not to file a police report.** After one year, all evidence will be destroyed.

## If more than 96 hours have passed since the assault:

Seek medical attention to address any injuries or symptoms related to the assault. University Health Services can provide confidential and professional medical care and/or make an appropriate referral to a local physician.

Consider seeking **confidential counseling and/or pastoral support**, either through the University's Counseling Center (574.631.7336), priest, deacon, sister, or brother at Campus Ministry (574.631.7800), or S-O-S (574-289-HELP [4357]).

Consider reporting the assault. To file a report with the University, contact the **Deputy Title IX Coordinator** (574.631.7728), or the Office of **Student Affairs** (574.631.5550). They can assist in filing an official report, provide academic or administrative assistance, provide information about **options** in pursuing campus judicial processes, or assist in reporting the assault to the local police.

The University's **Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct Policy** is available online: <http://dulac.nd.edu>

## Emotional Support

- **Listen.** Don't force a survivor to talk about the incident until he or she is ready in the healing process, but **remind him or her that you are there if he or she needs to talk.**
- **Follow his or her lead** in terms of what they want to do to gain closure about the incident or to have a better understanding of what happened to him or her. The best way to ensure that your friend gets help is to **suggest options** and to **allow him or her to choose** what they want to do.
- Make sure the survivor knows that his or her experience was **not his or her fault.**
- Make sure **your friend knows that you believe her or him.**
- **Provide comfort** for the survivor. Find out how by **asking the survivor what he or she would like to do** and what you can do to help.
- **Encourage** the person to **seek help from trained professionals.**
- If you are their romantic partner, be patient; let the survivor set the pace.

## General Information

Rape and sexual assault, in any form, are unacceptable at Notre Dame and will not be tolerated in this community. **All members of this community share responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment which promotes the safety and dignity of each individual.** The University encourages victims to report all incidents of sexual assault.

Under Indiana law, **sexual assault is defined** as any **unwanted sexual activity forced by one person on another**, including but not limited to unwelcome touching, forced sodomy, stranger rape, acquaintance rape, date rape, marital rape, and gang rape.

**Sexual assault is a crime of violence.** It is motivated by the desire to control, dominate, and humiliate, not the desire for sex.

**College-age students are more likely to be raped than any other age group.** According to some studies, it is estimated that **as many as 1 in 5 college women will experience sexual violence during their college years.** While most rapes are committed against women, 10% of sexual assault victims are men.

**Ninety percent of college-age rape victims know the offender.** An offender may be a date, friend, or someone the victim knows casually.



## Confidential Resources

Under Indiana law, if a student wishes the details of an incident to be kept strictly confidential, she or he can speak with counselors at the University Counseling Center, health providers, a priest, deacon, brother, or sister at Campus Ministry, or off-campus rape crisis resources, such as S-O-S, the rape crisis center for St. Joseph County.

## Out of The Shadows Support Group

Out of the Shadows is a **confidential, all women's or all men's on-campus support group** for survivors of sexual violence. It offers a supportive environment to discuss issues related to personal experiences. If you or someone you know may benefit from this type of group, you can email [outoftheshadowsgroup@gmail.com](mailto:outoftheshadowsgroup@gmail.com) or call S-O-S at **574.234.6900** for meeting locations and more information. **Out of the Shadows is coordinated by the Gender Relations Center.**