



Sexual Assault

Resource Booklet



**If you are experiencing emotional distress
or simply want to talk, call:**
First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line
1-855-242-3310 (Open 24/7)

Sexual Assault Crisis Hotline
1-800-726-2743 (Open 24/7)

Mental Health Crisis Line
1-888-737-4668 (Open 24/7)

CHANNAL Warmline
**1-855-753-2560 (Open 11:00 am – 11:00 pm)
7 DAYS A WEEK**

**For an in-person meeting,
please call for an appointment**

Mental Health and Addictions, Sexual Abuse
Community Services **(Mon – Fri: 8:30 – 4:30)**
same day appointment available:

**Stephenville – (709) 643-8740
Corner Brook – (709) 634-4506**

Victim Services **(Mon – Fri: 8:30 – 4:30)**
**Stephenville – (709) 643-6588/6618
Corner Brook – (709) 637-2614**

To report a sexual assault call 911 or:

RCMP Stephenville: **(709) 643-2118**
RCMP Corner Brook: **(709) 637-4433**
RNC Corner Brook at **(709) 637-4100**



WHO IS THIS BOOKLET FOR?

If you have been sexually assaulted or if you know someone who has been sexually assaulted, this booklet is for you.

It provides information on sexual assault, including the reporting process and lists available support and services. We hope this information will be useful.

Project Title:

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Published By:

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Funded By:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



Disclaimer: All information in this document is current as of March 2019, and is subject to change without notice.

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WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual Violence is a non-legal term that includes but is not limited to sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, voyeurism, and incest. Those who experience sexual violence are more likely to be physically injured, experience disruption in their daily lives and live in fear.

It can result in a range of physical and mental-health consequences with long-term health effects. This extensive impact is also felt by family, friends and the community.

Sexual assault is unwanted sexual activity, with perpetrators using force, making threats or taking advantage of victims not able to give consent.

Sexual assault is a criminal offence.

WHO IS SEXUALLY ASSAULTED?

In Canada, sexual violence is widespread. According to Statistics Canada, more than 635,000 incidents of sexual assault were reported to police in 2014. In the vast majority (87%) of these incidents, the victims were women. Those most at risk for sexual assault are young women aged 15 to 24, Indigenous women, those who self-identify as LGBTQI2S, persons with disabilities, and those in poorer states of health and wellness. One in three Canadian women will experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.

WHY DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Sexual Assault is a crime that has nothing to do with sex; it is about power and control. Violence is often used by individuals or groups holding power to control the less powerful and more vulnerable individuals and groups. We should not be surprised that women are the most common targets of sexual assault, as they traditionally hold less social, economic and political power than men.

MYTHS AND FACTS

Society's understanding of sexual violence can be influenced by misconceptions and false beliefs. Separating myths from facts is important to stopping sexual assault.

MYTH	FACT
SEXUAL ASSAULT CAN'T HAPPEN TO ME OR ANYONE I KNOW	Sexual assault can and does happen to anyone. Those most at risk for sexual assault are young women, Indigenous women, those who self-identify as LGBTQI2S and persons with disabilities.
A PERSON CANNOT BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY THEIR PARTNER	Sexual assault can occur in a marriage and other intimate relationships.
MOST SEXUAL ASSAULTS ARE DONE BY STRANGERS	Of sexual assaults where a charge was laid by police, the majority (87%) of victims knew the offender: a casual acquaintance, a family member, a friend, a co-worker or an intimate partner.
SEXUAL ASSAULT IS MOST LIKELY TO HAPPEN IN A DARK DANGEROUS PLACE	The majority of sexual assaults happen in private spaces like a person's home.
IF A PERSON DOES NOT REPORT TO POLICE, IT WAS NOT A SEXUAL ASSAULT	Just because a victim doesn't report the assault doesn't mean it didn't happen. Canada-wide, less than 1 in 20 victims reported to the police in 2014.
IF THE PERSON DIDN'T SCREAM OR FIGHT BACK, IT WASN'T SEXUAL ASSAULT	When someone is sexually assaulted, they may become paralyzed with fear and be unable to fight back. They may be fearful that if they struggle, the perpetrator will become more violent. If the victim is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they may be unable to resist.

THE PERSON ISN'T CRYING OR VISIBLY UPSET, SO IT WASN'T A SERIOUS SEXUAL ASSAULT	Each person reacts differently. They may cry, be calm, silent or angry. Their behaviour may not be a sign of the trauma they have experienced.
IF THE PERSON DOES NOT HAVE OBVIOUS PHYSICAL INJURIES, LIKE CUTS OR BRUISES, THEY WERE PROBABLY NOT SEXUALLY ASSAULTED	Lack of physical injury does not mean that the victim wasn't sexually assaulted. An offender may use threats, weapons, or other coercive actions that do not leave physical marks.
IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL TO HAVE SEX WITH SOMEONE WHILE THEY ARE DRUNK, HIGH OR PASSED OUT. IT PROBABLY WASN'T SEXUAL ASSAULT	If a person is unconscious or incapable of consenting due to their use of alcohol or drugs, they cannot legally give consent. Without consent, it is sexual assault.
IF IT REALLY HAPPENED, THE PERSON WOULD BE ABLE TO EASILY RECOUNT ALL THE FACTS IN THE PROPER ORDER	Shock, fear and embarrassment can all impair memory. Many survivors attempt to minimize or forget details of the assault as a way of coping with trauma. Memory loss is common when alcohol and/or drugs are involved.
PEOPLE LIE AND MAKE UP STORIES ABOUT BEING SEXUALLY ASSAULTED	The number of false reports for sexual assault is very low. Sexual assault carries such a stigma that many people prefer not to report.
SOME PEOPLE ASK FOR IT BECAUSE OF HOW THEY ACT OR DRESS	A person does not ask to be sexually assaulted through actions or appearance. Things like staying out late, drinking or doing drugs, dressing seductively, wanting a relationship or expressing a desire to go home with someone—none of these constitutes an invitation or provocation to sexual assault.
PERSONS WHO BECOME SEXUALLY EXCITED OR HAVE AN ORGASM DURING A SEXUAL ASSAULT ARE CONSENTING BECAUSE THEY'RE HAVING PLEASURABLE FEELINGS	It's possible for someone to have a physical reaction to sexual stimulation, even when being sexually assaulted. Regardless of the person's physical reaction, it doesn't mean the person consented to the assault.
ALL OFFENDERS HAVE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS	Most times, the alleged attacker is a member of the victim's family or an acquaintance who does not have mental health problems.

WHAT IS CONSENT?

Consent means the voluntary agreement of those involved to engage in the sexual activity.

Consent cannot be given when:

- a) You are being threatened
- b) You are incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, unconscious or asleep
- c) The offender abuses their position of trust, power, or authority, or pressures the victim into unwanted sexual activity

Consent to one form of sexual contact does not mean consent to all forms of sexual contact. If a person is silent or passive, consent cannot be assumed. Consent must be active and continuous, and can be withdrawn at any time.

CONSENT TO SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Age of consent is when a young person can legally agree to sexual activity. Age-of-consent laws apply to all forms of sexual activity, ranging from kissing and fondling to sexual intercourse. All non-consensual sexual activity is a criminal offence, regardless of age. These offences carry serious charges including mandatory minimum penalties.

CANADA'S AGE OF CONSENT

A person must be at least 16 years of age to legally consent to sexual activity. However, in some cases, the age of 16 is not legally acceptable. This is when one individual in the relationship is in a position of power, trust, or authority.



Close-In-Age Exception

Applies only to those who are 14 & 15 years of age

- When someone is 14 or 15 years of age, they are legally allowed to consent to sexual activity with a person who is **LESS** than 5 years older than they are.

Peer Experimentation Exception

Applies only to people who are 12 & 13 years of age

- When someone is 12 or 13 years of age they are legally allowed to consent to sexual activity with a person who is **LESS** than 2 years older than they are.

Consent laws can be confusing to understand and are subject to change

The Youth is →	Under 12	12	13	14	15	16	17	18 and up
And the other person is ↓								
Under 12	*	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Same Age	No	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes
Less than 1 Year Older	No	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes
Less than 2 Years Older	No	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes
Less than 3 Years Older	No	No	No	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes
Less than 4 Years Older	No	No	No	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes
Less than 5 Years Older	No	No	No	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes**	Yes
More than 5 Years Older	No	No	No	No	No	Yes**	Yes**	Yes

Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre

**Children under the age of 12 cannot consent to sexual activity*

***This does not apply if one of the individuals is in a position of trust or authority towards the other, one is in a relationship of dependency with the other, or if the relationship between them is found to be controlling.*

STATISTICS

SEXUAL ASSAULT STATISTICS IN CANADA

- 1 in 3 Canadians know what sexual consent means ¹
- Only 5% of incidents of sexual assault are reported to the police ²
- 1 in 3 women will experience some form of sexual assault in their lifetime ³
- 1 in 6 men will experience sexual violence in their lifetime ⁴
- More than 1 in 5 young Indigenous women are sexually assaulted ⁵
- Indigenous women are 3 times more likely to be sexually assaulted ⁶
- Approximately 75% of survivors of sexual assault in Indigenous communities are young women under 18 years of age ⁷
- Only 2 - 4% of all sexual assaults reported are false reports ⁸
- Of sexual assaults where a charge was laid by police 87% of victims knew their attacker ⁹
- Approximately 83% of women with disabilities will be sexually abused in their lifetime. ¹⁰
- According to a 2014 poll, 43% of women have been sexually harassed in their workplace ¹¹

¹ Canadian Women's Foundation, Only 1 in 3

² Rotenberg, Christine, Statistics Canada

³ SACHA

⁴ SACHA

⁵ Conroy & Cotter, Statistics Canada

⁶ Department of Justice, Victims of Crime

⁷ NL, Violence Against Aboriginal Women

⁸ Government of Canada, Sexual Misconduct Myths and Facts

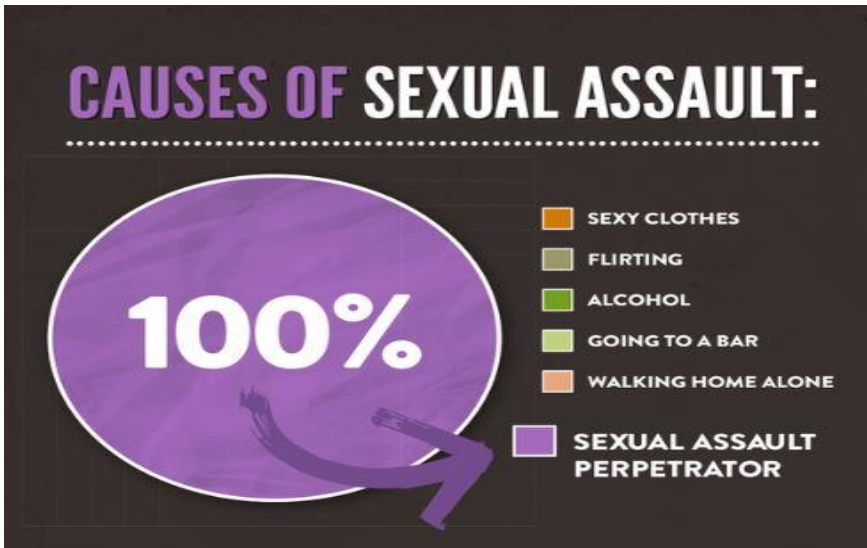
⁹ Rotenberg, Christine, Statistics Canada

¹⁰ NL, Violence Against Women With Disabilities

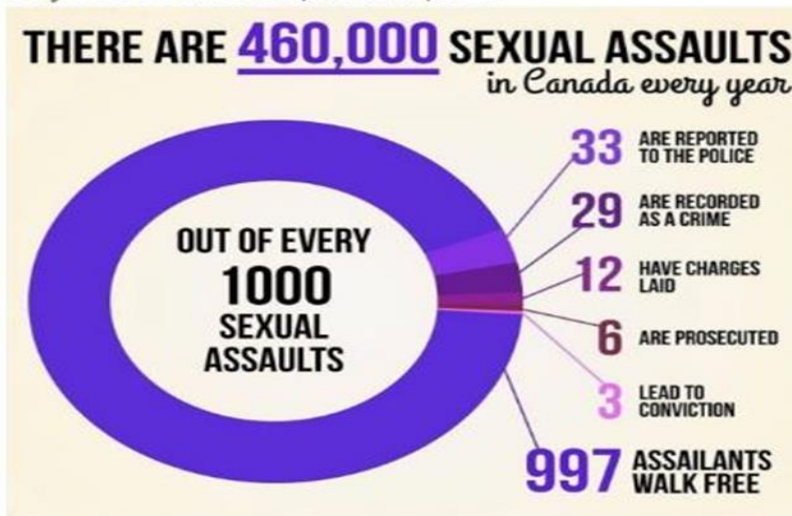
¹¹ Canadian Women's Foundation, *Fact Sheet*



CAUSES OF SEXUAL ASSAULT:



- Only 5% of survivors report to the police.



Source: Johnson, "Limits of a Criminal Justice Response: Trends in Police and Court Processing of Sexual Assault," in Sheehy, *Sexual Assault in Canada: Law, Legal Practice and Women's Activism*, 2012.



Reference: sacha.ca

REACTIONS TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

Emotions can vary from individual to individual. Sexual assault can be extremely traumatic and life-changing. It's important to remember that your responses are not irrational; they are normal reactions to a traumatic situation. There is no "right way" for someone to feel. Survivors of sexual assault react in a variety of ways. A person may....

- Be obviously upset
- Seem controlled and calm
- Appear not to care about anything

If you are a survivor, it is important to trust your feelings and allow yourself to experience them. **YOU DID NOT DO ANYTHING WRONG!** You are strong and courageous. When it comes to healing, everyone goes through the healing process at their own pace and in their own way. Talking about it is a very important healing tool. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.** Even if you feel that no one can understand your personal situation, there are those out there who want to help and support you through this time.

It is important for you to know it is not your fault and supportive people can be especially helpful to you.

DO NOT BLAME YOURSELF!!

There is **NOTHING** you did to deserve this assault



HOW TO SHOW SUPPORT

The support of family and friends plays an important role in the healing process. It is helpful when members of the victim's support group understand what can trigger an emotional reaction following the sexual assault. They will come to know the victim's needs when those needs can be communicated.

The people offering support will learn there is a connection between the victim's current difficulties and the sexual assault they experienced.

Here is some information that may help you know how to react when someone confides in you that they have been sexually assaulted.

Key messages to show support...

- This is not your fault
- I believe you
- It took a lot of strength to tell me
- I'm glad you told me
- I'll do my best to support you



When someone tells you they have been sexually assaulted...

They are sharing an uncomfortable, personal experience.

It is not always easy to know what to say when someone tells you they've been sexually assaulted, especially if it's a friend or family member. Disclosing can be very difficult, so we encourage you to be as supportive and non-judgmental as possible.

Here are specific reactions that can be harmful and others that are more helpful.

Harmful Reactions	Helpful Reactions
<p>Judging Asking the victim insensitive questions. Trying to force details from the victim.</p>	<p>Listening Listen with no judgment to what the victim has to say. Let them express themselves in their own way and at their own pace.</p>
<p>Doubting Showing disbelief, questioning what the victim has told you.</p>	<p>Believing Believe what the victim says. They are the one who experienced the attack. Focus on what they are saying and what they are going through.</p>
<p>Finding Fault Pointing out the victim's weaknesses, what they could have said or done.</p>	<p>Encouraging the Victim to be Strong Help them to feel good about what they have done right. Point to their strengths, and courage in talking about the assault.</p>
<p>Ignoring the Issue Refusing to have anything to do with the matter because it is no concern of yours; it is not your problem.</p>	<p>Supporting Be available to talk to the victim. If you feel unable to help, it is important to say so, and help them find someone else who can help.</p>
<p>Blaming Blaming the victim for what they did not do. Acting as if they are somehow responsible for what happened to them</p>	<p>Alleviating Guilt Help the victim understand that it is not their fault that they were sexually assaulted.</p>
<p>Turning the Page Preventing the victim from expressing negative emotions by saying it is no good to live in the past, or dwell on the situation.</p>	<p>Validating the Victims Emotions Help the victim express their feelings by recognizing their reactions, feelings (anger, resentment, guilt) are normal.</p>

THE REPORTING PROCESS

Every sexual assault case is different and, as a result, victims' responses to the assault will vary. It is important to disclose the attack to someone you feel comfortable talking to. This could be a friend, family member, police officer, social worker, teacher or anyone that you feel will support you in moving forward. The following information outlines steps you may choose to take:

Call the Police

If you have been sexually assaulted, help is available. Calling the police is a good first step. The police can come to where you are to make sure you are safe and take you to the hospital. If you wish, ask a friend or family member to go with you for support. To help the police gather as much evidence as possible, it is best not to wash yourself, to wash or change your clothes, or to clean or move any items at the scene.

Go to the Hospital

You will be asked to go to the hospital for medical care which may include a sexual assault exam. The exam can be very uncomfortable; however, it is extremely important and necessary to gather as much evidence as possible. Throughout the treatment process and during follow-up care, the person will be treated with respect and dignity by a supportive, non-judgmental care provider. Confidentiality will be maintained on all collected information.

Duty to Report: *There are circumstances where confidentiality cannot be maintained because the health-care provider has a duty to report. If a person under the age of 16 goes to the hospital and states they have been sexually assaulted, the health care provider is obligated by law to report the situation to the police.*

Note: *BILL 14, An Act Respecting Children, Youth and Families will replace The Children and Youth Care and Protection Act. It will increase the age of duty to report from under 16 years of age to under 18 years of age.¹²*

Call for Support Services

Help is available through police or community service programs. If you are not referred to any services, ask the investigating police officer to put you in contact with Victim Services. You may also want to call a crisis line which provides non-judgmental, confidential support. Contact information for such services is listed in this booklet on **pages 21-31**.

¹² BILL 14, An Act Respecting Children, Youth And Families

Write down what happened

It is important to write down everything you can remember about the incident as soon as you can. This will be valuable for the police investigation and may be used for court evidence.

Questions you may have regarding the process

The following questions, with answers, attempt to provide you with helpful information.

Is a medical examination necessary?

It is recommended that you receive a medical exam as soon as possible. It is important to remember not to wash yourself or your clothing as it can contain evidence of the assault. This will allow the doctor to complete tests and gain samples which can be used in court. The medical exam is for your health and safety as well.

Can I go to the hospital without calling the police?

Yes. If you do not feel ready to call the police, going to the hospital is still important for your safety. You could be put at risk for pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STIs); therefore, it is extremely important to see a health care provider as soon as possible. Keep in mind, the sooner you report to police, the better chance of laying charges against your attacker.

Duty to Report: *If you are under the age of 16 and go to the hospital for a sexual assault exam, the health-care provider is obligated by law to report the situation to the police. (Age will change to under 18 in 2019, please see note on previous page)*

Will the police want to keep my clothing?

The police may need to keep your clothing for evidence. If you have not washed your clothes, it could be examined for DNA evidence.

Will I have to be photographed?

Photos are used as evidence of sexual assault. If you have injuries related to the sexual assault, the police may want to take pictures at the hospital or later at the police station.



Why do I have to go to the police station?

After your medical exam, you will be asked to go to the police station to make a statement. If you are not well enough to go to the police station other arrangements will be made for you.

It is recommended you give your statement of the assault within a day or two while the incident is still fresh in your mind. Your statement includes everything you can remember about being sexually assaulted. The police will want to know as much detail as possible because your statement is the main part of their investigation. ***ALL details are important, even if it seems like they may not be.*** Once the interview is over, the police will make a referral to Victim Services on your behalf. A Victim Services Coordinator will contact you at a later time. ***(For more information regarding Victim Services, please see page 25)***

Before you leave the police station, the police officer will provide you with their contact information so you can reach them if you remember details you may have forgotten when giving your first statement. You can also call the police if you have any questions.

Usually your statement will be audio/video recorded by police in an interview setting; however, there are situations where your statement can be given at your home or in another area in which you feel safe.

Your statement will require you to recall the assault in step-by-step detail. This will likely be a difficult process; it is a good idea to have a support person with you. If you desire, this person could offer culturally meaningful guidance as well.

Note: Although it is desirable to have a support person with you, this person cannot be in the same room as you while giving your statement. **This is because:**

- The support person may answer questions for you
- A certain look from a support person can make you feel pressured to answer a different way.

Will the police ask me a lot of questions?

The police will record your statement and review with you the information you provided. It is their job to collect all the evidence they can. It is important to know that police officers are required to remain fair and unbiased; they cannot take either your side or that of the accused. They are concerned about you. Police officers find this process difficult as well. Keep in mind, it is their job to enforce the law and work towards bringing your attacker to justice. Before asking details about the assault, they may ask questions unrelated to the attack to make you more comfortable to continue.

The police will ask questions as it relates to your statement which may include the following:

Your daily routine...

- Events leading up to the attack may help you remember certain details.

Your past sexual experiences...

- If the person who assaulted you is someone you know, and with whom you've had sexual relations before the assault, you may be asked about those sexual activities. (See **Rape Shield Laws under "Court Process" Page 16**)

What you were wearing...

- This is not to offend you in any way. The police are not trying to imply that what you were wearing contributed to you being sexually assaulted. They ask this because it can be used as evidence or provide them with other sources of information.
 - If your case goes to trial, information about your clothing may be used as evidence. The more specific details you give, the more credible your statement will be. For example, if you reported to police you were wearing a black dress, but at trial you say you were wearing a red dress, you are providing conflicting information. As a result, the evidence may not be usable in court.
 - Reporting on these details may also help you recall other important details and events surrounding the attack.
 - If you have not washed your clothing, they can be examined for DNA evidence.
 - The offender may have an attraction to certain personal features or style of dress for those they target. If in these ways, you are similar to others who have been attacked, information about your clothing could provide evidence to help solve those cases.

If I didn't report the sexual assault when it happened can I still call the police?

Yes. It is never too late to report a sexual assault.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE ACCUSED/OFFENDER

Legal Definitions:

- **Accused** is a person who has been arrested for or formally charged with a crime (not yet found guilty)
- An **offender** is a person who has pled guilty or has been found guilty (after a trial) of an offence

An arrest will be made if the police have reliable information from the evidence collected which can support charging the accused. When that happens, there are usually some typical questions that are asked:

Will the accused be kept in jail?

Generally when a person is charged with an offence they are arrested. After their arrest they may or may not be released depending on the circumstances of the offence they are charged with. The accused may be released on conditions which must be followed until the case has been fully dealt with before the Court. In some instances, the accused may be held and will be given the opportunity to have a *Judicial Interim Release Hearing* to see whether the Court will permit their release. Each case is different so the conditions attached to each release will differ as well. In most instances the accused will have conditions which restrict their contact with you as a victim, and persons who may be associated with your case. If you are concerned about the accused having contact with you, then you should tell the police so they can ensure this is included as a release condition.

If the police do not charge the accused, what steps can I take?

If the police believe there is not enough evidence to lay a charge, they will let you know. If you disagree with this decision, you can ask that this decision be referred to a supervisor for further review. If, after this review, you are still unsatisfied with the result you can seek independent legal advice for appropriate civil action.

If there is a lack of information, it may be difficult for the police to charge the person responsible for the crime. However, since all reports of the crime are kept on file, if new evidence comes to light it is possible that the accused may be charged at a later date.

THE COURT PROCESS

Under Canadian law, a person is innocent until proven guilty. The important responsibility of a **Crown Attorney** is to prepare and bring to court the criminal charges laid by police officers against the accused. The Crown Attorney, also known as **Crown Prosecutor** or **The Crown**, is a government-appointed lawyer who prosecutes criminal offences on behalf of all members of the public.

The Crown Attorney is **NOT** the victim's lawyer. While they may explain the court process and prepare you for your court appearance, they are not representing you. During the prosecution process, the victim/complainant does not have a lawyer; the victim's role is that of **witness** only.

In cases where the offender pleads guilty, there is no need for a trial and you will not need to testify. If you have a *Victim Impact Statement* it will be considered by the judge at the time of sentencing. A Victim Impact Statement is a voluntary statement which allows you to express in writing how the crime has affected you (and those close to you) emotionally, physically and financially. This gives you the opportunity to have a voice in the sentencing process. Victim Services can assist you in completing your Victim Impact Statement.

If the accused does not plead guilty, the court proceedings may be longer which gives rise to questions such as:

Will I need my own lawyer?

You are the witness to what happened to you. As a witness, you do not need your own lawyer. If you want legal advice you can, of course, consult a lawyer.

Note: *The Province of Newfoundland now offers up to 4 hours of free legal advice for victims of sexual assault through the **Journey Project**. For more information please see page 22.*

Will my name be on radio, T.V. or in the newspapers?

The Crown Attorney can ask for a publication ban from the court to prevent information which would identify you from being published in the media. The Crown will generally make this request when the charges are first called before the Court. If you are concerned about your personal information becoming public, you should speak to the Police and/or the Crown about a publication ban.

If there is a trial, will I have to testify?

Yes, you will need to testify. Your testimony is very important because you are the main witness in the case. You will receive a paper called a subpoena that tells you when and where to go to court. If you have to miss work to attend the trial, your employer has to give you time off work with pay.

If I'm nervous, who can I talk with?

There are community organizations/agencies to contact. Victim Services will help by addressing any specific concerns you may have. They will update you on your case and guide you through the court process. Other services are available as well. Please see the **Services and Supports** section of this booklet for names, descriptions and contact information (**pages 21-31**). It is always a good idea to have a support person on whom you can rely.

Who will be in the courtroom?

The courtroom is open to the public, so anyone can attend. Specifically, the following people may be there:

- Your friends and family
- The accused
- Family and friends of the accused
- Members of the media such as television, radio, and news reporters

What will I have to do in the courtroom?

As a witness at the trial, you will be called by name to the witness stand. Here, you will be asked to take an oath (swear on the bible) to tell the truth. A witness can choose to provide an *affirmation* instead of swearing on the Bible. An affirmation is simply a promise to be truthful.

Note: *In Newfoundland, you now have the option to take an oath with a sacred Eagle Feather which is of great significance in the Indigenous Community.*

From the witness stand you will have to give *testimony* (tell your story). You will be asked questions by both the Crown Attorney and the defense lawyer. The questions can be very difficult and personal. During your testimony, try your best to stay calm and answer questions clearly. If you do not understand a question, ask that it be repeated. If you are asked a question and you don't know the answer or cannot remember, say so.

Note: *You may have the option to testify in another room by video or behind a screen in the court room. For this to happen you must make a request before the court process begins; it may be accepted or denied.*

Will I be asked about my sex life?

If the accused is someone you know and someone with whom you've had sexual relations before the assault, you may be asked about those sexual activities. You will not be asked about your sexual involvement with anyone else unless the judge allows such questions.

Rape-Shield Laws: Section 276 of the *Criminal Code*, also known as the “rape-shield law”, limits the extent to which evidence of the victim’s sexual history can be used in a sexual assault trial. Evidence of the victim’s past sexual activity cannot be used to support either of the following two discriminatory myths about victims of sexual violence: (1) someone who is sexually active is more likely to have consented to sex; (2) someone who is sexually active is less credible, especially if they are seen to be “promiscuous”. (Also known as the “Twin Myths”.)

Note: *Bill C-51* was introduced on June 6th, 2017 by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General. This legislation has made several amendments to clarify and strengthen the sexual assault provisions in the *Criminal Code*.¹³

What else happens before the trial ends?

Those who had contact with the victim following the sexual assault are witnesses and may need to testify. These include, but are not limited to, police, doctors and nurses. Evidence such as photos, clothing and medical records may be presented during the trial.



¹³ Department of Justice, Bill C-51

AFTER THE TRIAL

If the accused is found 'not guilty', it means there was not enough evidence for a conviction. Depending on the verdict (guilty or not guilty) the Court of Appeal can be asked by either the Defense or the Crown, within 30 days, to review the decision. If a new trial is ordered, you may have to testify again.

Note: Appeals are not a guarantee. The Crown can only appeal if there is an error in the decision of the Judge. The Defence can appeal if there is an error of fact or an error in law by the Judge.

If the accused is found 'guilty', the sentencing process will begin. If you have a Victim Impact Statement, it can be presented to the judge for consideration. The Court must then determine a sentence that is fair considering the circumstances, the seriousness of the offence, and the offender's degree of responsibility.



SERVICES AND SUPPORTS AVAILABLE

Knowledge is Power

IF YOU REQUIRE IMMEDIATE POLICE ASSISTANCE CALL 9-1-1

A 911 emergency happens when someone's health, safety or property is threatened, and emergency help is needed right away.

For other non-emergency calls, including the reporting of a crime, contact the RCMP or RNC.

RCMP

General Information

Tel: 1-800-709-RCMP (7267) (Non-emergency)

Contact Information

Bay St. George Detachment

40 Oregon Drive, Stephenville, NL A2N 3M3

Tel: (709) 643-2118

RNC

Non-Emergency / General Inquiries

Corner Brook: (709) 637-4100

Northeast Avalon: (709) 729-8000

Labrador City: (709) 944-7602

Churchill Falls: (709) 925-3524

Email: contactrnc@rnc.gov.nl.ca

*Please note: This e-mail is monitored once a day, Monday – Friday and is for General Inquiries ONLY

PLIAN

Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PLIAN) is a non-profit organization that provides legal information and legal education services to people of the province.

Legal-information line and lawyer-referral service is available:

Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 1:30 pm

Wednesday 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Toll Free Tel: 1 (888) 660-7788

Email: info@publiclegalinfo.com

Website: www.publiclegalinfo.com

THE JOURNEY PROJECT

The Journey Project is a partnership between the PLIAN and the NL Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre. Its aim is to increase supports within the justice system to survivors of sexual violence.

The **Sexual Violence Legal Support Service** is a program of The Journey Project which is funded by the NL Department of Justice and Public Safety. Free legal advice and system navigation is provided to survivors of sexual violence.

Includes:

- Access to services of Legal Support Navigators who can provide legal information and supportive referrals to both legal and non-legal resources
- Up to 4 hours of free legal advice with a lawyer

Available to anyone:

- aged 16 and above who has experienced sexual violence
- currently living anywhere in NL or who experienced sexual violence in NL
- interested in exploring their legal options or those who have already started a legal process.

Contact Information

Toll Free Tel: 1 (833) 722-2805

Email: support@journeyprojectnl.com

FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT HOPE FOR WELLNESS HELP LINE

The Hope for Wellness Help Line offers immediate assistance to all Canadian Indigenous peoples. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for:

- Counselling
- Crisis intervention

Experienced and culturally competent Help-Line counsellors will support you if you:

- Want to talk
- Are distressed
- Have strong emotional reactions

If asked, counsellors can help you find other wellness supports that are accessible to you.

Phone and chat counselling is available in **English** and **French**.

On request, phone counselling is also available in:

- Cree
- Ojibway
- Inuktitut

If you are experiencing emotional distress and want to talk, contact the toll-free Hope for Wellness Help Line at:

1-855-242-3310

OR the online chat (English and French) at **hopeforwellness.ca**
open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS HOTLINE

As a province-wide service, the Newfoundland Sexual Assault Crisis Hotline supports adults impacted by sexual violence. Staff provide non-judgemental and confidential crisis and information services 24 hours a day.

Limits of Confidentiality:

There are legal limits as to what can be kept confidential. Confidentiality will need to be broken when there is a risk of:

- Harm against someone under the age of 16
- Threats of harm against oneself
- Threats of harm against someone else

Crisis Support and Information Line: 1 (800) 726-2743

- Toll free, province wide, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Female and Male volunteers are available
- You do not have to be in crisis to make the call; information is also available
- Anonymous

The **NL Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre** is located in St. John's. You can access in-person support, support groups and a support person when visiting the hospital or the police.

Contact Information:

31 Peet Street, Suite 223
St. John's, NL A1B 3W8

Tel: (709) 747-7757

Email: info@endsexualviolence.com

Website: www.endsexualviolence.com

VICTIM SERVICES

Victim Services is a voluntary, free and confidential service for victims of crime. Offering a client-centered approach, staff will modify services to meet the individual needs of each victim. They help you to explore your options and provide you with the information, understanding and support you need. Individuals can choose to access a full range of services offered, some of the services, or none whatsoever. The choice is yours.

Victim Services can help with:

- General information about the criminal justice system to help you understand how it works
- Information on what is happening with your case
- Pre-court preparation so you can take part easily in the court process
- The Victim Impact Statement, if you wish to complete one
- Referrals to specialized community resources, if you want them
- Emotional support and short-term counseling as you prepare to go to court

Victim Services offers to two age groups:

- 1) Adult victims of criminal offences who are 16 years of age or older
- 2) Children under the age of 16 years who will be testifying in criminal proceedings as either a victim of crime or a witness to a crime. The child's family is also eligible for services

Note: *If you are over the age of 16, you can contact Victim Services before charges are laid against the accused.*

Contact Information

35 Alabama Drive
Stephenville, NL A2N 3K9

Tel: (709) 643-6588 / 643-6618

Website: www.victimserviceshelp.ca

Please Note: *For Victim Services in other areas of NL, see page 36*

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Mental Health and Addictions staff provide mental-health promotion, and mental-illness and addiction-prevention services to children, adults, families and community groups. Programs and services include counselling, consultations, assessments, education and resource materials. A person can contact them directly or have an agency refer them for supports.

Sexual Abuse Community Services (SACS) – Stephenville

SACS provides education, assessment and counseling services to children and adults affected by sexual abuse, and to children under age 12 who have sexually intrusive behavior; SACS also promotes community awareness and sensitivity to issues related to sexual abuse and provides consultation services.

DoorWays is a single session, walk-in counselling service:

- Available to youth and adults without an appointment or referral
- A health-care professional will meet with you and discuss your concerns on a first-come, first-served basis
- DoorWays provides information and support focused on your need

Community Counsellors

Counsellors are available to support individuals as well as their family and friends. You may want to speak to a counsellor if the following, or any other concern, is affecting your mental health and well-being:

Alcohol and Drugs; Gender and Identity; Anxiety and Stress; Grief and Loss; Depression; Mental Illness; Eating Disorders; Parenting/Family Issues; Fears and Phobias; Sexual, Physical and Emotional Abuse; Gambling; Suicide.

Contact Information

127 Montana Drive
Stephenville, NL A2N 2T4

Tel: (709) 643-8740

Website: www.westernhealth.nl.ca

Bridge the gApp: www.bridgethegapp.ca

Please Note: For Mental Health and Addictions in other areas of NL see page 37

BAY ST. GEORGE STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL

The Bay St. George Status of Women Council (BSGSWC) focuses on improving the quality of life for women and their families in the Bay St. George region.

Some of the services that the Bay St. George Women's Centre offers include:

- Educational and social programming for women
- A resource library on women's issues
- Support and referral for women in crisis
- A comfortable meeting space

Karen's Place is a temporary, affordable 2-bedroom housing unit operated by the BSGSWC. It is a fully furnished unit with heat and lights included in the weekly rent. The housing unit can accommodate women and children for a period of 3 – 6 months only. The unit is considered communal living as there is a shared living room, kitchen, washroom and laundry facilities.

While there is no supportive housing staff at Karen's Place, tenants can avail of the following services from the Bay St. George Status of Women Council:

- Programming at the Women's Centre;
- Referrals to other services;
- Supportive counselling and advocacy;
- Home-Start Kits when they move out.

Contact Information

54 St. Clare Ave
Stephenville, NL A2N 1P1

Tel: (709) 643-4444

Website: www.bsgstatusofwomen.ca

Please Note: For Women's Centres in other areas of NL see page 38

WILLOW HOUSE

Located in Corner Brook, Willow House is the only Women's Shelter on the West Coast of Newfoundland and it is located in Corner Brook. It is a domestic violence shelter for women and children who are in crisis.

What is Offered:

- 24 Hour crisis line, answered by a crisis worker
- A safe place to stay, at no cost, where necessities are provided
- Transportation to the shelter
- Accommodations in a communal living setting for up to six weeks
- Supportive counselling by experienced, non-judgemental staff
- Help with exploring your options and making decisions, as well as accessing information about housing, finances, legal issues and other matters
- Referrals to other agencies and supports

At Willow House:

Your safety is our primary concern. Women 16 and older can avail of our services. The following is provided:

- Food, linens, hygiene products and baby items
- Staff are available 24/7
- Help for you so you are safe to move on
- Assistance with children

Contact Information

Local Crisis Line: (709) 634-4198

Toll Free Crisis Line: (866) 634-4198

Business Line: (709) 634-4199

General email: info@transitionhouse.ca

Website: www.willowhousenl.com

Please Note: For Women's Shelters in other areas of NL, see page 38

CHANNAL

Consumers' Health Awareness Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (CHANNAL) is a provincial organization that helps build and strengthen a self-help network for individuals who live with mental health issues. CHANNAL's goal is to remove isolation for those living with mental illness, to educate the public on issues and to offer advocacy, social and emotional support to mental health consumers.

Target Population: Individuals (16+) living with mental health issues/illness

Highlight of Programs and Services Offered:

- In-Person Peer Support Group
- In-Person one-on-one Peer Support
- Support In Establishing Peer Support Groups
- Ongoing Community Information Presentations
- E-Peer Support
- Wellness Workshops
- Public Education
- Access to Resources

Contact Information

108 Carolina Avenue, Suite 1
Stephenville, NL A2N 2S4

Tel: 709-643-4361

Email: brotchford@channal.ca

Website www.channal.ca

Needing Someone to Talk to? Looking for information related to Mental Health and Addictions?

Warmline: Call 1-855-753-2560

(Open 11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.) 7 DAYS A WEEK

Please Note: For CHANNAL in other areas of NL, see page 39

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

CMHA, a voluntary, non-profit, charitable organization, is a nationwide leader and champion for mental health. Locally, the provincial division, CMHA-NL, helps people connect to the necessary resources to maintain and improve their mental health and community integration. Its core goal is to help people with mental illness develop the personal tools to lead meaningful and productive lives.

Mental Health for All

Good mental health is essential to overall well-being and is more than just the absence of illness. A person can have a mental illness but still experience mental well-being. On the other hand, a person can be free of a diagnosed mental illness but still have mental distress.

To support individuals and provide helpful information, CMHA-NL consults with government departments and community agencies.

CMHA-NL offers a variety of programs such as mental health education, workplace mental health, senior mental health education and anti-stigma programs for youth. The local office will have up-to-date information on available programs and services.

Contact Information

106-108 Carolina Ave. Suite 3.
Stephenville, NL A2N 3S4

Tel: (709) 643-5553

Toll Free: 1-855-643-5553

Email: western_office@cmhanl.ca

Website: www.cmhanl.ca

Please Note: For CMHA in other areas of NL, see page 39

ADVANCED EDUCATION, SKILLS AND LABOUR

Services for Victims of Violence

AESL supports all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador who have to leave a violent situation.

Emergency Supports for Victims of Violence include:

- Transportation to a shelter/transition house or other safe location
- Long-term accommodations may be provided by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC)
- A personal allowance for the time spent at a shelter (this is based on an individual's financial situation; it is delivered by the Department of Health and Community Services)

Financial Benefits for Victims of Violence who are in receipt of Income Support:

- Continuation of income support benefits
- Transportation may be provided:
 - to a shelter or some other safe location
 - to move household furniture
 - outside the province for safety reasons
- Start-up cost for getting furniture, linens, clothing etc. if it is determined to be unsafe to return home for these items

Contact Information

Bay St. George Office

29 Carolina Ave
Stephenville, NL A2N 3P8

Tel: 1-866-417-4753 OR

After Hours: 1-877-729-7888

For general inquiries, please email: AESL@gov.nl.ca

Emergency Housing Services – NLHC: 1-833-724-2444

Please Note: For AESL in other areas of NL, see page 39

GLOSSARY

Terms used by service providers when working with individuals who have experienced sexual violence:

VICTIM:

Someone who has experienced some form of emotional, sexual, psychological or physical trauma. This person is prevented from living life similar to the way they lived life prior to the trauma. This person is in a victimized state.

SURVIVOR:

Someone who has been victimized but is healing and beginning to cope with the trauma and is working towards moving past the traumatic event.

THRIVER:

While no one can completely get over a traumatic event, a thriver is someone who has gone through the various stages of healing to get beyond trauma and can function/participate in life in a meaningful way.

HEALING:

The process of getting beyond trauma. There are levels or stages of healing that people experience. People heal or overcome trauma in different ways and at varying periods in time.

SEXUAL ASSAULT:

Any unwanted or forced sexual act committed against a person without consent including but not limited to kissing, fondling, oral sex and vaginal or anal intercourse. Replaced rape as a definition in the criminal code in 1982.

SEXUAL ABUSE:

A term used to describe a pattern of sexual violations which often occurs over a period of time.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Any comment, gesture, or behaviour with a sexual context that can be considered offensive or degrading to the recipient.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

An umbrella term for sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, voyeurism, stalking, incest and others.

SEXUAL ASSAULT DEFINITIONS

VOYEURISM:

Gaining sexual pleasure from watching others when they are naked or engaged in sexual activity.

HISTORICAL SEXUAL ASSAULT:

A term commonly used by service providers to describe a sexual assault that has occurred in the distant past.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Any behaviour, comment or gesture of a sexual nature which is deemed offensive. Coercive or subtle in nature, sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour that makes the receiver feel uncomfortable. As an abuse of power, the perpetrator uses behaviours and actions to control or intimidate the victim. It happens everywhere --- educational settings, workplaces, private homes, recreational venues and on social media.

INCEST:

A sexual assault in which the perpetrator is a parent, sibling, or any other family member. This also includes step-parents, common-law partners, etc.

DATE RAPE/ACQUAINTANCE RAPE:

If the offender is dating the victim when the sexual assault(s) occur, it is commonly called date rape. In other cases where the offender is someone known to the victim, this is known as acquaintance rape.

REVENGE PORN:

Posting sexual images or videos of a person on the internet without consent, usually by a former sexual partner, in order to cause them distress or embarrassment.

SEXTING:

Sending unwanted and/or receiving sexual photos or messages via electronic device.



SEXUAL OFFENCES

Within the Criminal Code of Canada Sexual and Violent Offences Include:

Sexual Interference (*found in section 151 of the Criminal Code*)

Every person who, for a sexual purpose, touches, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, any part of the body of a person under the age of 16 years

Invitation to Sexual Touching (*found in section 152 of the Criminal Code*)

Every person who, for a sexual purpose, guides or encourages a person under the age of 16 years to touch them, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object

Sexual Assault with a Weapon, Threats to a Third Party or Causing Bodily Harm (*found in section 272 of the Criminal Code*)

A person, or persons, who commits a sexual assault who:

- a) carries, uses or threatens to use a weapon (imitation or real)
- b) threatens to cause bodily harm to a person;
- c) causes bodily harm;
- d) is a party to the offence with another person (there may be more than one offender)

Aggravated Sexual Assault (*found in section 273 of the Criminal Code*)

A sexual assault in which the victim is wounded, maimed, disfigured, brutally beaten, or in danger of losing her/his life

Criminal Harassment (Stalking) (*found in section 264-2 of the Criminal Code*)

Prohibits:

- a) Repeatedly following a specific person or someone connected to that person;
- b) Repeatedly communicating with a specific person or someone connected to him/her;
- c) Watching a residence, place of work, etc. where a specific person lives or works or doing the same to someone connected to that person;
- d) Engaging in threatening conduct directed at a specific person or anyone connected to that person.

If any of these activities causes a person to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone connected to them, it is considered to be a criminal harassment and is a criminal offence

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

VICTIM SERVICES

Location	Telephone
Corner Brook	(709) 637-2614
Clareville	(709) 466-5808
Gander	(709) 256-1028 (790) 256-1070
Grand Falls-Windsor	(709) 292-4544 (709) 292-4548 (709) 292-4508
Marystown	(709) 279-3216
Port Saunders	(709) 861-2147
Stephenville	(709) 643-6588 (709) 643-6618
St. John's	(709) 729-0900

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS COUNSELLING OFFICES

West Coast

Location	Telephone
Burgeo	(709) 886-2185
Corner Brook	(709) 634-4506
Deer Lake	(709) 635-7830
Norris Point	(709) 458-2381
Port aux Basques	(709) 695-6250
Port Saunders	(709) 861-9126
Stephenville	(709) 643-8740

East Coast

Bay Roberts	(709) 786-5224	Mount Pearl	(709) 752-4121
Bell Island	(709) 488-2701	Placentia	(709) 227-3641
Bonavista	(709) 468-5318	Shea Heights	(709) 752-4313
Clarenville	(709) 466-5723	St. John's	(709) 777-5622
C.B.S.	(709) 834-7906	Torbay	(709) 437-2210
Ferryland	(709) 432-2930	Trepassey	(709) 438-3941
Harbour Grace	(709) 945-6512	Whitbourne	(709) 759-3370
Holyrood	(709) 229-1551	Witless Bay	(709) 334-3941
Marystown	(709) 279-7952		

Central

Baie Verte	(709) 532-5271
Gander	(709) 256-5438
Grand Falls-Windsor	(709) 292-2246
Lewisporte	(709) 535-0906
Springdale	(709) 673-4974
Twillingate	(709) 884-1370

STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL – WOMEN’S CENTRES

Location	Telephone
Corner Brook	(709) 639-8522
Gander	(709) 256-4395
Grand Falls-Windsor	(709) 489-8919
(Gateway) Port Aux Basques	(709) 695-7505
Stephenville	(709) 643-4444
St. John’s	(709) 753-0220

WOMEN’S SHELTERS

Corner Brook and Area Willow House	Local Crisis Line: (709) 634-4198 Toll Free Crisis Line: 1-866-634-4198
Gander and Area Cara Transition House	Local Crisis Line: (709) 256-7707 Toll Free Crisis Line: 1-877-800-2272
Marystown & Area Grace Sparkes House	Local Crisis Line: (709) 279-3562 Toll Free Crisis Line: 1-877-774-4957
St. John’s & Area Iris Kirby House	Local Crisis Line: (709) 753-1492 Toll Free Crisis Line: 1-877-753-1492
Carbonear & CBN Area O’Shaughnessy House	Local Crisis Line: (709) 596-8709 Toll Free Crisis Line: 1-888-596-8709

CHANNAL

Grand Falls-Windsor	Tel: (709) 489-0035
Stephenville	Tel: (709) 643-4361
St. John's	Tel: (709) 753-1138
Toll Free Number: 1-855-753-1138	

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (CMHA)

St. John's	Tel: (709) 753-8550 Toll Free: (877) 753-8550
Grand Falls-Windsor	Tel: (709) 489-3302 Toll Free: (855) 489-3302
Stephenville	Tel: (709) 643-5553 Toll Free: (855) 643-5553

DEPARTMENT OF ADVANCED EDUCATION SKILLS AND LABOUR – SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

St. John's & Area	Toll free: 1-877-729-7888
Grand Falls & Area	Toll free: 1-888-632-4555
Stephenville & Area	Toll free: 1-866-417-4753
Labrador	Toll free: 1-888-773-9311

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