

Act

- Help your friend identify support systems and provide information on local crisis or mental health providers.
- You may accompany your friend to the hospital or the law enforcement station.
- With permission from your friend, enlist other friends and family to help.
- Stay with your friend through the healing process.
- Remember to take care of yourself and seek support for your own response to the sexual assault of your friend or family member.

To Report or To Not Report

Reporting a sexual assault to law enforcement is a very individualized decision that victims will need to make for themselves. Remember, if your friend decides not to report, they are still fully entitled to support services and medical care. If your friend does decide to report, you will need to know what to expect from the different systems that may be encountered. Below is a brief overview of what to expect. Your local sexual assault program advocate will be able to more fully help you understand the process in your area and to support you through it.

Advocate Response

Advocates from your local sexual assault program can be accessed whether or not your friend chooses to report. Advocates can be helpful to friends and family members of victims. Advocates are trained to be with victims at the hospital, go the law enforcement station, provide individual and group counseling, and provide you with specific information about sexual assault. Whether your friend decides to report, getting in touch with your local sexual assault program can be a very important and helpful step in healing.

Hospital Response

A sexual assault evidence kit, sometimes called a “rape kit,” is performed by medical personnel to collect evidence at the request of law enforcement. This exam can be performed whether or not your friend decides to report the sexual assault to law enforcement. Although medical personnel who collect the evidence are well-trained, the process may be uncomfortable. Support is important; your friend may need you to be there. The cost of collection of the evidence will be assessed to the county. However, there may be other costs incurred at the hospital for medi-

cal treatment that are not considered part of the evidence kit. If your friend has reported the assault to law enforcement, she/he may be eligible for Crime Victims’ Compensation benefits that can help pay for financial losses such as medical expenses, lost wages, counseling/therapy, and other costs related to the assault.

Law Enforcement Response

Law enforcement will need to ask your friend questions about the assault. Some questions may be very difficult to answer and may not make sense at the time they are asked, but there is a reason for them. It is not unusual for law enforcement to visit with the victim numerous times during the course of an investigation. Once law enforcement has investigated and has been able to identify the offender, they will send the information to the prosecutor.

Prosecutor Response

The prosecutor determines if there is enough evidence to move forward with prosecution. The system sometimes moves slowly. It sometimes seems that just as a victim begins to feel OK, she/he is thrown back into the middle of the trauma because of a court hearing or trial. Sometimes victims find it very important to have information about the court case and proceedings. Most prosecutors have Victim Witness Coordinators who can help get this information. Victims have a legal right to certain information about the case.

REMEMBER YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

Sexual assault is a crisis, and we all handle crisis in different ways. Some victims go into shock after being sexually assaulted, or experience overwhelming fear, anger, shame, or anxiety. The emotional reaction to sexual assault is complex and often confusing. Remember that these feelings and experiences are not unusual. The fear and confusion will lessen with time, but the trauma may disrupt your friend’s life for awhile.

For support, contact the following:

The sexual and domestic violence program nearest you (see map)

Kansas Crisis Hotline

1-888-END-ABUSE (1-888-363-2287)

This project was supported by Grant NO. 2010-MU-AX-0003 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.



HOW TO SUPPORT A VICTIM OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

If you are reading this, a person you care about has probably been a victim of sexual assault. Because you care about this person, you may experience feelings that may be similar to those of the person who has been assaulted. These feelings may include anger, shock, helplessness, grief, and, perhaps, even guilt. You will never know exactly how a victim feels about the assault, but you can listen and be supportive. This brochure will assist you in helping the victim cope with the trauma of the assault, as well as assist you with your own trauma related to the assault.

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How to Start the Conversation

Seek out a private, quiet place to begin talking. Allow plenty of time to talk at length. Start by saying the following:

- It is not your fault.
- I am here to listen.
- I am sorry it happened.

During the conversation - What do you do?

- Listen. Your friend may need to tell you about the assault over and over again.
- Believe. Survivors need to know that you believe what happened. It is rare that people make up stories about sexual assault.
- Validate feelings. Acknowledge your friend's sadness, anger, fear, or confusion.
- Assure. Tell your friend that she/he did the best she/he could do to survive the situation and that no one deserves to be sexually assaulted.
- Don't say "When are you going to get over this?"
- Don't blame or judge your friend.

Now that you know, what can you do?

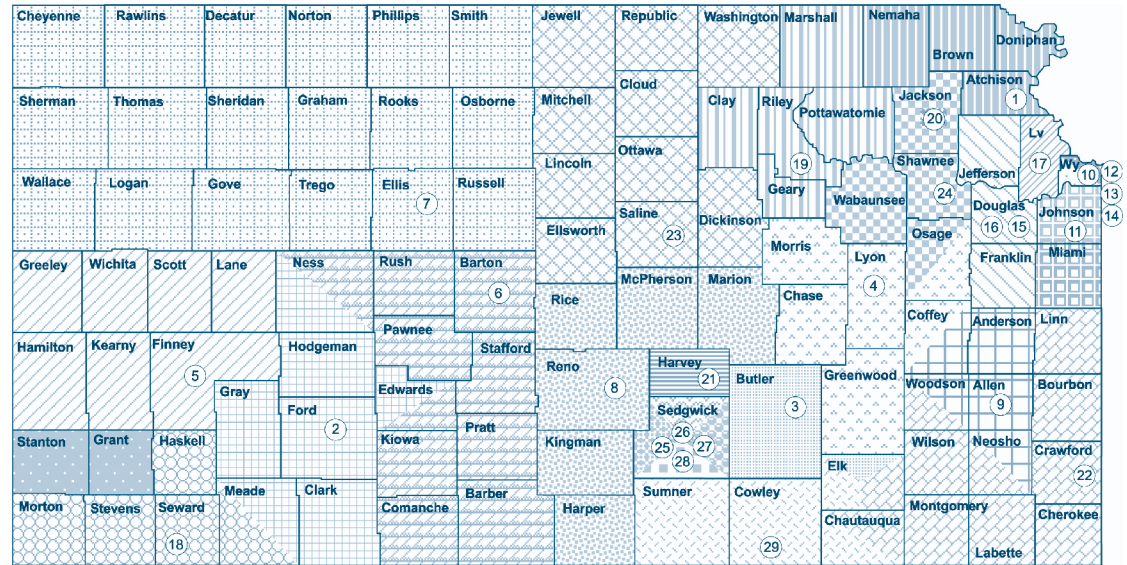
Support

- Avoid treating your friend like a helpless victim.
- Healing takes time. Respect your friend's pace and be patient.
- Accept your friend's decision whether to report the assault and/or to cooperate with the prosecution.
- Help your friend with plans, but don't make decisions for her/him.
- Respect your friend's right to tell or not tell others about the assault.
- Only give advice if and when your friend asks for it.

Educate

- Remind your friend that sexual assault is a crime and is never the victim's fault.
- Remind your friend that millions of people have experienced sexual assault and that she/he is not alone.

Kansas Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs



CITY	SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS	CRISIS HOTLINE NUMBER
1. Atchison	DoVES	800-367-7075 or 913-367-0363
2. Dodge City	Crisis Center of Dodge City	866-270-2270 or 620-225-6510
3. El Dorado	Family Life Center of Butler County	800-870-6967 or 316-321-7104
4. Emporia	SOS, Inc.	800-825-1295 or 620-342-1870
5. Garden City	Family Crisis Services	800-275-0535 or 620-275-5911
6. Great Bend	Family Crisis Center	866-792-1885 or 620-792-1885
7. Hays	Northwest Kansas Domestic and Sexual Violence Services	800-794-4624 or 785-625-3055
8. Hutchinson	Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Center	800-701-3630 or 620-663-2522
9. Iola	Hope Unlimited	620-365-7566
KC Metro		
10. Wyandotte Cnty	Friends of Yates Della Gill/Joyce H. Williams Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	913-321-0951
11. Johnson Cnty	Safehome (<i>domestic violence</i>)	888-432-4300 or 913-262-2868
12. MOCSA	Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (<i>sexual assault</i>)	913-642-0233 or 816-531-0233
13. El Centro	El Centro, Inc. ¡Si Se Puede! (<i>domestic violence</i>)	913-677-0100
14. KCAVP	Kansas City Anti-Violence Project (LGBT services)	816-561-0550
15. Lawrence	GaDuGi Safe Center (<i>sexual assault</i>)	785-841-2345
16. Lawrence	The Willow Domestic Violence Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	800-770-3030 or 785-843-3333
17. Leavenworth	Alliance Against Family Violence	800-644-1441 or 913-682-9131
18. Liberal	Liberal Area Rape Crisis and DV Services	620-624-8818
19. Manhattan	The Crisis Center, Inc.	800-727-2785 or 785-539-2785
20. Mayetta	Prairie Band Potawatomi Family Violence Prevention Program	866-966-0173
21. Newton	Harvey County DV/SA Task Force	800-487-0510 or 316-283-0350
22. Pittsburg	Safehouse Crisis Center, Inc.	800-794-9148 or 620-231-8251
23. Salina	Domestic Violence Assoc. of Central Kansas	800-874-1499 or 785-827-5862
24. Topeka	YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment	888-822-2983 or 785-354-7927
25. Wichita	Catholic Charities Harbor House (<i>domestic violence</i>)	866-899-5522 or 316-263-6000
26. Wichita	StepStone (<i>domestic violence</i>)	316-265-1611
27. Wichita	Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center (<i>sexual assault</i>)	316-263-3002
		o español: 316-263-2044
28. Wichita	YWCA Women's Crisis Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	316-267-7233
29. Winfield	Safe Homes, Inc.	800-794-7672 or 620-221-4357