

- 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 personal 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 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 to the law enforcement station, provide individual and group counseling, and provide specific information about sexual assault. 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 collection kit is performed by medical personnel to collect evidence following a sexual assault. 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 and your friend may need you to be there. The cost of collection of the evidence will be charged to the county in which the assault occurred. However, there may be other costs at the hospital for medical treatment that is 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. There can be a long time lapse between when the assault occurred and when there is a court hearing or trial. It can seem that just as a victim begins healing, 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 traumatic, and we all handle trauma 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 of the sexual assault may impact the victim for years to come.

### For support, contact the following:

**The sexual assault program nearest you (see map)**

**Kansas Crisis Hotline**

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

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-MU-AX-0008 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 emotions 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. 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.

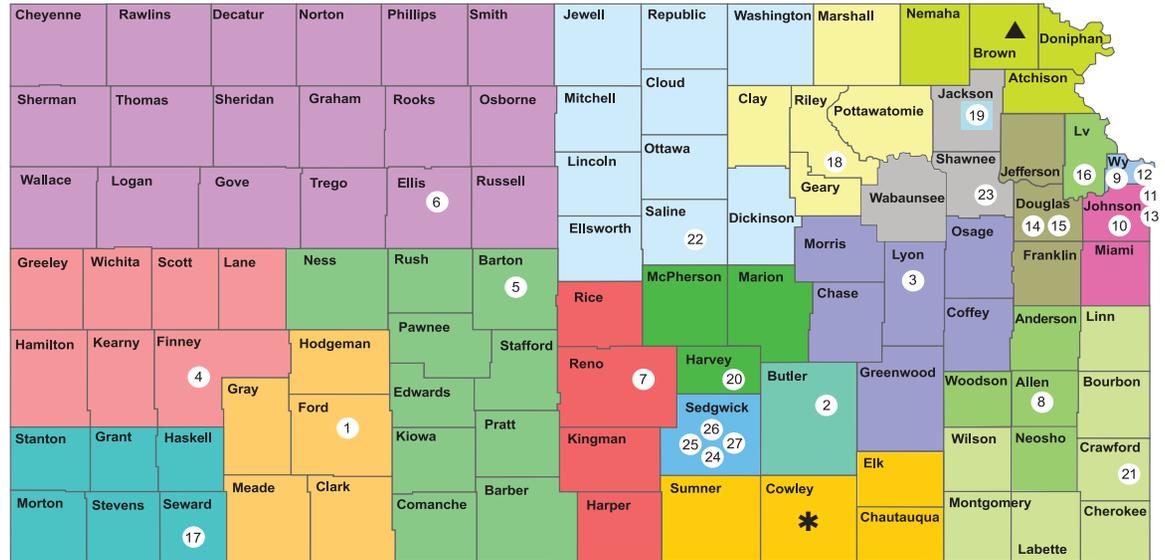
### Educate

- 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.

### Act

- Help your friend identify support systems and provide information on local crisis or mental health providers.

## Kansas Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs



### CITY

1. Dodge City
2. El Dorado
3. Emporia
4. Garden City
5. Great Bend
6. Hays
7. Hutchinson
8. Iola
9. Wyandotte Cnty
10. Johnson Cnty
11. MOCSA
12. Mattie Rhodes
13. KCAVP
14. Lawrence
15. Lawrence
16. Leavenworth
17. Liberal
18. Manhattan
19. Mayetta
20. Newton
21. Pittsburg
22. Salina
23. Topeka
24. Wichita
25. Wichita
26. Wichita
27. Wichita

### SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

- Crisis Center of Dodge City
- Family Life Center of Butler County
- SOS, Inc.
- Family Crisis Services
- Family Crisis Center, Inc.
- Options: Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, Inc.
- Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Center
- Hope Unlimited
- Friends of Yates Della Gill/Joyce H. Williams Center (*domestic violence*)
- SAFEHOME (*domestic violence*)
- Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (*sexual assault*)
- Matti Rhodes Center ¡Si Se Puede! (*domestic violence*)
- Kansas City Anti-Violence Project (*LGBT services*)
- The Sexual Trauma and Abuse Care Center (*sexual assault*)
- The Willow Domestic Violence Center (*domestic violence*)
- Alliance Against Family Violence
- LARC/DVS, Inc.
- The Crisis Center, Inc.
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Family Violence Prevention Program
- Safehope, Inc.
- Safehouse Crisis Center, Inc.
- Domestic Violence Assoc. of Central Kansas
- YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment
- Catholic Charities Harbor House (*domestic violence*)
- StepStone (*domestic violence*)
- Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center (*sexual assault*)
- Wichita Family Crisis Center (*domestic violence*)

### CRISIS HOTLINE NUMBER

- 866-270-2270 or 620-225-6510
- 800-870-6967 or 316-321-7104
- 800-825-1295 or 620-342-1870
- 620-275-5911
- 866-792-1885 or 620-792-1885
- 800-794-4624 or 785-625-3055
- 800-701-3630 or 620-663-2522
- 620-365-7566
- 913-321-0951
- 888-432-4300 or 913-262-2868
- 913-642-0233 or 816-531-0233
- 816-241-3780 (not a crisis line)
- 816-561-0550
- 785-843-8985
- 800-770-3030 or 785-843-3333
- 800-644-1441 or 913-682-9131
- 620-624-8818
- 800-727-2785 or 785-539-2785
- 866-966-0173
- 800-487-0510 or 316-283-0350
- 800-794-9148 or 620-231-8251
- 800-874-1499 or 785-827-5862
- 888-822-2983 or 785-354-7927
- 866-899-5522 or 316-263-6000
- 316-265-1611
- 877-927-2248 or 316-263-3002
- 316-267-7233

▲ No accredited services in this area. If you are in need of advocacy services in Atchison, Brown, Nemaha, and Doniphan counties, call the surrounding advocacy programs or the 24/7 Kansas Crisis Hotline at 1-888-363-2287.

\* No accredited services in this area. If you are in need of advocacy services in Cowley, Chautauqua, Elk, and Sumner counties, call the surrounding advocacy programs or the 24/7 Kansas Crisis Hotline at 1-888-363-2287.