

## What is Rape?

Rape occurs when someone uses force, threats, or intimidation to get you to have sex. Teenagers and other young women are especially vulnerable to sexual assault. Statistically, your senior year in high school and your freshman year in college are the times when you are most vulnerable to sexual assault.

If you are forced or coerced into sex, it is rape. If you decide not to fight back or go along out of fear, this does not mean that you consented. What you choose to do to get through this assault does not change the fact that sex without consent is still rape.

***It is never okay to force sex on someone else. Even if you used poor judgment, you are not responsible for someone else raping you. Foolish choices are not illegal, rape is!***

***Some people question if what happened to them can really be called rape, especially if they know the perpetrator.***

### Even if:

- You were dating for a long time...
- You had sex before...
- You kissed, then changed your mind...
- Your date spends a lot of money...
- You trusted the person...
- You didn't fight back...
- It happened a long time ago...
- You never told anyone...



***Sex without your consent is rape. It is illegal. It is wrong.***

***If you have been sexually assaulted...***

- You are not alone.
- Talk to a friend who you feel comfortable confiding in and call a sexual assault crisis center.
- Sexual assault crisis centers are available anytime, day or night, or whenever you want to talk. It is free, confidential and you don't have to give your name.
- Consider getting medical assistance.
- Remember that you can't control another person's behavior. It is not your fault.

*There is no right or wrong way to feel after being raped. People may experience guilt, shame, anger, loss of trust, fear, and/or helplessness. Rape survivors may react by having anxiety, numbness, nightmares, excessive crying, mood swings, and/or lack of concentration.*

- Believe your friend.
- Tell your friend that she/he is not to blame for the assault.
- Don't pressure your friend to give details; allow the victim to talk at her/his own pace.
- Don't gossip about the assault.
- Ask before touching the victim.
- Remember: your supportive response will help the victim to deal with the trauma of the assault.
- Urge your friend to get medical assistance.
- Call a sexual assault crisis center if you have questions or need support for yourself.

***How to help a friend:***



***Tips included here may not prevent sexual violence – the ability to prevent sexual violence lies with the offender.***

- *Communicate assertively and clearly.*
- *Expect respect and avoid those who do not show it.*
- *Know your sexual limits and communicate them clearly.*
- *Avoid excessive drinking or drugs as they impair judgment and communication skills.*
- *Do not leave drinks unattended as it provides an opportunity for someone to drug you.*
- *Try to avoid situations or locations that isolate you from others.*
- *Stay away from men who are overly critical or belittling of women.*
- *Make a scene if it becomes necessary. Don't worry about looking foolish.*
- *Trust your instincts – they seldom fail you.*



**LOUISIANA  
FOUNDATION  
AGAINST SEXUAL  
ASSAULT**

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Hammond, La 70403  
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Fax (985)345-5592  
Toll Free Information Line:  
(888) 995-7273  
[www.lafasa.org](http://www.lafasa.org)

Sexual Assault Crisis Centers  
provide:

- A 24-hour crisis hotline
- Information and referral
- Free counseling
- And more...

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*Personal  
Safety Tips  
for Teens*

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