

# Teen Guide

## New Jersey Child Assault Prevention



An Assault Prevention Program  
Committed to Empowering  
Teens to be *Safe, Strong & Free*

A Project of the New Jersey Department of Children & Families (DCF)

# Statistics on Assaults Against Teens

- "One in four young women and one in six young men, will be sexually assaulted before they reach the age of 18. Of those, over 93% will be assaulted by someone they know and trust not a stranger." *YWCA- Child Sexual Abuse Facts*
- On average, there are, 463,634 victims, age 12 or older, of rape and sexual assault each year in the U.S.  
*RAINN- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network*
- Sexual assault can happen to anyone, no matter the age, sexual orientation, or gender identity. 82% of all juvenile victims of sexual assault are female and 18% of all sexual assault victims are male. *Rainn.org/statistics*
- Approximately, 1 in 3 teens reported experiencing dating violence which involves physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner. *Children's Hospital-Center for Violence Prevention*
- According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, the rate of simple assaults and violent crimes against juveniles (12-17) was higher than the rate of simple assaults and violent crimes against young adults and adults.  
*Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention ojdp.ojp.gov*
- National Crime Victimization Survey data show that 54% of violent crimes against juveniles ages 12-17 involved a known offender, 9% domestic violence and 45% acquaintance violence. Stranger violence was less prevalent in juvenile assaults. *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention ojdp.ojp.gov*

# Safe, Strong and Free

## Safe

You have the right to be safe.

This means that you have the right to say “No!” to potentially dangerous situations from any person, even someone you know. (An adult, friend, relative or anyone else)

The right to trust your feelings.

The right to protect yourself. (Which includes the right to self-protection)

## Strong

You have the right to be strong, not just physically, but you have the right to be strong inside; to feel good about yourself.

The right to be strong means you have the right to trust how you feel about a situation. If you **feel** pressured, **then you are being pressured**.

## Free

The right to be free means you have choices. The right to be free means that you have a right to seek safety when you need it.

**The freedom to make choices about your body; so that if someone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, you have the right to say, “NO” and leave. No matter who that person is. Even if it is someone you know.**



# Definitions

**Consent** - *Freely choosing to do something*

Consent means you've said "yes," but you feel just as free to say, "No!"

**Force** - *Anything that prevents you from choosing freely to do something and force can be subtle*

- Force can be **emotional**- "I'll commit suicide if you don't love me!"
- It can be **physical**.
- Force can be used by people who have **authority** over you. As a young person, you know that adults can force you to do something just because they are adults.
- Force can come from other teens too.

**Neglect** - *Keeping food, shelter, clothing, and/or medical care from someone on purpose*

Not to be confused with poverty when someone is unable to provide those needs.

**Emotional Abuse** - *Deliberately not praising, insulting constantly, ignoring someone's emotional needs, or hurting someone's feelings on purpose*

**Physical Abuse** - *Hurting someone physically*

This can include hitting, slapping, beating, kicking, punching, throwing around, burning, etc. Not to be confused with discipline.

**Sexual Harassment** - *Unwanted or unwelcome sexual talk or actions*

It may make you feel bad, confused, or trapped. It may also interfere with your life-for example at school or on the job. Sexual harassment is not about sexual attraction. It is about power-the abuse of power

**Sexual Assault is forced sexual contact.** This can be any of the following:

**Rape** is forced sexual penetration. Rape happens when someone forces a finger, penis or object into your anus or vagina or a penis into your mouth or when a male is forced to commit a penetrative act against his will.

**Incest** is forced sexual contact among family members or people living together as a family.

**Molestation** is forced sexual touch.

**Voyeurism** is looking at someone's genitals or other body parts without their consent. A "peeping tom" falls into this category, but so does anyone who watches you undress or shower without your permission.

**Exhibitionism** is showing genitals to someone else without their consent. The stereotype here is of a man in a trench coat who is a flasher, but exhibitionism includes anyone who exposes themselves to you.

**Sexting** is when you send sexually explicit messages, or when you take sexually explicit photos of yourself or others and then forward them to other people.

**Pornography** is written, printed or video material that contains sexually explicit images or content. It is considered sexual assault if someone is forced to look at sexual pictures or films or forced to participate in sexual activities that are photographed or filmed. This is illegal for anyone under the age of 18.

**Commercial Sexual Exploitation or Trafficking** is the sexual exploitation of children through the exchange of sex or sexual acts for money, drugs, food, shelter, protection, and/or other basics of life. This is illegal.

# Myths & Facts

**Myth:** Sexual assault is rare. Only girls are assaulted.

**Fact:** Sexual assault is a common crime. 1 in 3 young women and 1 in 5 to 7 young men will be sexually assaulted before they turn 18 years old.

**Myth:** Only strangers assault teens.

**Fact:** Most teens-over 85%-are assaulted by someone they know and trust. That person could be a family member, a friend, a date, a co-worker, or another student, etc.

**Myth:** It's your own fault if you are raped.

**Fact:** The victim of rape, or of any other kind of assault, is never to blame. The responsibility for the assault lies with the person who did the assaulting.

**Myth:** Sexual assault happens because a person loses control because of sexual need.

**Fact:** The sexual assaulter has the desire to control and have power over someone. Sexual assault is a crime where sex is being used as a weapon to humiliate and hurt someone else.

**Fact:** All assault is about the need for:

**Myth:** The way to help a person you love, who is beating you, is to stay with them and try to convince them to stop beating you or to be so good that they don't have a reason to beat you.

**Fact:** No matter how worried, jealous, or angry someone is, they have no right to beat you. They cannot use physical violence to express their feelings. The batterer needs help. You have a right to be safe. If you or someone you know is being beaten, get help for yourself. Nobody deserves to be beaten. By defending your right to be safe, you're letting a batterer know you are serious about their need to change.

**Myth:** Violence can help a relationship.

**Fact:** Violence never helps anything, but particularly never helps a relationship. Abuse is never a sign of love, even if the violence is followed by tender times of making up. Abuse is a sign that the abuser has problems and needs help.

**Myth:** The only way to defend yourself if someone insults you is to threaten to beat them up.

**Fact:** Beating someone up only takes away their rights, which is not a way to defend your own. You can stand up for your rights by being assertive and by being strong enough not to give into teasing or other forms of insults. You don't have to take away someone else's rights to keep your own.



“Date/Acquaintance Rape” means having a date or acquaintance force you to have sexual intercourse. Any kind of forced sexual contact is a violation of your rights, *even if it is a date or someone you know who is forcing you*. It is hard to be clear about your feelings with someone, especially if you’re confused about them yourself. To keep yourself safe and feeling strong and free, you need to talk about what you want and don’t want.

**Remember!** You have the right to make choices about your body and the right to say “No!” to anyone who touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.

- ◆ **Know your date.** Find ways to get to know your date in safe situations, before being alone in private places. Meet with them in public places or go out on group dates. Notice how your date feels about how boys and girls should act. Does your date feel that you should do whatever you’re told to do? This could be dangerous.
- ◆ **Trust your feelings.** If you feel uncomfortable about a situation, even if you can’t figure out why, deal with those feelings right away.
- ◆ **Be assertive!** Look your date straight in the eye and tell them how you feel.
- ◆ **Leave the situation.** Go to a place where you feel comfortable and be with people who support you.
- ◆ **Be honest about your feelings.** Someone looking at you in a “funny” way or “accidentally” touching you may be testing you to see how much you’ll accept.
- ◆ **Stand up for yourself!**
- ◆ **Take action!** If someone tries to force you to do something that makes you feel that you are not safe:

**Say “No!”**

**Yell!**

**Resist in any way you can!**

# What to do if you have been sexually assaulted

## **Get Some Help!**

You might want to tell a friend first, but make sure you tell an adult who will believe you and help you. You can also call the National Sexual Assault Hotline 800-601-7200. They can help you to figure out what to do.

## **Get Medical Attention!**

They will be able to tell you how to get medical attention. Don't shower or change clothes before going. It is vital that you get medical care, because you are at risk for sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy, in addition to any physical injury you might have.

## **Get Good, Long Term Support!**

CASA can help you find long term-support. Being sexually assaulted is a very painful experience emotionally, as well as physically.

You may feel depressed, frightened, and guilty. You may be afraid to trust anyone. You may have problems relating to anyone else sexually. These are all normal reactions to sexual assault. You may need help to deal with them.

Your friends may be able to help, but you can also get help from several community groups.

***Remember!***

***You are not to blame!***

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# How to be a Caring Friend

## If a friend may be thinking of suicide:

- 1) Pay attention to the warning signs**
  - ◆ Talking about dying or being gone
  - ◆ Being sad, depressed, or listless for a long time
  - ◆ Not getting over a traumatic event or loss
  - ◆ Giving away things they really care about
  - ◆ Doing risky things that could be dangerous
- 2) Tell the friend that you care and are concerned.**
- 3) Help your friend to talk about what may be wrong.**
- 4) Don't try to solve the problem for your friend.**
- 5) Encourage your friend to talk to someone who can help or tell a person like that yourself.**

## If a friend may have been sexually assaulted:

- Let your friend know it is not his or her fault.
- Listen to your friend and let him or her share feelings.
- Encourage your friend to get medical attention and counseling immediately.
- Be there-it may take a long time for your friend to deal with this.



# Sexual Harassment Can Make You Feel...

- Powerless to stop the situation
- That it must be your fault
- Like you want to change your life to avoid the harasser
- That you are may not be worth respect
- Physically sick or depressed and moody

*Remember! Sexual Harassment is not funny. It is not the “normal” way for things to be between people. Victims are not being too sensitive or just “not able to take a joke.”*

## ***How to Help Yourself if You Feel Sexually Harassed***

- **Ignoring It Doesn't Help.** There are many ways to deal with sexual harassment.
- **Don't Just Hope It Will Stop.** By taking action now, it may not get worse and be harder to deal with later.
- **Allow Yourself to Get Angry.** Use your anger to help you focus and take action.
- **Tell a supportive friend, counselor, and parent.**
- **Keep a record.** Write down when, where, what happened, what you did, and who was around.
- **Let the harasser know.** Be clear and direct about the behavior. Sometimes the harasser doesn't really know how the behavior makes someone else feel.

# Places to Get Help

Alcohol/Drug Information Hotline	800-238-2333
Family Helpline- 24/7	800-THE-KIDS
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	DIAL/TEXT - 988
NJ Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline 24 Hour/7days	877-NJABUSE (652-2873)
NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJ CASA)	800-601-7200
NJ Safe Haven for infants	877-839-2339
NJ Youth Helpline-2 <sup>ND</sup> FLOOR- 24 hour hotline <a href="http://www.2ndfloor.org">www.2ndfloor.org</a>	888-222-2228
RAINN-Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network <a href="http://www.Rainn.org">www.Rainn.org</a>	800-656-HOPE
Runaway Hotline 24/7	800 RUNAWAY 800-786-2929
CRISIS TextLine	Text the word HOME TO 741741



**NJCAP**

200 College Drive  
Blackwood, NJ 08012  
856-374-5001  
[www.njcap.org](http://www.njcap.org)

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