Facts about Male Victimization

• Males can be sexually assaulted by females or other males which includes acquaintances, a stranger or group of strangers, or a significant other or others. Size, strength, and appearances are rarely factors.

• Sexual assaults of males can often be violent and frequently involve weapons or physical force. Alcohol or drugs may also be used. Submission is sometimes forced through entrapment, intimidation, threats or coercion.

• Sexual orientation does not cause or prevent sexual assault. Heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender males are all at risk of sexual assault. Being sexually assaulted does not change a person’s sexual orientation.

• Sexual arousal or orgasm during a sexual assault does not indicate a “willing” participant. Erection and ejaculation are physiological responses that can occur in stressful and traumatic situations; they do not indicate attraction or imply consent.

• Perpetrators of male victims can often manipulate the victim’s feelings of confusion and embarrassment to maintain control and discourage reporting.

• Lack of belief or support in coping with assault, can lead to a heightened sense of isolation for male survivors. It may be more difficult for these survivors to report assaults and to access services.

The Sexual Assault Response Center is a rape crisis center in Delaware. The center is committed to providing healing, hope, and empowerment to individuals whose lives have been impacted by sexual violence. SARC provides comprehensive, free and confidential rape crisis services and community awareness and prevention services.

If you are interested in volunteering or making a donation, please visit our website at www.ywcade.org/sarc

Sexual Assault Response Center
YWCA Delaware

Robscott Building
153 E. Chestnut Hill Road, Suite 102, Newark, DE 19713

Georgetown Professional Park
20155 Office Circle, Suite 2, Georgetown, DE 19947

Phone: 302-273-1300 | Fax: 302-224-4057

We provide services throughout Delaware.

This program is funded through the Delaware Criminal Justice Council by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women.
Sexual Violence occurs when you are forced, threatened or manipulated into any sexual contact against your will. Sexual contact without your consent is sexual assault, whether the offender is a stranger or someone you know. **Sexual assault can happen to anyone at any age, place, or time.** The way a person dresses or acts does not cause sexual assault. It is never the victim-survivor’s fault.

**Sexual violence is a crime of power and control.** It is caused by a decision to control and violate someone in the most personal way. It is not caused by sexual desire or attraction.

**Sexual Violence includes:**
- **Rape** – forced sexual intercourse
- **Sodomy** – forced anal or oral sex
- **Forced object penetration** – penetrating someone’s anus or causing that person to penetrate himself, against that person’s will
- **Unwanted** sexual touching
- **Sexual contact with minors**, whether consensual or not
- **Sexual contact** with a person who lacks the capacity to give consent
- **Incest** – non-consensual sexual contact between family members or sexual abuse of a minor by a family member
- **Any unwanted** sexual contact

**How Can Someone “Force” You to Have Sex?**
Most sexual assaults involve some type of force, but force is not always physical. Some ways someone can force you to have sex without using a weapon or physical violence include:
- Using threats to intimidate or scare you
- Threatening to harm a friend, family member, service animal or pet
- Using the position of authority to get you to agree to do something sexual
- Having sex with you when you are too intoxicated from alcohol or medications to say “no” or to consent
- Overpowering you physically
- Not taking “no” for an answer
- Manipulating you by not telling you the truth

**Reactions to Sexual Assault**
A person may experience a few, many or none of the following emotions and behaviors after a sexual assault. There is no “typical” way to respond to sexual violence.
- **Depression**
- **Shock, disorientation and difficulty concentrating**
- **Unwanted and/or intrusive memories and flashbacks**
- **Being afraid and on guard**
- **Anger**
- **Self-blame, guilt, and shame**
- **Suicidal thoughts**
- **Emotional withdrawal, numbness**
- **Negative beliefs about self, family, friends and the future**
- **Problems with relationships**
- **Sleep disturbances, and nightmares**
- **Physical symptoms (stomach aches, migraines)**
- **Problematic coping behaviors (avoidance of memories, denial, alcohol or drug abuse)**

Trauma caused by sexual violence may influence a person’s sense of safety. Male survivors often experience doubts about sexuality, feelings of inadequacy, fear of being targeted, and isolation due to societal reactions. Reactions can be severe for males because many are socialized to believe that they are immune to sexual assault and the myth that they cannot be sexually assaulted.

**If You Are Sexually Assaulted**
- **Go** to a safe place, if possible. If you are in danger, call 911.
- **Tell** someone about the assault – a family member, friend, caregiver, service provider or other trusted person.
- **Call** the SARC Helpline – a Sexual Assault Response Advocate (SARA) is trained to help you understand your medical and legal options and provide emotional support.
- **Consider** going to a hospital emergency department for a medical exam. They can provide a forensic exam to collect evidence, determine if you have injuries, test for sexually transmitted infections and provide treatment options.
- **If possible**, to preserve evidence, try not to bathe, change clothes, comb your hair or urinate. If you cannot wait until you arrive at a facility, and suspect you have been drugged, save your first urine in a clean container and take it with you to the hospital. If you have changed clothes, place your clothes in a paper bag and bring them to the hospital. A forensic exam can collect forensic evidence that may be on your body and clothing that can assist with case investigation and prosecution.
- **Consider** reporting the assault to law enforcement. Sexual assault is a crime. Your report may enable police to hold the perpetrator accountable and may prevent another assault.
- **If at any time** you feel you were not treated respectfully by medical providers or law enforcement, you deserve to be supported free of discrimination. Call the SARC Helpline 24/7 to speak with an advocate about your options.

**If Someone You Know Has Been Sexually Assaulted**
- **Supporting Male Survivors**
  - **Encourage** him to talk. Listen without judging.
  - **Tell** him you believe him, no one deserves to be sexually assaulted and it is not their fault.
  - **Ask** if they are safe. If they are still in imminent danger, call 911.
  - **Offer to go** to the hospital with them. Even days or weeks after an assault, medical attention may be needed.
  - **Offer to call** the SARC Helpline for more information and support.
  - **Ask** if they need any accommodations to access help.
  - **Support** their right to make their own decisions about reporting the crime and seeking medical attention, to the extent possible.
  - **Do not tell** others without their permission unless you are mandated to report. If you are mandated to report, and the situation meets the mandatory reporting requirements of suspected abuse, neglect, or an emergency situation involving an adult who is incapacitated or a minor, contact Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families online or by phone at 800-292-9582.