

# HOW WE RESPOND TO **sexual violence** MATTERS



# What is sexual violence



Sexual violence is any type of unwanted sexual contact.

- Rape
- Trafficking
- Incest
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Stalking
- Harassment
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Unwanted Contact

**Victims are never at fault.**

It doesn't matter what someone is wearing or how they are acting, no one asks to be raped.



Sexual violence can include **words and actions** of a sexual nature against a person's will and without their consent.



Sexual violence can range from **sexist attitudes and jokes to rape and murder.**



Sexual violence affects people of all **genders, ages, races, religions, incomes, and sexual orientations.**



A person may use **force, threats, manipulation, or coercion** to commit sexual violence.



People who commit acts of sexual assault are **almost always known and trusted by victims** – a friend, classmate, neighbor, coworker, or family member.



## I care about survivors.

We all have a role to play in preventing sexual violence.

**Promote and practice** healthy attitudes and relationships

**Seek** voluntary consent that is clear and specific when engaging in sexual activity

**Speak up** when you hear harmful comments or when you see problematic behavior

**Believe** survivors and assist them in finding help and resources

**Support** your local rape crisis center; donate or volunteer

## I am a survivor.

Everyone heals in their own time and in their own way. You don't need to face this alone. There's help, hope and healing available at your local rape crisis center in Pennsylvania.

Rape crisis centers can provide free, confidential crisis counseling 24 hours a day to you and your loved ones. Trained staff and volunteers can talk to you about your medical and legal options. They can accompany you to the hospital, police station, or court. Centers also provide free short-term counseling and advocacy services.

Call 1-888-772-7227 or visit [pcar.org](http://pcar.org) for more information.

**Remember, what happened to you was not your fault, and you can heal.**

## I know a survivor.

We all know someone who has been affected by sexual violence — a son or daughter, brother or sister, loved one, friend or co-worker.

Sexual assault is a serious crime and is known to have short- and long-term effects on victims and those who love and care for them.

Each survivor reacts to sexual violence differently. They may talk about the assault soon after, or wait weeks, months, or years before discussing the assault, if ever.

### But you can help.

Encourage counseling and be patient: healing can take years with advances and setbacks, but healing can happen.

If someone you know tells you their story, here are examples of supportive things you can say:

**I believe you.**

**Thank you for telling me.**

**It wasn't your fault.**

**You did nothing wrong.**

**I am here for you.**

**You are brave.**

**You are never alone.**

**How can I help?**



Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape

1-888-772-PCAR

[www.pcar.org](http://www.pcar.org)



**NO MORE**  
TOGETHER WE CAN END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

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Contact your local rape  
crisis center: