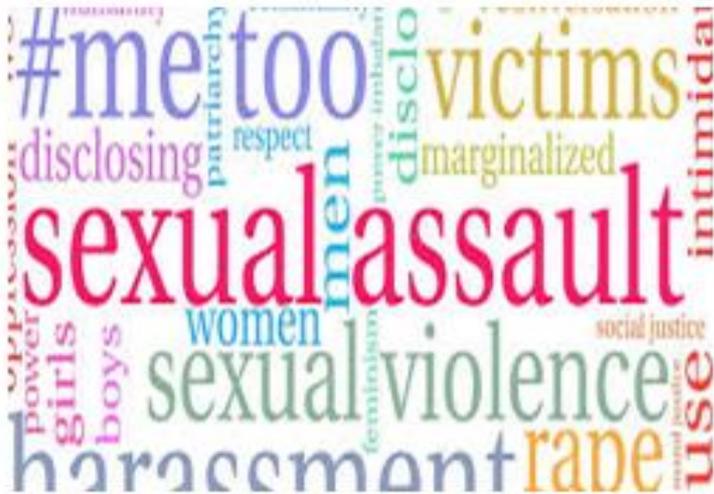


UDCA Senior Initiative Education

Sexual Abuse



ELDER ABUSE
Hiding in Plain Sight
An Educational Awareness on Elder Abuse
and Prevention

UDCA Senior Committee Education & Awareness

National Center on Elder Abuse

As the Baby Boomer generation ages and the number of older adults in America increases, it will become all the more important to be aware of the warning signs of elder abuse.

- According to the National Center on Elder abuse there over 40 million people age 65 or older in Americans, have experienced sexual assault or abuse; and this number is growing rapidly.

Department of Justice

The Department of Justice refers elder abuse to “a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person.”

- The legal definition of elder abuse, and the definition of who counts as an “elder,” can vary from state to state.
- Elder abuse can occur in many different settings, including nursing homes and senior living centers.
- However, according to the Department of Justice the majority of reports of elder abuse occur at home.

Who Are the Victims...

Vulnerable Adults ..Sexual and Physical Abuse

- One who is unable to protect themselves because of a mental or physical impairment or advanced age.
- Adults with a disability have a disproportionate risk of abuse compared to adults without a disability.
- Physically impaired younger resident.
- **Sexual offenders are attracted to vulnerability.**

Types of Sexual Violence

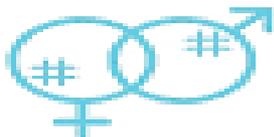
- There are many types of sexual violence, including rape, child sexual abuse, and intimate partner sexual violence—and other crimes and forms of violence may arise jointly in these instances.

Sexual Abuse

Definition

Physical Signs

Behavioral Signs



Sexual Abuse

Sexual involvement imposed upon a child or adolescent by a parent or caregiver; may include rape, incest, molestation, indecent exposure, sexual exploitation, exposure to (or involvement in the production of) pornographic materials.

Sexual abuse of an elderly person

Sexual abuse occurs when a perpetrator engages in any kind of sexual contact without the person's consent.

Some victims of sexual abuse are unable to give consent due to health conditions, such as dementia or Alzheimer's.

The laws about consent as they relate to medical conditions vary from state to state.

- Some warning signs of sexual abuse include:
- An elder's report of being sexually assaulted or raped
- Bruises around the breasts or genital area
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections

The Most **Hidden** form of Elder Abuse is Sexual Abuse

- **Least perceived**
- **Least acknowledged**
- **Least Detected**
- **Least Reported**

The Most **Prevalent** form of Elder Abuse is Physical Abuse

Myths.

Misconceptions

- Advanced age protects one from sexual assault.
- That older adults are not sexual beings or sexually desirable.
- Only women get raped.
- Only strangers rape women.
- Good girls do not get raped.
- That rape is a crime of passion.

Sexual penetration”

- Means sexual intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, anal intercourse, or any other intrusion, however slight, of any part of a person's body or of any object into the genital or anal openings of another person's body, but emission of semen is not required.



The Role of Consent

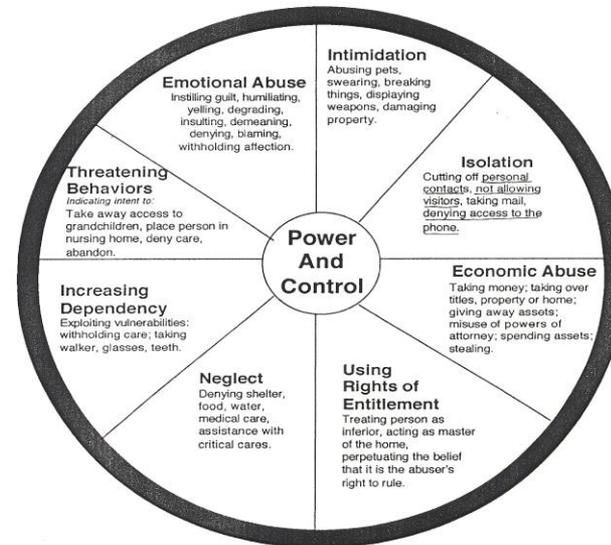
- Consent is crucial when any person engages in sexual activity, but it plays an even bigger, and potentially more complicated role when someone has a disability. Some disabilities may make it difficult to communicate consent to participate in sexual activity, and perpetrators may take advantage of this.
- People with disabilities may also not be given the same education about sexuality and consent that people without disabilities receive. In addition, someone who has a developmental or intellectual disability may not have the ability to consent to sexual activity, as defined by the state laws.

Understanding Consent

Consent is an agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity.



Power & Control Wheel for Older Abuse Persons



Each section of the wheel represents methods used to maintain power and control over the victim. Compliance of these tactics is reinforced by physical or sexual violence.

Prepared by the Iowa Elder Abuse Committee
Modeled Upon the Power and Control Wheel, Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

Consent also plays an important role in determining if act is legally considered a crime.

Mentally incapable”

Means that a person suffers from a mental disease or defect that renders that person temporarily or permanently incapable of appraising the nature of his or her conduct.



Mentally incapacitated

- Means that a person is rendered temporarily incapable of appraising or controlling his or her conduct due to the influence of a narcotic, anesthetic, or other substance administered to that person without his or her consent, or due to any other act committed upon that person without his or her consent.

Issues of Sexual Consent Between Elderly Adults with Dementia Proves Problematic. 6.01 min



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4FUmNTslbM>

Sexual Abuse of People with Disabilities

Consent is crucial when any person engages in sexual activity, but it plays an even bigger, and more complicated role when someone has a disability.



People with different disabilities

May face different challenges and have very different needs.



- Some disabilities may put people at higher risk for crimes like sexual assault or abuse.

Institutional Settings



About **83 percent** of victims of elder sexual abuse reside in an institutional care center, such as a nursing home.



How is Sexual Abuse Different for the Elderly?

- Lack of a support system.
- Generational beliefs about sexual abuse.
- Rigid gender roles.
- Anything sexual should not be discussed.
- Domestic or child sexual abuse was not recognized.
- Exacerbation of existing illnesses.
- Longer recovery times.

Effects of Sexual Violence

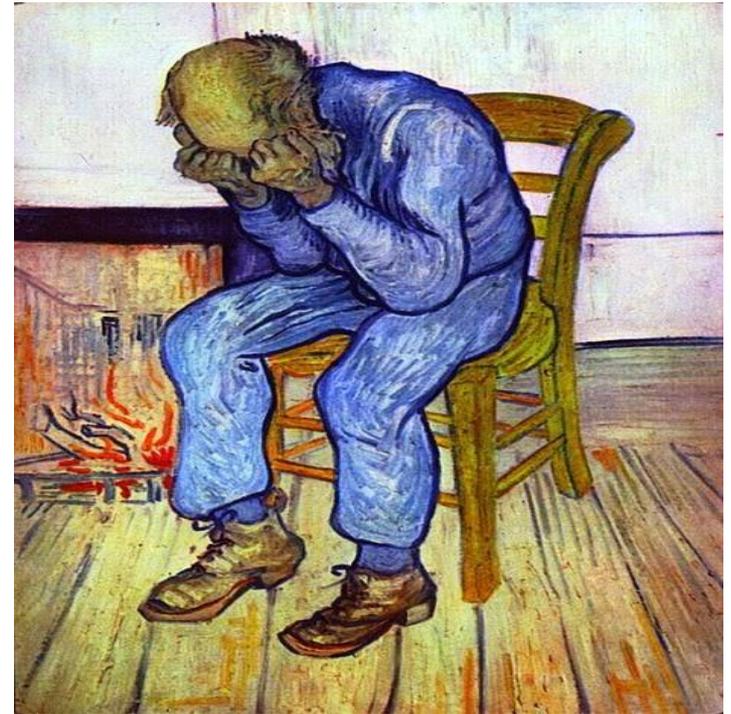
- Sexual violence can have psychological, emotional, and physical effects on a survivor.



- These effects aren't always easy to deal with, but with the right help and support they can be managed.

Physical Abuse...The Most Prevalent form of Elder Abuse

- The INTENTIONAL use of physical force that results in acute or chronic illness
- Bodily injury
- Physical pain
- Functional impairment
- Distress or Death



Mental Health & Physical effects:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Panic attacks
- PTSD
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of motivation
- Substance abuse
- Suicidal ideation



- **Physical effects:**
- Increased stress levels
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbances
- Eating disturbances

Common Factors in Elder Abuse

- Someone who needs regular assistance may rely on a person who is abusing them for care. The perpetrator may use this power to threaten, coerce, or force someone into non-consensual sex or sexual activities.
- An abuser may take away access to the tools a person with a disability uses to communicate, such as a computer or phone.
- People with disabilities may be less likely to be taken seriously when they make a report of sexual assault or abuse.
- They may also face challenges in accessing services to make a report in the first place. For example, someone who is Deaf or Deaf and Blind may face challenges accessing communication tools, like a phone, to report the crime or get help.
- Many people with disabilities may not understand or lack information about healthy sexuality and the types of touching that are appropriate or inappropriate. This can be especially challenging if a person's disability requires other people to touch them to provide care.

Reporting



Report Abuse



Only about **30 percent** of elderly victims of sexual abuse over the age of 65 years actually report the abuse to the authorities.

Some of the reasons that elders may not report include

- Being unable to report, due to physical or mental ability
- Depending on the abuser for care and basic needs
- Fearing retaliation from the abuser
- Fearing that reporting the abuse will end with them being placed in an institution
- Feeling ashamed to tell someone that a loved one is hurting them or taking advantage of them
- Having concerns that the report will get the abuser in trouble — this can be especially true if the abuser is someone that the elder is close to or cares about
- There are also times when sexual abuse or assault is reported but isn't taken seriously because of the victim's age or assumptions about their mental capabilities.

Why is elder abuse underreported?

- Many states have laws about mandatory reporting for elder abuse. You can learn more about the laws in your state from the [RAINN State Law Database](#). Even with mandatory reporting laws, elder abuse is believed to be an underreported crime.

Vulnerable

- Means a condition in which an adult is unable to protect him or herself from abuse, neglect, or exploitation because of a mental or physical impairment or because of advanced age.



Physically helpless”

- means that a person is unconscious, asleep, or for any other reason is physically unable to communicate unwillingness to an act.



Sexual Abuse by Medical Professionals

When you go to the doctor, dentist, hospital or physical therapist, or see other medical professionals, you trust them to treat you with respect as they care for your health.



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Sexual Misconduct

- Sexual misconduct is a non-legal term used informally to describe a broad range of behaviors, which may or may not involve harassment. For example, some companies prohibit sexual relationships between coworkers, or between an employee and their boss, even if the relationship is consensual.

Sexual Exploitation by Helping Professionals

Sexual exploitation by a helping professional is a serious violation of your trust and, in many cases, the law.

- **What is sexual exploitation by a helping professional?**
- Sexual exploitation by a helping professional includes sexual conduct of any kind between a professional and the person seeking or receiving a service. Helping professionals include doctors, therapists, professors, police officers, lawyers, religious leaders, and any other professional who offers a helping service.

Force or coercion

- Includes but is not limited to: When the attacker overcomes the victim through the actual application of physical force or physical violence;
- When the attacker coerces the victim to submit by threatening to use force or violence on the victim, and the victim believes that the attacker has the present ability to execute these threats;
- When the attacker coerces the victim to submit by threatening to retaliate in the future against the victim, or any other person, and the victim believes that the attacker has the ability to execute this threat. “To retaliate” includes threats of physical punishment, kidnapping, or extortion;
- When the attacker engages in the medical treatment or examination of the victim in a manner or for purposes that are medically recognized as unethical or unacceptable; or
- When the attacker, through concealment or by the element of surprise, is able to overcome the victim.

What can I expect in a medical setting?

- When you see a medical professional for an exam, procedure, or treatment, you should expect to:
- **End the exam at any time.** If anything about the exam makes you feel uncomfortable, you can let the person examining you know and they should stop right away.
- **Ask to have someone in the room.** If you want to have someone else in the exam room with you, you can ask for a nurse, friend, or family member to stay with you.
- **Privacy.** The exam should be in a private room or have a curtain drawn. You should also have a private place to change your clothes before and after the exam.
- **Undress to your comfort.** You should only need to undress the parts of your body that are being examined, and you shouldn't need to stay undressed for long before or after the exam.
- **Ask for an examiner of a different gender.** You can ask to be seen by someone of another gender if that makes you more comfortable (but this might require picking a new doctor and might not be possible if it's an emergency).
- **Have your questions answered.** If you ask the person examining you about what they're doing or why they're doing it, they should answer you truthfully and right away.
- **Respect for your religion.** You should be able to continue to wear religious jewelry or garments, unless they stop you from getting care.
- **Get information in the language you speak.** Medical caregivers should make every effort to give you information in the language you speak. If they don't speak your language, ask them to make arrangements to have someone interpret either on-site or through a language access line. You can also bring along a trusted friend or family member who can interpret for you.
- **Have your pain taken seriously.** The person examining you should let you know if something will be painful. If you tell them it hurts and you want them to stop, they should stop right away.

What is okay and not okay during a pelvic, vaginal, breast, rectal, or testicle exam?

- Sometimes an exam of private areas of your body is needed to stay healthy, but it should be limited to steps that are absolutely medically necessary. Here are some things that are normal and not normal during an exam of private parts of your body.

Are elderly victims of sexual assault getting the justice they deserve? 9:45min



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Py-91YMGeqc>

UDCA Senior Committee Education and Awareness

It's *okay* for the examiner to:

- Explain each part of the exam to you before and while it is happening.
- Use gloves.
- Encourage you to tell them if something feels wrong or uncomfortable.
- Is the same sex as you, if you have asked.
- Only ask you to undress the part of your body being examined.

It's *NOT* okay for the examiner to:

- Refuse to answer your questions or tell you to be quiet.
- Examine private parts without gloves.
- Refuse to tell you what they are doing or why they are doing it.
- Decline to have another person in the room with you.
- Insist that you undress parts of your body they are not examining.
- Ask you questions about your sexual activity that make you uncomfortable.

How can I report incidents of medical abuse?

- If you think you have experienced sexual abuse by a medical professional, there are a few different ways you can report it:
- Call 911 to report to your local law enforcement.
- Contact the hospital, doctor's office, or facility where you experienced the abuse.
- Report the abuse to [your state's medical licensing board](#).
- If you reported the abuse and did not get any help, you might want to report to another authority. If you feel comfortable doing so, keep telling people until you get help.

What are some common reactions?

You trusted a professional to respect your boundaries and protect your interests at a time when you were vulnerable or dependent on their expertise. Because of this relationship, inappropriate sexual advances or contact can feel like an act of betrayal.

Some common reactions include:

- Anxiety disorders
- Depression
- Difficulty with intimacy
- Feelings of guilt, shame, anger, or confusion
- Increased risk of suicide
- Loss of trust
- Sexual dysfunction



Personal injury

Means bodily injury, disfigurement, mental anguish, chronic pain, pregnancy, disease, or loss or impairment of a sexual or reproductive organ.



Using Technology to Hurt Others

Some people use technology, such as digital photos, videos, apps, and social media, to engage in harassing, unsolicited, or non-consensual sexual interactions.



What Can You do?

- There is a very low reporting rate for sexual exploitation by helping professionals. Often, victims fear retaliation from the professional, are concerned they won't be believed, or do not realize they were harmed until much later.
- You are not to blame for what happened to you. If you have experienced sexual exploitation of any kind by a professional, you have options.
- Contact the licensing board or professional association
- Contact the organization that employs the professional and file a report
- File a civil lawsuit
- Report to law enforcement

Bystander Intervention

To create and promote a safe, respectful and welcoming community bystander intervention is necessary.



A proactive bystander is an individual who accepts personal responsibility for a situation and intervenes to ensure the well-being and/or safety of others.

Statutes of Limitations

- When a crime is committed, there is a window of time that a state has to charge the perpetrator. The laws that determine this time frame are called criminal statutes of limitations, and they vary by state, situation, and crime. How does your state stack up?

If you've been Sexually Assaulted!



REMEMBER IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT!

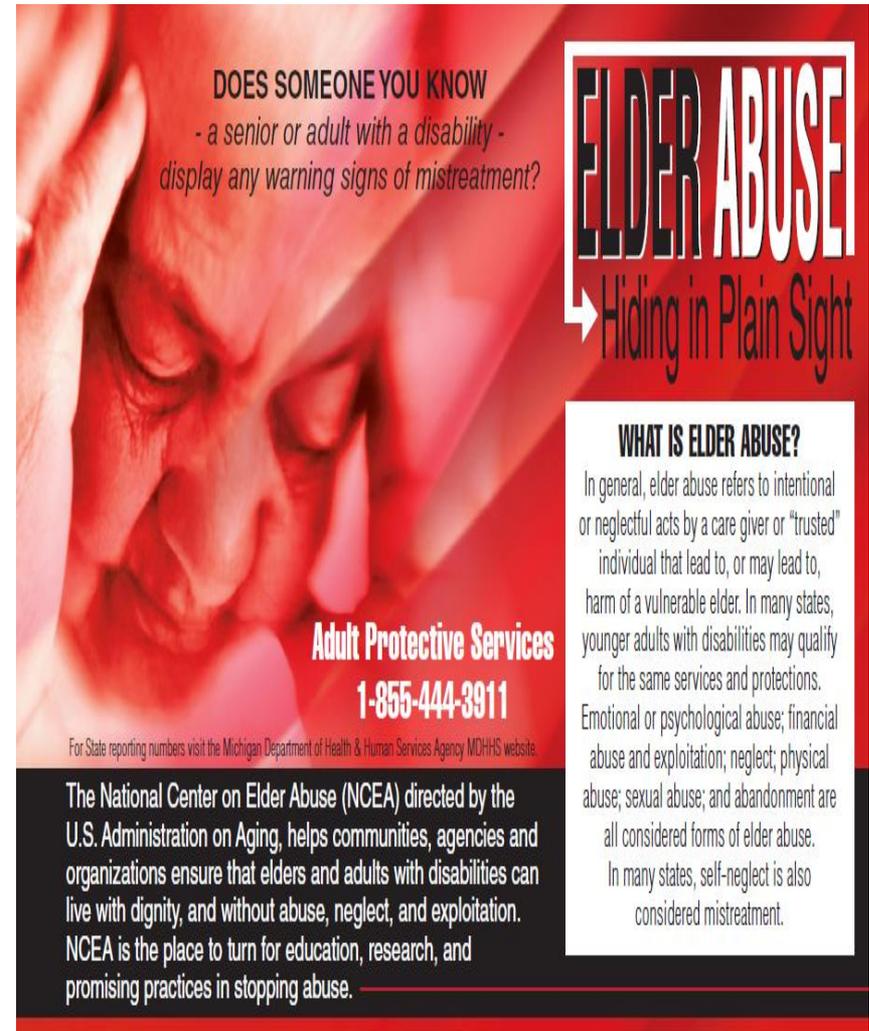
- *Call the sexual assault crisis line at 313-430-8000*
- *Preserve evidence of the assault.*
- *Don't bathe or brush your hair or teeth. Don't eat or drink anything.*

Write down all the details you can recall about the assault and the attacker.

- *Get medical attention.*
- *If you are ready to — report the rape to law enforcement authorities.*
- *Recognize that healing takes time, know that it's never too late to call.*

Laws in Michigan

- Forced or Coercion
- Mentally incapable
- Mentally Incapacitated
- Physically Helpless
- Personal Injury
- Sexual Penetration

A poster with a red background and a close-up image of an elderly person's face. The text is white and black. The top text asks if someone you know shows signs of mistreatment. The middle text says 'ELDER ABUSE' in large letters, with 'Hiding in Plain Sight' below it. The bottom text provides contact information for Adult Protective Services and a definition of elder abuse.

DOES SOMEONE YOU KNOW
- a senior or adult with a disability -
display any warning signs of mistreatment?

ELDER ABUSE
Hiding in Plain Sight

WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?
In general, elder abuse refers to intentional or neglectful acts by a care giver or "trusted" individual that lead to, or may lead to, harm of a vulnerable elder. In many states, younger adults with disabilities may qualify for the same services and protections. Emotional or psychological abuse; financial abuse and exploitation; neglect; physical abuse; sexual abuse; and abandonment are all considered forms of elder abuse. In many states, self-neglect is also considered mistreatment.

Adult Protective Services
1-855-444-3911

For State reporting numbers visit the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services Agency MDHHS website.

The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) directed by the U.S. Administration on Aging, helps communities, agencies and organizations ensure that elders and adults with disabilities can live with dignity, and without abuse, neglect, and exploitation. NCEA is the place to turn for education, research, and promising practices in stopping abuse.

Victim Reporting (SA)

- Only 3% - 5% of victims report:
- Why they may not report.
- Victim's fear of further harm.
- Victim's reluctance to report especially if perpetrator is a family member.
- Older victims are more likely to be admitted to a hospital following an assault and treated for an existing illness rather than the sexual assault.
- Disabling conditions that interfere with making reports.



Reporting

- Reporters must report immediately by telephone or otherwise.
- Failure of a mandatory reporter to report, as required makes the reporter civilly liable for damages approximately caused by the failure to report and subject to a civil fine of up to \$500 for each failure to report.
- A privileged communication between an attorney and client is grounds for excusing a report otherwise required to be made.
- Mich. Comp. Laws §§ 400.11,400.11a,400.11e

Mandatory Reporters

- A person who is employed, licensed, registered or certified to provide health care, educational, social welfare, mental health or other human services;
- An employee of an agency licensed to provide health care, educational, social welfare, mental health or other human services;
- A law enforcement officer;
- An employee of the office of the county medical examiner.

Who Reports Elder Abuse

Mandated Reporters Include:

Physicians	Licensed emergency medical care providers.
Licensed master social workers.	School counselors.
Dentists.	Audiologists.
Licensed bachelor's social workers.	Teachers.
Physician's assistants.	Psychologists.
Registered social service technicians.	Law enforcement officers.
Registered dental hygienists.	Marriage and family therapists.
Social service technicians.	Members of the clergy.
Medical examiners.	Licensed professional counselors.
Persons employed in a professional capacity in any office of the Friend of the Court.	Regulated child care providers.
Nurses.	Social workers.
School administrators.	Employees of an organization or entity that, as a result of federal funding statutes, regulations, or contracts, would be prohibited from reporting in the absence of a state mandate or court order (example: domestic violence provider).

Immediate Contact Resources

- The National Sexual Assault **HOTLINE** will give direction on how to proceed after an assault occurs – **1-800-656-4673**.
- Also available locally– Wayne County Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner's Program (WC SAFE).

Crisis Line – 1-313-430-8000

Provides those affected by Sexual Assault with immediate and ongoing comprehensive services at no cost.

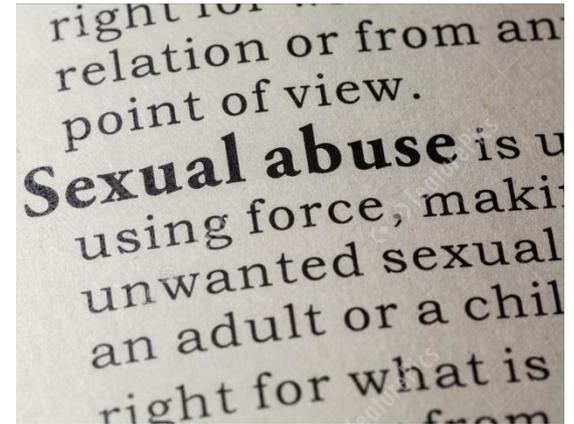


Resources

- To speak with someone who is trained to help, call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.HOPE (4673) or chat online at online.rainn.org.

LET'S DO OUR PART!!!

- SEE IT
- REPORT IT
- STOP IT



References

- RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) is the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization.
- RAINN created and operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE, [online.rainn.org](https://www.rainn.org) y [rainn.org/es](https://www.rainn.org/es)) in partnership with more than 1,000 local sexual assault service providers across the country and operates the DoD Safe Helpline for the Department of Defense.
- RAINN also carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help survivors, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.