

Statistics on College Men & Sexual Assault

- One in 15 male students raped or attempted to rape a woman during the past year (Weitzman, De-Jong & Finn, 1999) .
- One in 10 college men say they would force a woman to have sex if assured they would not get caught (University of California-Berkeley, 1994).
- Nearly 30% of college men surveyed admitted using a coercive method at least once in order to obtain sexual intercourse, while 15% admitted to using force (Rapaport & Burkhart, 1984).
- 84% of the men who commit acts which constitute rape said that what they did was *definitely* not rape (Koss, et al., 1987).

THE LAW IN WISCONSIN

Sexual assault in the 3rd or 4th degree are the most likely types of assaults to occur on college campuses. According to §940.225 of the Wisconsin statutes, an individual is guilty of sexual assault in the 3rd degree (Class G felony) when s/he has sexual intercourse with another person without the consent of that person. An individual who has sexual contact with another person without the consent of that person is guilty of 4th degree sexual assault (Class A misdemeanor). Note that an individual is guilty of 2nd degree sexual assault (Class C felony) if s/he has sexual contact or sexual intercourse with another person who is under the influence of an intoxicant to a degree which renders that person incapable of appraising the defendant's conduct and the defendant knows of such condition. "Consent" is defined in §940.225 to mean words or overt actions by a person who is competent to give informed consent which indicate a freely given agreement to have sexual intercourse or sexual contact. Imprisonment terms or fines levied against convicted defendants depend on the severity of the offense.

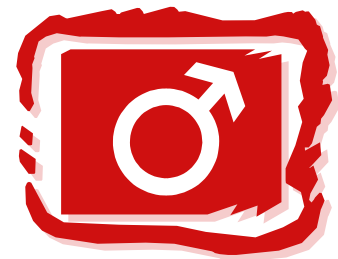


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What Men Can Do To Prevent Sexual Assault



If You Aren't Part of the Solution,
You're Part of the Problem

For more information, call DOS at 263-5700.

To become involved, call *Men Making A Difference* at 265-5966.

It isn't enough to be "against rape." Research shows that the vast majority of heterosexual men would never rape a woman and believe that rape is wrong. Yet, most college men who commit rape fail to recognize their acts as such, even when the victim presses charges. Closely and critically examine the way you treat and feel about women: might you ever be placing yourself in potentially compromising situations? Ask yourself honestly: do you believe in any rape myths or some variation of them? If so, work on changing.

Take an active stand against sexism. Avoid making sexist jokes or laughing when others tell them. Whether you actively participate in the degradation of women or simply passively listen, you are communicating that you believe women are not as deserving of respect or equal treatment as men are. Jokes, comments, pornography and other forms of media which objectify or sexualize women foster a "rape culture" which justifies and normalizes rape. Remember, too, that every woman is somebody's sister, daughter, mother, girlfriend, etc. Men demand that the women who are close to them be treated appropriately but some men may fail to afford the same treatment to other women. Treat all women as you would want the women you care about to be treated.

Never assume. Ask straightforward, tactful questions about your partner's sexual boundaries and desires. If you believe you're mature enough to have sex, then you should be comfortable with open, honest communication — even if it means you might get rejected. Refrain from coercive, pressuring techniques. Realize that gender norms may inhibit women from being assertive when expressing their sexuality, so when a woman is comfortable enough to be responsible for her own sexuality, she needs to be appreciated for that, not judged. But if a woman is trying to play "head games" or use sex to manipulate you, get yourself out of the situation.

Establish clear verbal consent from a sober partner. Research shows that men and women interpret non-verbal signals, dress, and behavior in different ways. Men, in general, more readily interpret cues as signs of sexual interest when women are in fact only being friendly or flirtatious, for example, going up to a man's room, wearing revealing clothing, or dancing in a suggestive manner. Unless she's given you a verbal, audible and sober "yes," you don't have clear consent for sexual intercourse.

Manage alcohol and other drug use. The vast majority of campus rapes involve alcohol or other drug use on the part of the perpetrator and/or victim. Research studies demonstrate that alcohol increases male sexual aggression by exacerbating the effects of testosterone. Men should especially be aware that when they are intoxicated, they may not listen as well or be aware of their own strength. Regardless of your state of intoxication, you are accountable for your actions.

Hold your male friends accountable. How men are raised in US society can effect the way men think and talk about sexual relationships or women. You may feel a lot of pressure to prove your masculinity. The best role models of masculinity are those who aren't afraid to stand up for or do the right thing. Stop a friend who is getting too sexually aggressive. If you care about your male friends, don't let them take drunk women up to their rooms, sexually harass women at a house party or in a bar, or otherwise place themselves in potentially risky situations. Men have a lot to lose if they're accused or convicted of rape.

Take a public stand against sexual assault. Write letters to the editor of the college newspaper. Participate in anti-violence marches and rallies. Not enough men's voices are heard in the public arena in support of a non-violent community. All men are ethically and morally responsible for influencing the behavior of the few men who do commit violence against women. Ultimately, men have the greatest potential to impact other men and prevent sexual assault (Katz, 1995).

Because the overwhelming majority of campus rapes involve a male student assaulting a female student, most of the suggestions provided above apply to heterosexual relationships; however, we recognize that same-sex assaults also occur, and many of these same strategies can be applied for prevention.