

## As a Survivor of Sexual Assault your Rights are:

- To be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- To have a rape crisis advocate assist you.
- To be informed and ask questions regarding exams and treatment given, including information regarding payment.
- To request the medical part of the exam, and refuse the legal part (evidence collection); however, the decision to refuse evidence collection could seriously affect the criminal case.
- To the strictest possible confidentiality, unless you agree to release information.
- To be informed of available medical, legal, and advocacy services, including aftercare and later testing that may be needed.
- To be asked those questions that are relevant to law enforcement investigation or medical treatment.
- To receive medical treatment with informed consent, even if you choose not to report to law enforcement.
- To be informed of a safe place to stay.
- The right to make an application to Crime Victim Compensation for any medical expenses incurred as a result of the crime.

We believe all people have a right to a life free of physical violence, sexual assault, verbal/emotional abuse, and restriction of personal liberties.

We believe that violence is a societal problem, a learned behavior, and with intervention and education, the cycle of violence can be broken.

We believe in the worth, dignity, and uniqueness of the individual, and we support these values through education, personal growth, self-reliance, and self-determination.

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*This pamphlet is sponsored in part by the Office of the Attorney General: Division of Victim Services.*

*CIS is available to all people without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, ability or disability.*

*The information contained within this brochure is provided by CIS for educational and informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional legal advice. If you have legal questions, please consult an attorney.*



## A Guide for Victims of Sexual Abuse

**Toll Free 24-Hour Crisis Line**  
**1-877-864-9688**

Cody Office  
1220 13th St.  
Cody, WY  
307-272-4754

Powell Office\*  
335 N. Gilbert Street  
Powell, WY  
307-754-7959  
Fax: 307-754-4448

\*Powell office is ADA accessible



## **What is Sexual Abuse?**

Sexual abuse is any sexual contact without a person's consent, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, or using a person for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to: fondling, flashing, masturbation, intercourse, and oral-genital contact. In cases of child sexual abuse, force or coercion is not necessary for a crime to occur since the child is not capable of consenting to sexual activity with an adult.

## **Common Questions Asked by Survivors of Sexual Assault:**

### **Medical**

#### **1) What is generally included in medical treatment after a sexual assault?**

- General physical examination.
- Tests for pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and other tests including possible DNA testing.
- Evidence collection.

#### **2) Who pays for the medical treatment?**

- The investigating agency is liable for any authorized medical evidence collection relating to the investigation or prosecution of the sexual assault.
- Wyoming Crime Victims Compensation Program is liable for any medical costs directly incurred by a sexual assault victim which are not covered by other sources.
- A convicted offender may be ordered to reimburse a victim for any costs that are the direct result of a sexual assault.

### **Advocacy**

An advocate is someone who will support you after the sexual assault

#### **1) Where can I find an advocate, and what do they provide?**

- Crisis Intervention Services serves Park County, and is available 24 hours a day.
- CIS provides advocacy, support, prevention/education programs, transportation, and emergency safe house.

#### **2) What is a Victim Witness Coordinator?**

- A Victim Witness Coordinator is available to assist you through the criminal justice system.
- In Park County, they can be reached through the County Attorney's office.

#### **3) What is Victim's Compensation?**

- The Wyoming Crime Victim Compensation Program provides reimbursement of eligible expenses incurred by a victim of crime with physical injury.
- Information regarding compensation can be obtained from CIS or the Victim Witness coordinator.

#### **4) What if the victim is a child? (under 18)**

- DFS and/or law enforcement must investigate the crime. DFS may authorize a medical exam and provide or purchase treatment. Law enforcement may remove a child from an unsafe environment.
- A "Handbook on Child Sexual Abuse" is available from your advocate.

### **Legal**

#### **1) What will law enforcement do after I report the sexual assault?**

- Law enforcement will investigate the crime, which may include: interviews, written reports and evidence kit may be used at the medical facility, but only if you consent.
- Provide you with information about other

medical, legal, and advocacy services that are available.

#### **2) What is the purpose of a criminal prosecution?**

- A criminal prosecution is a process used to determine legally whether a criminal law was broken, who broke it, and the penalty for breaking it.
- If the prosecutor decides to proceed with a criminal case, you might be subpoenaed to testify as a witness.
- There is no monetary cost to you if the case is prosecuted.

#### **3) What about a civil suit?**

- A civil suit is used to sue for monetary damages and may be used instead of, or in addition to, a criminal prosecution.
- There can be monetary costs involved with filing a civil suit.

### **Facts about Sexual Abuse**

- The offender is 100% at fault.
- Victims are every age, race, and physical appearance.
- Most sexual assaults involving both adults and children are committed by someone known to the victim.
- Nationally 60% of SA victims are acquainted with their assailants.
- Sexual Assault is a crime of violence; anger and hostility are acted out to dominate and control another person. Passion, lust, or sexual desire is not the motive for rape.
- All sexual assaults are traumatic experiences. The victim's relationship to the offender and/or the level of physical injury does not indicate the amount of emotional pain and suffering a victim will endure.