

DV/SA Victim Advocacy Centers

**Belcourt - Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa
Hearts of Hope**
Crisis Line: 701.477.0002
Office: 701.477.0002
E-mail: gourneau@utma.com

**Beulah
Women's Action & Resource Center**
Crisis Line: 701.873.2274
Office: 701.873.2274
mercerwar.com

**Bismarck
Abused Adult Resource Center**
Crisis Line: 866.341.7009
Office: 701.222.8370
abusedadultresourcecenter.com

**Bottineau
Family Crisis Center**
Crisis Line: 800.398.1098
Office: 701.228.2028
famcrisiscenter.org

**Devils Lake
Safe Alternatives for Abused Families**
Crisis Line: 701.409.0665
Office: 701.662.7378
saafnd.org

**Dickinson
Domestic Violence & Rape Crisis Center**
Crisis Line: 888.225.4506
Office: 701.225.4506
dvrcnd.com

**Ellendale
Kedish House**
Crisis Line: 877.349.4729
Office: 701.349.4729
kedish-house.com

**Fargo
Rape & Abuse Crisis Center**
Crisis Line: 800.344.7273
Office: 701.293.7273
raccfm.com

**Fort Totten - Spirit Lake Nation
Spirit Lake Victim Assistance**
Crisis Line: 701.766.1816
Office: 701.766.1816
spirittlakenation.com/programs/spirit-lake-victim-assistance/

**Grafton
Domestic Violence & Abuse Center Inc.**
Crisis Line: 866.435.7490
Office: 701.331.0466
dvacnd.org

**Grand Forks
Community Violence Intervention Center**
Crisis Line: 866.746.8900
Office: 701.746.0405
cviconline.org

**Jamestown
Safe Shelter**
Crisis Line: 888.353.7233
Office: 701.251.2300
safeshelterjamestown.org

**Lisbon
Abuse Resource Network**
Crisis Line: 701.683.5061
Office: 701.683.5061
abuseresourcenetwork.org

**Minot
Domestic Violence Crisis Center**
Crisis Line: 701.852.2258
Office: 701.852.2258
courage4change.org

**Stanley
Domestic Violence Program NW ND**
Crisis Line: 800.273.8232
Office: 701.628.3233
dvprnwnd.weebly.com

**Valley City
Abused Persons Outreach Center**
Crisis Line: 701.845.0072
Office: 701.845.0078
apocnd.org

**Wahpeton
Three Rivers Crisis Center**
Crisis Line: 701.642.2115
Office: 701.642.2115
threeriverscrisiscenter.com

**Washburn
McLean Family Resource Center**
Crisis Line: 701.462.8643
Office: 701.462.8643
mcleanfrc.weebly.com

**Williston
Family Crisis Shelter**
Crisis Line: 701.770.5180
Office: 701.572.0757
familycrisisshelter.com

Effects of Sexual Violence on You

If someone you care about has experienced sexual violence, you may be feeling an array of emotions, such as:

- Guilt that you did not prevent the violence
- Fear over the realization that you are also vulnerable
- A strong desire for revenge
- A desire to “fix it” and move on
- Victim blaming, or rationalizing that the violence “wasn’t that bad” or “wasn’t really rape” or was the victim’s fault
- Impatience at your loved one’s long healing process
- Frustrations with how your loved one is coping with the violence

These feelings are common and can be hard to deal with on your own. It’s normal to reach out to a professional to talk about your own response to the violence.

Remember that it’s okay to set boundaries and limitations with your loved one in order to care for yourself, and don’t blame yourself. The only ones responsible for sexual violence are the abusers!

Contact Us:

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Bismarck, ND 58501

Phone: 701.255.6240
Toll Free: 888.255.6240

nddsvc.org
contact@nddsvc.org



NDD SVC does not provide direct services to victims and survivors. Contact a DV/SA advocacy center near you if you are looking for support. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

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**North Dakota
Domestic & Sexual
Violence Coalition**

Sexual Violence: Support Guide for Friends & Family

Understanding Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is an all-encompassing term used to describe any type of unwanted, forced, or coerced sexual contact or behavior that happens without consent.

Forms of sexual violence include: sexual assault, rape or attempted rape, child sexual abuse, incest, unwanted touching (groping, fondling, forced kissing), sexual harassment or threats, sex trafficking, alcohol or drug-facilitated sexual assault, exposing one's genitals or naked body to others without consent, voyeurism (watching someone engage in sexual acts without their knowledge or consent), nonconsensual intimate image sharing, possession or distribution of child sexual abuse materials, and using technology to generate intimate images of someone without their consent.

The majority of sexual violence is committed by someone known to the victim. It can be anyone from a brief acquaintance to a spouse or partner. Sexual violence is never the victim's fault, but because the victim often knows the abuser, they may feel somehow responsible for the abuse. This can cause confusion and other emotions, such as guilt, shame, or fear of retaliation from the abuser if they speak up about the violence. As a result, many victims of sexual violence do not report the crime to law enforcement.

How Your Loved One May React

After experiencing sexual violence, a victim may go through a wide range of reactions and emotions. There is no one pattern or order of responses, but many victims of sexual violence experience:

- Denial, anger, or shock
- Guilt, shame, or feeling like they somehow caused the abuse
- Depression, numbness, or social withdrawal
- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Dissociation or flashbacks
- Dislike of sex
- Promiscuity or hyper-sexuality
- Fear for their safety
- Difficulty with intimacy
- Impaired memory
- Nightmares or insomnia
- Eating problems or disorders
- Thoughts of suicide or self-harm

10 Ways to Support a Loved One Who Has Experienced Sexual Violence

There is no one size fits all response for supporting a loved one after they've experienced sexual violence, but a good mantra to follow is **Listen, Believe, Support**. Listen to what your loved one has to say, believe them when they tell you what happened to them, and show your support by asking them how you can help.

- 1 Believe them.** Many victims of sexual violence fear that no one will believe them if they talk about the abuse. Remind your loved one that you believe them and are there for them. Avoid making assumptions or blaming them for the abuse they endured.
- 2 Listen without judgment or giving advice.** Your loved one is likely feeling many different emotions. It's important to support them in expressing any feelings they may have.
- 3 Remind them that what they experienced was not their fault.** Victims often blame themselves for the abuse, especially if they are in a relationship with or know the abuser personally. Remember that the only person at fault for the sexual violence is the abuser.
- 4 Respect their decisions.** Let them choose who they talk to about the abuse and where they get support. It's their experience to share, not yours.
- 5 Encourage your loved one to talk to a professional about the abuse.** You're a strong supporter, but you might not feel equipped to provide all the support that your loved one may need. Provide the contact information for the nearest domestic violence/sexual assault advocacy center. Advocacy centers are staffed with professionals who work with victims of sexual violence. They can help your loved one find mental health support, legal support, and more. All services provided by DV/SA advocacy centers are FREE and confidential.

- 6 Remain calm.** How you react to your loved one telling you about their experience will affect further reactions and responses from them. Listening to them and remaining calm lets them know that you're there for them. Responding with extreme anger, despair, disgust, or pity can make your loved one feel worse. Remember that they are coming to you for support and the situation is not about you. It may be helpful to find someone else that is not the victim to talk about any emotions you may be experiencing.
- 7 Be there for them.** This may look like going with your loved one to medical appointments, listening to them when they want to talk, or helping them contact professional help. Keep in mind that healing from sexual violence doesn't happen within a specific time frame. Be there for your loved one throughout the entire healing process, however long that may be.
- 8 Give your loved one the opportunity to share their experience with you, but avoid pressing for information.** They may not feel comfortable sharing certain details, and it's important to respect their privacy and boundaries.
- 9 Only touch them if you've received permission first.** Physical contact without permission can cause anxiety or flashbacks.
- 10 Don't attempt to confront the abuser or tell your loved one you are going to "get revenge."** Doing or saying things like this can cause your loved one additional stress. It may also create a dangerous situation for you or your loved one.

The more you understand about sexual violence, the better you can help and support your loved one. Visit niddsvc.org to learn more.