

## 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](mailto:gourneau@utma.com)

**Beulah  
Women's Action & Resource Center**  
Crisis Line: 701.873.2274  
Office: 701.873.2274  
[mercerwar.com](http://mercerwar.com)

**Bismarck  
Abused Adult Resource Center**  
Crisis Line: 866.341.7009  
Office: 701.222.8370  
[abusedadultresourcecenter.com](http://abusedadultresourcecenter.com)

**Bottineau  
Family Crisis Center**  
Crisis Line: 800.398.1098  
Office: 701.228.2028  
[famcrisiscenter.org](http://famcrisiscenter.org)

**Devils Lake  
Safe Alternatives for Abused Families**  
Crisis Line: 701.409.0665  
Office: 701.662.7378  
[saafnd.org](http://saafnd.org)

**Dickinson  
Domestic Violence & Rape Crisis Center**  
Crisis Line: 888.225.4506  
Office: 701.225.4506  
[dvrcnd.com](http://dvrcnd.com)

**Ellendale  
Kedish House**  
Crisis Line: 877.349.4729  
Office: 701.349.4729  
[kedish-house.com](http://kedish-house.com)

**Fargo  
Rape & Abuse Crisis Center**  
Crisis Line: 800.344.7273  
Office: 701.293.7273  
[raccfm.com](http://raccfm.com)

**Fort Totten - Spirit Lake Nation  
Spirit Lake Victim Assistance**  
Crisis Line: 701.766.1816  
Office: 701.766.1816  
[spiritlakenation.com/programs/spirit-lake-victim-assistance/](http://spiritlakenation.com/programs/spirit-lake-victim-assistance/)

**Grafton  
Domestic Violence & Abuse Center Inc.**  
Crisis Line: 866.435.7490  
Office: 701.331.0466  
[dvacnd.org](http://dvacnd.org)

**Grand Forks  
Community Violence Intervention Center**  
Crisis Line: 866.746.8900  
Office: 701.746.0405  
[cviconline.org](http://cviconline.org)

**Jamestown  
Safe Shelter**  
Crisis Line: 888.353.7233  
Office: 701.251.2300  
[safeshelterjamestown.org](http://safeshelterjamestown.org)

**Lisbon  
Abuse Resource Network**  
Crisis Line: 701.683.5061  
Office: 701.683.5061  
[abuseresourcenetwork.org](http://abuseresourcenetwork.org)

**Minot  
Domestic Violence Crisis Center**  
Crisis Line: 701.852.2258  
Office: 701.852.2258  
[courage4change.org](http://courage4change.org)

**Stanley  
Domestic Violence Program NW ND**  
Crisis Line: 800.273.8232  
Office: 701.628.3233  
[dvprwnd.weebly.com](http://dvprwnd.weebly.com)

**Valley City  
Abused Persons Outreach Center**  
Crisis Line: 701.845.0072  
Office: 701.845.0072  
[apocnd.org](http://apocnd.org)

**Wahpeton  
Three Rivers Crisis Center**  
Crisis Line: 701.642.2115  
Office: 701.642.2115  
[threeriverscrisiscenter.com](http://threeriverscrisiscenter.com)

**Washburn  
McLean Family Resource Center**  
Crisis Line: 701.462.8643  
Office: 701.462.8643  
[mcleanfrc.weebly.com](http://mcleanfrc.weebly.com)

**Williston  
Family Crisis Shelter**  
Crisis Line: 701.770.5180  
Office: 701.572.0757  
[familycrisisshelter.com](http://familycrisisshelter.com)

## 5 Ways to Help End Sexual Violence

1. Learn more about sexual violence and how abuse impacts victims. When you understand the complex situations and feelings that victims face, you can provide better support to someone who is experiencing abuse.
2. Talking about sexual violence isn't easy, and it may make you uncomfortable. We encourage you to talk about it anyway. By having informed conversations about sexual violence, we can put an end to the harmful attitudes and beliefs that cause sexual violence, create a better support system for victims, and build safer communities for everyone.
3. Challenge offensive or harmful language regarding women, girls, and other marginalized groups like sexist jokes or stereotypical or demeaning comments. While not everyone who makes a sexist joke is abusive, it's important to call out harmful attitudes and beliefs that can lead to violent actions.
4. Be a role model for healthy relationships by demonstrating respect, equality, and always seeking enthusiastic consent.
5. Volunteer with or donate to your local DV/SA advocacy center.

### Contact Us:

521 E Main Avenue, Suite 320  
Bismarck, ND 58501

Phone: 701.255.6240  
Toll Free: 888.255.6240

[nddsvc.org](http://nddsvc.org)  
[contact@nddsvc.org](mailto: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.*

This project was supported by Grant Number 15JOVW-22-GG-00907-MUMU, awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

**North Dakota**  
**Domestic & Sexual**  
**Violence Coalition**

# Understanding Sexual Violence



## What is 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. Sexual violence includes any kind of sexual assault, abuse, or harassment.

Many people believe harmful stereotypes about sexual violence that blame the victim instead of the abuser, but sexual violence is not about what a victim wore, how they acted, or how much they had to drink. Sexual violence is never a victim's fault. The only people that cause sexual violence are the abusers, because sexual violence is about power and control. Abusers commit acts of sexual violence to gain power and control over the person they are abusing. These actions come from attitudes and beliefs that they have about the victim or certain marginalized groups. Abusers often feel a sense of entitlement, superiority, or male privilege over the victim that they use to justify their actions. For example, a man may wrongly believe that he is superior to women and entitled to women's bodies, which he may use to justify groping a woman in public or threatening his partner into performing sex acts. These kinds of beliefs are wrong and are the cause of sexual violence.

Statistically, women are more likely to be victims of sexual violence, but men are also victims. It's important to add that although the majority of abusers are men, that doesn't mean the majority of men are abusers.

## Forms of Sexual Violence

- Sexual assault or rape
- Child sexual abuse
- Incest
- Unwanted touching (groping, fondling, forced kissing, etc.)
- Sexual harassment or threats
- Sex trafficking or sexual exploitation
- Alcohol or drug facilitated sexual assault
- Voyeurism (watching someone engage in sexual acts without their knowledge or consent)
- Nonconsensual intimate image sharing
- Possession or distribution of child sexual abuse materials
- Using technology to generate intimate images of someone without their consent

## Impacts of Sexual Violence on Victims

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 violence. 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.

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

## What is Consent?

Consent is an ongoing agreement between participants to engage in a sexual activity. We say that consent is ongoing because it is more than just a one time "yes" or "no." It's a continuous conversation between partners about boundaries, desires, and comfort levels with different sexual activities. Without consent, a sex act is sexual violence.

Consent is always a clear, enthusiastic "yes" rather than the absence of a "no." Silence is not consent, "I'm not sure" is not consent, and "I guess so..." is not consent.

If someone consented to a sexual activity in the past, it doesn't mean that they consent to further sexual activity in the future. It's important to check in with your partner periodically to make sure that you're both comfortable with an activity. One way to do this is by asking, "Is this OK?" or "Do you want to \_\_\_?" You can also change your mind and withdraw consent at any time by communicating to your partner that you want to stop.

Consent cannot be given by anyone who is underage or unable to understand what's happening due to being asleep, unconscious, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Consent is not valid if someone is pressuring, threatening, or intimidating you into participating in sexual activities.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual violence, contact a domestic violence/sexual assault victim advocacy center near you for support.

A directory can be found on the back of this page or by visiting [nndsv.org/find-help](https://nndsv.org/find-help)

All services provided by advocacy centers are FREE and confidential.

