

How to help a friend who has been sexually assaulted

The emotional impact of sexual assault can be both immediate and long-lasting. Although it may be difficult to know if a friend is hurting, there are ways to be helpful.

Helping your friend

A friend may confide in you ten minutes or ten years after the assault. Sexual assault can be hard to talk about – you can help your friend by listening and offering support and also by encouraging him or her to call SHARE.

How to Respond

- ▶ **Listen and demonstrate that you believe him or her**
It is important for your friend to know he/she is believed, supported and not judged.
- ▶ **Let your friend lead the conversation** - Allow your friend to determine the pace and focus of the conversation. Help him or her understand the available options, but your friend should be the one to decide how to proceed.
- ▶ **Be reassuring** - People often blame themselves. Your friend is not at fault. No one asks to be sexually assaulted. She/he is not responsible for the offender's actions.

Helping yourself

- ▶ **Be aware of your own feelings** - You may feel hurt, angry, guilty, anxious, or frightened which may be surprising, confusing, or overwhelming.
- ▶ **Know and respect your own limits** - Provide support and compassion. Try not to offer more than you can give, and encourage your friend to seek additional support.
- ▶ **You are not responsible for your friend's experience** - You may think that you could have done something to prevent your friend's sexual assault. The offender is responsible for the assault.
- ▶ **Seek support for yourself** - Find someone other than the survivor to talk to about your feelings. SHARE is available for you, too.
- ▶ **Keep the rest of your life on track** - Do not forget to take care of yourself. This will help both you and your friend.

What Resources are available?

- ▶ **Crisis Services** - The SHARE Center has a 24/7 confidential hotline (203.432.2000) to talk by phone. Students can also drop in weekdays 9-5. A counselor can help you and your friend with resources, services and decisions on how to proceed.
- ▶ **Medical** - Medical attention is available 24/7 at Acute Care (55 Lock Street, 203.432.0123). Encourage your friend to seek medical attention as soon as possible following the sexual assault (pregnancy testing, emergency contraception, and prophylactic medications for STI's and HIV are also available).
- ▶ **Evidence Collection** - In acute situations, forensic or physical evidence is recommended. Collection exams are conducted in the Emergency Department at Yale–New Haven Hospital only. SHARE counselors are available to meet students at the Emergency Department. Students often ask a friend to accompany them as well.
- ▶ **Reporting** - Your friend has a right to report the assault. Detailed reporting information can be found at: <http://smr.yale.edu>. To view videos about the Formal Complaint Process, visit: cce.yalecollege.yale.edu/howtohelp-uwv
- ▶ **Long-Term Support** - Both SHARE and the Mental Health & Counseling Center at Yale Health can assist with addressing the long-term needs of survivors of sexual assault and abuse.



RESOURCES

Campus

| | |
|--|--|
| SHARE Center..... | 203.432.2000 (24/7) (Confidential) (Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education) |
| Yale Health, Lower Level..... | <i>Drop in weekdays</i> 9am-5pm |
| Security Escort..... | 203.432.WALK |
| Mini Bus..... | 203.432.6330 |
| University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct (UWC)..... | 203.432.4449 |
| Walden Peer Counseling (undergrads)..... | 203.432.TALK |
| Communication and Consent Educators (CCEs; undergrads)..... | 203.432.0847 |

Mental Health & Counseling Center

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 8:30am – 5pm, Mon-Fri..... | 203.432.0290 |
| After hours & weekends..... | 203.432.0123 |

Yale Medical Health Services

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Ob/Gyn..... | 203.432.0222 |
| Student Medicine..... | 203.432.0312 |
| Acute Care..... | 203.432.0123 |

Other Resources

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Yale Chaplain's Office..... | 203.432.8752 |
| Yale LGBTQ Resource Office..... | 203.432.0309 |

Public Safety

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Yale Police Department..... | 203.432.4400 |
| New Haven Police Department..... | 203.946.6316 or 911 |

In the Community

| | |
|--|----------------|
| CT Sexual Assault Crisis Services 24-hour Toll-Free (English)..... | 1.888.999.5545 |
| (Spanish)..... | 1.888.568.8332 |
| Women and Families Center..... | 203.389.5010 |
| Planned Parenthood..... | 203.387.3131 |
| Yale–New Haven Hospital..... | 203.688.2222 |

Check the SHARE Web site
for more information:
www.sharecenter.yale.edu