

Where to Go for Help

Students who have experienced sexual violence have many options and services available to them both on and off campus. Below are descriptions of such resources (See the following page for contact phone numbers):

Campus Resources

UF Police Department

Emergency police response

UFPD Community Services Division

Women's self defense course

UFPD Office of Victim Services

Crisis intervention, advocacy, information and referral

UF Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

Takes reports of student violations of University policy

UF Student Health Care Center (Infirmary)

Medical care for victims of sexual violence

UF Counseling and Wellness Center

Individual and group counseling

Community Resources

Alachua County Crisis Center

Free 24-hour phone counseling, face-to-face counseling, and information and referral services

Peaceful Paths

Counseling, support groups, and shelter services for survivors of intimate partner violence

RESOURCES

Campus Resources:

University of Florida Police Department	(352) 392-1111
UFPD Office of Victim Services	(352) 392-5648
UFPD's Community Services Division Rape Aggression Defense Course	(352) 392-1409
SNAP	(352) 392-7627
Counseling and Wellness Center	(352) 392-1575
Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution	(352) 392-2161 x207
Student Health Care Center	(352) 392-1161
Student Legal Services	(352) 392-5297

Community Resources:

Alachua County Crisis Center	(352) 264-6789
Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center	(352) 264-6760
Alachua County Sheriff's Office	(352) 367-4000
Gainesville Police Department	(352) 334-2400
Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network	(352) 377-8255
Shands Hospital Emergency Room	(352) 265-0050

For more information, please contact

**University of Florida
Police Department**

**Office of Victim Services
(352) 392-5648**

**Community Services Division
(352) 392-1409**

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The Foundation for The Gator Nation

I think my roommate was raped last night.

My sister's boyfriend has always been aggressive with her and now she has bruises all over.

How to Help a Friend

My friend's ex won't stop calling and emailing and is starting to make threats.

My friend is acting strange. I think something happened, but I'm not sure what.

Forms of Sexual Violence

Sexual violence can manifest in many ways. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- ✘ Sexual battery (a.k.a. rape, sexual assault, etc.)
- ✘ Intimate partner violence
- ✘ Stalking
- ✘ Exposure of sexual organs
- ✘ Obscene/harassing phone calls/emails
- ✘ Sexual Harassment

Each of these forms of violence can be traumatic and life-altering for those experiencing them.

Common Reactions to Sexual Violence

People who have experienced any of the above forms of sexual violence may have a variety of emotional, cognitive, and/or behavioral reactions that may vary in intensity and duration. All of the following reactions are normal, but may become problematic without support or intervention:

- ✘ Anger
- ✘ Depression
- ✘ Fear of retaliation for reporting
- ✘ Fear of experiencing further violence
- ✘ Guilt or self-blame
- ✘ Shock
- ✘ Anxiety or panic attacks
- ✘ Difficulty recalling details of event(s)
- ✘ Trouble concentrating on studies/work
- ✘ Nightmares or other sleep disturbances
- ✘ Social withdrawal

Common Reactions of Family and Friends

Though it might not make sense, family and friends of those who have experienced sexual violence often react in ways that can cause further emotional distress for the victim. These reactions include, but are not limited to:

- ✘ Overwhelming the victim with questions
- ✘ Blaming/judging the victim
- ✘ Attempting to force or coerce the victim into taking certain action (e.g. making/not making a police report, withdrawing from school, moving home, etc.)
- ✘ Failing to control her/his own emotional reactions in the presence of the victim
- ✘ Discussing the situation with others without the victim's permission

How You Can Help

You can play an important role in helping your friend or loved one begin the process of healing in the aftermath of experiencing sexual violence. Some of these ways are as follows:

- ✘ Listen openly and patiently
- ✘ Believe what your friend tells you
- ✘ Avoid asking too many questions
- ✘ If you must ask questions, avoid asking blaming questions (“Why did/were you . . . ?”)
- ✘ Ask permission before hugging or touching
- ✘ Respect privacy: avoid speaking with others about the incident unless you have been requested to do so by your friend
- ✘ Inform your friend about resources available on campus and in the community that can provide assistance and offer to go with her/him to seek help
- ✘ Support your friend in following through with the decisions s/he has made, regardless of whether or not they are the decisions you would have made

Deciding What to Do

The University of Florida Police Department's Office of Victim Services is available to assist students in deciding what options are best for them in the aftermath of sexual violence and in following through with those options. It is NOT the role of an advocate to make decisions for a student. Victims of sexual violence have many options available to them including, but not limited to:

- ✘ Filing a police report
- ✘ Petitioning for an Injunction for Protection Order
- ✘ Notifying Student Conduct Office at the Dean of Student's Office if the offender is a UF student
- ✘ Notifying Human Resources if the offender is a faculty or staff member
- ✘ Speaking with a counselor

Not everyone who has been the victim of a crime decides to report that crime to the police...it is a very personal and difficult decision to make.

Taking Care of Yourself

It is important to be aware of your own emotional reactions when someone you care about has experienced sexual violence. You may find yourself experiencing similar reactions as your friend. It is important as you attempt to provide your friend with support that you also take care of yourself.

- ✘ Remember that you will not be able to “fix” the situation for your friend. Don't underestimate the importance of simply listening and being a supportive presence.
- ✘ Don't feel as though you are the only person who can help your friend or loved one. Such a responsibility will be overwhelming and the reality is that there are many resources and support systems available to help.
- ✘ If you begin to feel overwhelmed, seek help for yourself. Talk to a victim advocate, counselor, friend, or family member.
- ✘ Remember that you won't be able to provide support and assistance for your friend if you are not taking care of yourself.