

I Have Been Sexually Assaulted

What do I do?

A Resource Guide

What is sexual assault?

- Sexual assault is any sexual contact that you did not agree to. This includes any unwanted touching, forced kissing and forced sex.
- Any sexual activity that is preformed under coercion, manipulation, intimidation or threat of safety is sexual assault.
- Sexual assault can happen anywhere including at work, at school on public transit and while out in your community.

What is consent?

Consent is an agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity

Consent cannot be given by individuals who are underage, intoxicated, incapacitated, asleep or unconscious

Consent is enthusiastic. It can be revoked at anytime

You have the right to sexual contact that you freely agree to. No one has the right to touch you without your consent.

Sexual Assault Is Not Your Fault

What happened is not your fault. It does not matter what you did (or did not do) before, during or after the assault. It is okay if you fought back; it's also okay if you didn't.

All of your reactions and feelings are normal

You are not alone, we see you, we believe you

Medical Options

You may want to seek out medical treatment for any injuries, to treat potential STIs or prevent pregnancy.

Medical treatment will remain confidential if you do not wish to take any further action

A forensic examination kit can be completed at the Cranbrook Hospital. Depending on the reporting option you choose, the RCMP may or may not be involved.

It is important to note: forensic kits are only available at the Cranbrook Hospital at this time.

What are My Reporting Options?

No Report

You can choose not to report. Choosing not to report/disclose is a valid choice. You can change your mind and make a report at any point in the future should you choose to. Support is still available if you decide not to report.

Report to Police

You can make a report to the police by phone or in person at the police station. You can ask for their victim services worker to be present during for support and clarification.

You will be given the option to have a forensic examination completed – this can be done at the Cranbrook hospital. A doctor or nurse will collect DNA samples from your body that can be used as evidence in your case

What are My Reporting Options?

Delayed Report

If you are unsure whether you want RCMP involvement, or maybe want to report in the future but now is not the right time, then you have the option of delayed reporting.

A forensic examination kit can be completed and securely stored at the hospital for up to a year, without RCMP having any knowledge about it. After a year, the samples taken will be destroyed.

Third Party Report

Third Party Reporting is done through a designated third party. It allows victims who do not want to report the crime directly to ensure police receive a report about the crime without knowing who you are. The Fernie Women's Centre is one agency that can support you through the process. Support with TPR is available for all genders.

*Third party reporting isn't appropriate for everyone/situation. If you have questions and want to know if it's the right option for you, please contact us at the Fernie Women's Centre.

After/Self Care

Sexual assault effects everyone differently and taking care of yourself afterwards can be difficult. On the days that it feels possible - doing things that make you feel good/normal/better can help. It's important to remember that even steps that seem small can still help. Choose activities that work best for you. Know that support is available

Whatever you decide, the decision is yours. No one else gets to tell you how to feel, how to process or that you should be doing more/less.

Note - It is not uncommon for friends/family to minimize or respond in ways that might not validate you. Know that there are people who understand and want to help support you in ways that make you feel safe and seen.

Seeking Support In the Elk Valley

There are people who can help and support you.

24 Hour Services

Elk Valley Safe Homes - 1 250 946 6004

Crisis Line - 1 888 353 2273

Police Based

Police Based Victim Services - 1 250 423 7500

Fernie Women's Centre

1 250 423 4687

info@ferniewomenscentre.com