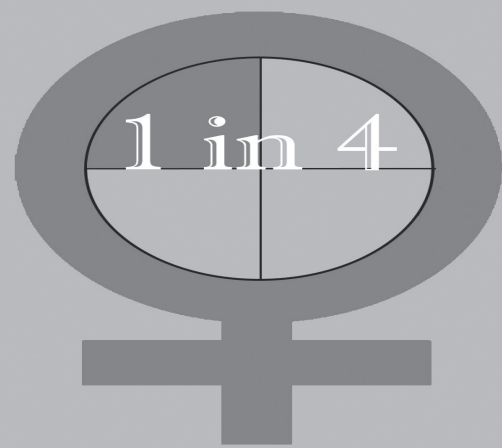
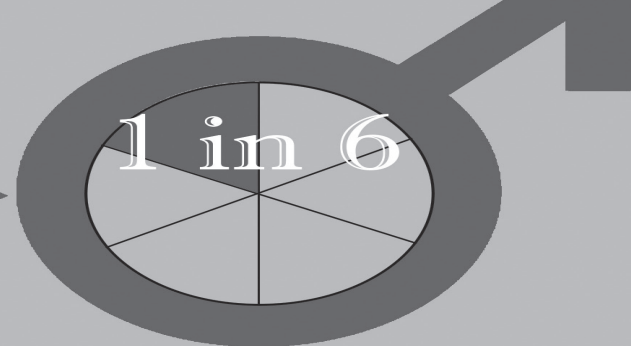


SEXUAL ASSAULT



1 in 5 women in college are SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

VICTIMS
U.S.



1 in 16 men in college are SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

AFTERMATH EFFECTS



DEPRESSION

3 X



PTS DISORDER

6 X



ALCOHOL ABUSE

13 X



DRUG ABUSE

26 X

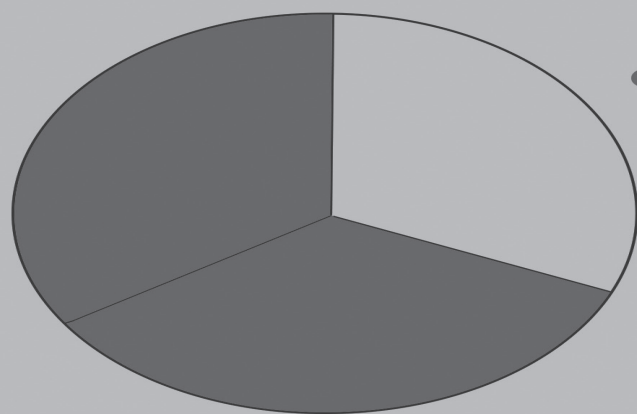


CONTEMPLATE SUICIDE

4 X



REPORTS / WHO TO GO?



- **2/3** of victims tell another person, usually a friend, not family or school officials.

RESOURCES

<http://www.nsvrc.org>
<https://rainn.org>

What is sexual assault: it goes beyond rape



MADELINE PANOZZO
GCJD

When we hear the term sexual

assault, we immediately think of its most extreme form: rape. Yet, how else can someone be sexually assaulted without being raped?

By definition, sexual assault is "any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient."

That could mean a forced and uninvited kiss.

You might think that's a stretch. But experts say sexual assault is a crime of power and control.

Sexual assault is a very broad term, and it's worth taking some time to discuss specifics.

Force is a term often used when talking about sexual assault, but it doesn't have to be physical. Perpetrators can use emotional coercion, or threaten victims to perform non-consensual sex.

Date Rape is another common term, but experts suggest the term acquaintance rape is more accurate. Perpetrators of acquaintance rape could be a classmate, neighbor, or the friend of a friend. Law enforcement officials say having a prior relationship, even an intimate one, does not give someone consent

for increased or continued sexual contact.

It's important to note that four out of five sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim.

Stranger rape is when the victim does not know the perpetrator at all. It can occur in many different ways. For example, at night in a public place.

Often, the crime a perpetrator is charged with will depend on the state the assault occurred in. States define sexual assault crimes differently, the age of consent

varies, and even the statute of limitations for prosecuting are different. The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network's website has a lot of information on how states differ.

As college students, we are particularly vulnerable. Recent studies show that nearly one fourth of all college students are sexually assaulted.

Experts remind us that sexual assault can take many different forms, but one thing remains the same: it's never the victim's fault.

Just the facts: rape on college campuses in numbers

ANGELA THEIS
GCJD

Four college girls walk into a bar.

Sadly, this is not the beginning of a joke. There is no catchy punchline at the end.

The cruel reality is that one in four college women will be raped or sexually assaulted in their lifetime, according to OneInFourUSA.org. What's more, one in six men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetimes, something hardly anyone ever talks about.

College students are particularly vulnerable.

A 2015 study published by CNN Health shows that 23 percent of female college students said they experienced some form

of unwanted sexual contact — ranging from kissing to touching to rape, carried out by force or threat of force, or while they were incapacitated because of alcohol and drugs.

On the Sam Houston campus last year, there were five sexual assaults reported to University Police. In addition, in 2015 there were nine forcible sex offenses on campus and seven in campus housing, according to Cleary statistics.

But experts say the numbers are probably higher. Not all students assaulted report to the University and even fewer go on to report to law enforcement.

What's more, statistics show sexual assault is disturbingly high among Greek organizations.

A 2009 Violence Against Women study reported that

sorority women were four times more likely to be sexually assaulted than non-Greeks.

Many of these rapes are occurring with the assistance of drugs and alcohol.

In up to 81 percent of college rape cases involving a male assault of a female, experts say the females are intoxicated. This is despite the fact that, in recent years, a push for a better understanding of consent, or lack thereof, under the influence has been made.

However, this societal problem is not limited to college campuses.

One in four women in the military will also be victims of rape or attempted rape during their military service.

While new attention has been brought to the problem, the numbers are not dropping as they should. In the United States alone,

1.27 million women experience rape every year with 80 percent of assaults being committed by someone known, and even close, to the victim.

However, strides are being made in the right direction.

Many states are in the process of lengthening the statute of limitations on rape prosecutions. This would allow many victims the ability to prosecute rapes after receiving adequate time to recover from the emotional and physical traumas.

According to an article by NPR and Rebecca O'Connor from the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, "many states have no limit at all for cases where there's DNA evidence... [and] understanding about how rape victims often need time to recover from their trauma is bolstering

efforts to loosen their time limits."

The idea of opening up civil rape cases could hold alleged perpetrators accountable even after the statute of limitations is up.

These extensions on prosecuting would also hopefully allow for higher arrest rates, currently at seven percent, and prosecution rates, currently at two percent, of perpetrators.

Currently, it's estimated that 98 percent of rapists will not spend a single day in jail.

Advocates say there must be a conscious effort as a society to not only encourage the reporting and prosecution of rapes and sexual assault, but also come up with better solutions to prevent rape and sexual assault in the first place.

Bystander intervention: what to do to stop it before it starts



ALICIA CANCHOLA
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It's difficult to hear accounts from those who have been sexually assaulted. Even more so, it's difficult to hear about an assault that could have been prevented.

More often than not, there are bystanders who have the potential to intervene before a sexual assault takes place. Yet, in many situations they do not.

Sam Houston State's Title IX coordinator Jeanine Bias Nelson said people often stay idle because they're waiting on someone else to step up.

"This can be for a number of reasons," Nelson said. "Most often because people feel someone else will step in, or they do not want to get involved in a situation that does not directly involve them."

In many cases, ignorance about what to do also plays a role.

To be able to be effective, one must first truly understand what bystander intervention is, and who qualifies as a bystander.

According to sexual assault experts, a bystander is someone who observes violence or witnesses the conditions that perpetuate violence. A bystander is someone who is not directly involved, but is in the position to speak up to discourage or interrupt an incident from occurring.

But bystanders won't act unless they feel empowered and equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively assist in the prevention of sexual violence, Nelson said.

The key, according to Nelson and sexual assault experts, is to have a plan before you go out. It's important to never directly

intervene alone to ensure a personal safety. What's more, experts say to trust ones instincts and know when to call law enforcement for additional help.

For SHSU students, resources are not far away. The Title IX office on campus handles all acts of sex discrimination, which includes sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Nelson said cultural change revolves around continued education. The more civilians talk about their responsibility as bystanders, the more people will know what is expected of society as a whole.

"Those on campus, who are considered advocates, whether they be faculty, staff, or students, should continue to bring awareness to the issue as well as role model expected behavior," Nelson said.

Having the ability to identify situations, gain confidence to speak up and sharing the knowledge of the two can help kick start the spread of bystander intervention

Systematic backlog

QUANTAE ROBINSON
GCJD

Many people have been victimized by sexual assault, yet sexual assault has the lowest arrest rate of all violent crimes.

Even if survivors report the crime, which many don't, there are systematic problems that persist. Most notably, a backlog in untested rape kits.

A rape kit consists of DNA evidence that is collected and preserved after an exhaustive examination of a victim's body. It can be a powerful tool to solve and prevent crime.

But many jurisdictions lack resources and personnel to process them. As DNA evidence becomes more prevalent, crime labs just can't keep up. What's more, many kits never make it a crime lab in the first place and spend years sitting in police storage facilities.

EndtheBacklog, which is dedicated to justice for rape victims, says another reason for the backlog is that some law enforcement agencies don't

prioritize sexual assault cases because they don't believe victims or even blame them.

There is no federal law mandating the tracking and testing of rape kits, so numbers are sketchy. But some states are enacting reforms to deal with the issue.

In 2011, Texas enacted legislation requiring law enforcement agencies to submit sexual assault evidence to a crime lab for analysis within 30 days of receipt. But the law initially did not allocate any new funding for this testing process. As the backlog persisted, the legislature finally included nearly 11 million dollars in the budget for processing untested rape kits for 2014 and 2015.

Rape kit testing is a credible path to justice on many levels.

The DNA from rape kits can corroborate a victim's account, but it can also exonerate innocent suspects.

We must commit to testing each rape kit so justice prevails.