

Dating Rights & Responsibilities

- Say "no" firmly. If you don't mean "no" then don't say it.
- Be clear, honest, and consistent in your communications about sexual desires.
- Trust your instincts if you have any hesitations. Pay particular attention to situations that make you uncomfortable and think of ways to decrease potential problems.
- Be aware that non-verbal behaviors or actions may be interpreted differently than you intended. This does not mean it is your fault if you are assaulted.
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol and/or other drugs.
- Understand that forced sex is never acceptable; it is against the law.
- Accept "no" as "no". Do not read other meanings into that word.
- Know the difference between desire and action. Being sexually aroused does not give you permission to force sex on another.
- Be responsible for your own actions and sexual limits; they are your responsibility.
- Realize that dating someone for a long time, spending money on someone or previous sexual activity does not entitle someone to have sex with you.
- Don't make assumptions. Just because your date welcomes some sexual contact does not mean he or she wants other types of contact or will want it at another time. If you're not sure, ask.

Remember:

**No One Asks or Deserves to be Raped!
If it is Against Your Will or Consent,
It is Against the Law!**

There is help...you can talk with someone who will listen, who understands.

You don't need to hide your feelings or pretend they are not there.
You are not alone.

**For More Information,
Contact Your
Local Rape Crisis Center**

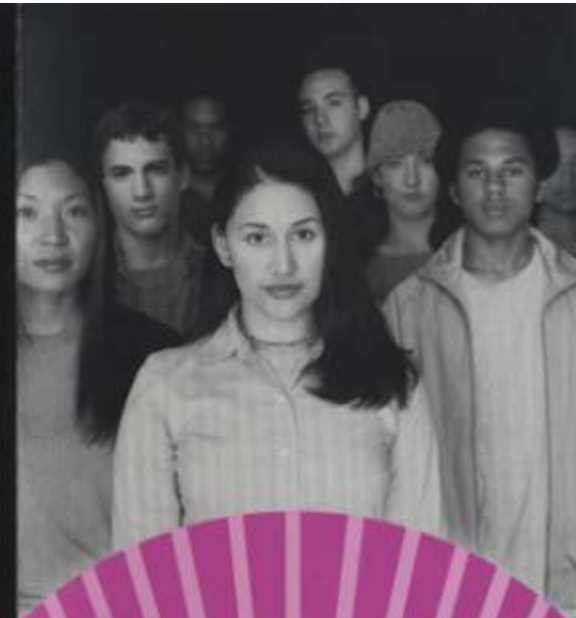
or call



**Florida Council Against
Sexual Violence**
1311-A Paul Russell Road
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Information Line: 1-888-956-RAPE
Office: (850) 297-2000
www.fcasv.org

The project was supported by Grant No. 2006-WF-VX-0015 awarded by the Violence Against Women Grants Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice, the Florida Department of Children and Families or any other agency of the state or federal government. This project was also supported by the PH45892 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



**EVEN
AMONG
FRIENDS**

R A P E

RAPE: EVEN AMONG FRIENDS



KNOW THE FACTS

If it is against your will or consent, it is against the law.

As children you were probably warned not to talk to strangers. Yet the fact is you are more likely to be sexually assaulted by someone you know: a friend, date, ex-boyfriend, classmate, neighbor, relative, or employer.

Acquaintance rape occurs when someone you know uses physical strength, emotional bargaining, bullying/threats, blackmail or mind games to force you to have sex. If you do not consent, and someone has sex with you anyway or does sexual things to you that you do not want, it is a crime.

Women are most at risk for rape between ages 16 and 24. Since this is when young women begin to date, they are particularly vulnerable to being a victim of date rape.

In one study of college students, 74 percent of the men who perpetrated sexual violence and 55 percent of the female victims had been drinking or using drugs prior to the assault. Date rapes often occur as a result of misunderstood behaviors and/or communication styles. People who regard sex as "scoring" and are aggressive often believe "no" can be changed to "yes" with a little more pressure or force. But rape is always a crime, even if the victim has dated or had sex with the perpetrator in the past.

Common Reactions to Victimization

Victims of date rape may experience many different feelings in response to their crisis. Victims also may be confused about whether to tell the police, their school and their family and friends about what happened. Some common feelings include:

- Confusion
- Self-blame
- Embarrassment
- Helplessness
- Denial
- Shock
- Fear
- Disbelief
- Anger

Victims sometimes want to forget that this happened to them. But surviving sexual assault creates many long term effects. Some common problems are:

- Nightmares or problems sleeping
- Memories and thoughts about the violence
- Depression
- Drugs and alcohol use as a way to calm down or forget
- Eating disorders
- Suicidal thoughts
- Trouble concentrating
- Health problems
- Trust issues in relationships

Victims deserve the help of a rape crisis advocate to help them cope with their feelings and decisions.

What Do Victims Feel?