

Myths and Facts about Sexual Violence

Myth Most sexual assaults are committed by strangers.

In reality, the majority of the time the offender is someone that the victim knows. Victims are usually coerced, manipulated, tricked or threatened by someone they are acquainted with. One study found that 84% of women who were raped knew their attacker and for 57% of those women, the offender was a first date or romantic acquaintance.

Fact Alcohol or drugs increase a person's vulnerability to sexual assault.

Alcohol and drugs can increase anyone's vulnerability. In one study, 75% of males and 55% of females were under the influence of drugs or alcohol when the sexual assault occurred.

Myth Men cannot be sexually assaulted.

Anyone can be victimized. 1 in 6 boys under the age of 18 are sexually assaulted. It has also been estimated that 10% of all men have been sexually assaulted. Because of social stigma however, male sexual victimization is vastly underreported.

Fact The most common place for sexual violence to occur is in the survivor's home.

The second most common place is the offender's home, because the offender is usually someone the victim knows. Many people think that sexual assaults happen in dark, abandoned places, but the greatest risk lies where we feel the safest.

Fact Most of the time, sexual assault is planned.

Sexual assault is not an impulsive act. If it is a single offender, it is planned 60% of the time; gang attacks are planned 90% of the time.

Myth Perpetrators are deranged, psychopathic, undereducated men from poor backgrounds.

Sex offenders are found in all socioeconomic classes. Offenders can be anyone: doctors, lawyers, the homeless, blue-collar workers, classmates, co-workers, etc.

For more information,
contact our
24-hour hotline:

201.487.2227



YWCA Bergen County's

Mission

To empower survivors of all forms of sexual violence through support, advocacy, counseling, and resources necessary to lay the foundation for the healing process; and to prevent sexual violence through education, training, and awareness to create a safe community for all.

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empowering women
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ywca mission

The YWCA Bergen County is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

www.ywcabergencounty.org

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