



# NEW ENGLAND LEARNING CENTER FOR WOMEN IN TRANSITION

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## ~ SEXUAL ASSAULT FACTS ~

### Did you know...

- In Massachusetts, the rate of rape and sexual abuse of persons over the age of 12 is **1 per hour**.
- **1 in 4** females is raped during her lifetime - over half of them before the age of 18.
- **1 in 7** males is sexually abused during his lifetime.
- **74%** of assaults are committed by acquaintances, *not* by a stranger in a dark alley. This includes boyfriends or ex-boyfriends, spouses and partners or ex-spouses and ex-partners, parents or guardians, other family members, and friends, neighbors, co-workers, and classmates.

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### Rape and incest are punishable crimes in Massachusetts.

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted, *it is not your fault*. Responsibility for any sexual assault lies in the hands of the abuser. No matter what you did or didn't do, you did NOT cause or deserve the abuse.

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### Whether you were sexually assaulted recently or in the past, it helps to talk to someone.

By calling a confidential hotline, you can get information, resources, or referrals. If you want, you can also set up an appointment with a trained counselor.

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### What is the Difference Between Sexual Assault and Rape?

**Sexual Assault** is *touching any intimate parts of someone's body against that person's will or consent*. Sexual assault is an offense in itself, and may or may not include rape.

**Rape** is *non-consensual intercourse, oral sex, or anal sex against a person's will, by use of force, threats, or intimidation*. Penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth by any object is considered rape.

**Consent:** Under Massachusetts state law, if a person is drunk, under the influence of drugs, asleep, or unconscious, that person is unable to consent. Intercourse with a person in such a condition may be considered rape.

**Statutory rape** is *sexual intercourse with a person under the age of 16*.

**Incest** is *the crime of rape when committed by a member of the family*.

## COMMON REACTIONS TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

Emotional shock, feeling numb

Disbelief. *"Did this really happen?"*

Fear.

Embarrassment. *"What will people think?"*

Shame. *"I feel so dirty, like something's wrong with me."*

Guilt. *"What did I do to let this happen?"*

Depression, feeling tired and hopeless.

Powerlessness.

Flashbacks.

Denial. *"I just want to forget it."*

Anxiety, nausea, difficulty breathing, nightmares.

Anger, rage.

Feeling violated.

Stress, feeling on edge, fear of going crazy.

Feeling vulnerable, fear it will happen again.

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### **The New England Learning Center for Women in Transition is Franklin County's Official Rape Crisis Center.**

*NELCWIT offers free rape crisis services to all people, including women, girls, men, and boys.*

If someone reports a sexual assault to NELCWIT, either in person or by calling the hotline, an advocate will provide support and will offer her or him the option of going to the hospital. The advocate can either accompany the individual to the hospital or meet her or him there — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If a victim of sexual assault reports directly to Franklin Medical Center or Athol Memorial Hospital, hospital staff will call NELCWIT's hotline. NELCWIT will then send an advocate to the hospital to offer support and advocacy — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NELCWIT offers counseling appointments within five days of any report of sexual assault.

NELCWIT's staff can also assist victims of sexual assault by providing support and advocacy with the police, courts, and District Attorney's office.

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All of our counseling and advocacy services are FREE. To find out more or arrange an appointment, call our hotline at 413-772-0806 or 888-249-0806.