

Sexual violence can no longer be a secret

- Sexual violence has affected everyone whether through their own victimization or may have known someone that has been sexually assaulted.
- Sexual violence can no longer be a secret—The violence is growing at an alarming rate with devastating affects which is creating trauma to victims and their families.
- Sexual violence needs to be stopped now. It is time to break the silence and the perpetrators need to be held accountable.
- Sexual violence continues to be largely underreported. Only one in five women who were raped as adults reported their rape to the police. Fear of their rapist, embarrassment and not considering their rape a crime of police matter, were primary reasons women chose not to report their victimization. The average annual rate of rape and sexual violence experienced by American Indians and Alaskan Native women is 3.5 times higher than all other races.
- Sexual violence can be defined as any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without consent. In general, state law assumes that a person does not consent to sexual activity if they are forced, threatened, unconscious, drugged, a minor, developmentally disabled, chronically/mentally ill or they are undergoing a medical procedure.
- Sexual violence can be sexual activity such as forced sexual intercourse, sodomy, child molestation, incest, fondling, attempted rape or rape.
- Sexual violence perpetrators can be strangers, friends, acquaintances, or family members. Often perpetrators commit sexual assault by way of violence, threats, coercion, manipulation, pressure, or tricks. In extreme cases, sexual assault may involve the use of force, which may include but is not limited to physical violence, use or display of a weapon, or immobilization of the victim.
- Sexual violence can involve psychological coercion and taking advantage of an individual who is incapacitated or under duress and therefore is incapable of making a decision on their own.
- Sexual violence is a devastating crime against women, children, and men. It is time to break the silence and stop it now.

If you or someone you know has gone thru sexual violence, remember that it was not your fault. It was not your choice. Only one person makes the choice of rape. There are things we can (and should) do to protect ourselves, but the only person who can prevent sexual violence is the rapist. It is not your fault.

If you or someone you know has gone through sexual violence and are in need of help and support, or if you would like more information about the services the DOVE Program provides, please contact at 218-935-5554 or 1-800-763-8629. If you are in immediate danger or need someone to talk to, call the 24-hour crisis line at 1-877-830-3683.