

What you can do if you are sexually assaulted

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

- Tell someone ...your parent or guardian or someone else you trust
- They will want to help you and will take you to the doctor so you can get medical attention. Medical care is very important because there may be internal injuries that are not noticeable, or you may have been exposed to sexually transmitted diseases.
- Express your feelings about what has happened. Someone who loves and cares for you will listen carefully and understand your need to talk about what happened.

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



Common Misconceptions about sexual abuse of boys and men

- ♦ *A "real" man cannot be raped—Not true*
- ♦ *If a boy is sexually assaulted, both the victim and the perpetrator are gay—Not true*
- ♦ *Sexual response such as erection or ejaculation during a sexual assault means you consented or you enjoyed it—Not true*
- ♦ *Boys who have been sexually abused by a male will become gay—Not true*
- ♦ *Boys who have been sexually abused will become sexual offenders — Not true*
- ♦ *Nearly all child sexual assault is committed by a stranger—Not true*
- ♦ *Sex with an older female is always an enjoyable experience for boys— Not true*

If you've been sexually assaulted as a child or as an adult, you are not alone. We offer free counselling to anyone who has experienced, or is experiencing, abuse of any kind. we are here to help.

**The Crisis Centre
24-Hour Hotline: 328-0922**



It Can Happen To Boys Too



**The Crisis Centre
24 hour Hotline 328-0922
Fax: 328-7824**

Family Violence Unit: 356-3350

**bahamascrisiscentre@yahoo.com
www.bahamascrisiscentre.org**

Dealing with your Emotions

If you have been sexually assaulted, you may be experiencing a wide range of emotions and these feelings may concern you. The following is a list of several common reactions that boys who have been sexually assaulted may experience:

- ♦ Denial
- ♦ Helplessness
- ♦ Fear of being alone
- ♦ Trouble sleeping
- ♦ Anger
- ♦ Self-blame
- ♦ Anxiety
- ♦ Isolation
- ♦ Shame
- ♦ Nightmares
- ♦ Depression
- ♦ Loneliness
- ♦ Fear of future assault
- ♦ Flashbacks
- ♦ Guilt
- ♦ Difficulty developing relationships
- ♦ Withdrawal
- ♦ Dislike of sex

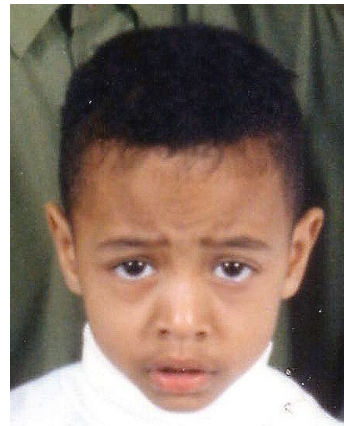
No one asks to be raped

What is Sexual Violence and how can it affect boys?

- ◆ Sexual violence is any unwanted sexual contact.
- ◆ Men and boys can be victims of sexual violence as children, teens or as adults.
- ◆ Perpetrators of sexual violence against boys men act out of power and control.
- ◆ Sexual violence includes such crimes as rape, incest, sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation of children or any sexual contact without consent.
- ◆ Anyone who has been the victim of a sexual assault needs compassion, sensitivity and caring, and male victims may also have special needs to consider.
- ◆ In the United States, about 10 percent of reported rapes involve male victims, and many more go unreported.

- ◆ Men and boys are often reluctant to report the crime of sexual assault, or to seek services, because they feel humiliated, ashamed or confused by the crime or because they feel that seeking help will make them appear vulnerable or weak. They are also concerned that people will think they are gay.
- ◆ Most perpetrators of male assault are men, but can be women and they rape both gay and straight men because rape is an act of violence, not of sex or sexual desire.

Studies show that one out of seven boys will be the victim of some type of sexual assault before age 18.



If you know a boy who has been sexually assaulted

- Show compassion to the person who has been assaulted. Telling someone about an experience of sexual assault takes a lot of courage and should be met with caring support.
- Encourage medical attention. Care is important because there may be internal injuries that are not noticeable, or the victim may have been exposed to sexually transmitted diseases. Additionally, a forensic exam can help provide evidence should he decide to prosecute.
- Maintain confidentiality. Let the victim decide who will know about the assault.
- Let him express his feelings. If the victim wishes to remain silent, do not force a discussion. Say you will always be there to listen.
- Believe him. Make it clear to the victim that you believe the assault happened and that the assault is the fault of the abuser, **NOT** the victim.
- Encourage counselling. Give the victim the hotline number, **328-0922** but let the decision be his.
- **REMEMBER...if the boy is under age, the incident MUST be reported to the Police, Social Services and/ or the Crisis Centre.**

How boys may feel when they have been sexually assaulted

Boys who have been sexually assaulted may experience fear and anger over the loss of control over their bodies and themselves.

Boys who have been sexually abused often feel dirty, ashamed, and guilty that they weren't "strong enough" to protect themselves.

Sometimes boys who have been sexually assaulted worry that they were assaulted because they were gay or that the perpetrator thought they were gay. They may also worry that the assault may cause them to become gay.

A boy might worry about how his body reacted during the assault.

It is important or remember that sexual response is automatic and not within your control—just because your body reacted sexually, does not mean you enjoyed the abuse.

**Crisis Centre 24 Hour Hotline:
328-0922**