

**New Mexico Sexual Abuse Program Coordinators** *(continued)*

- **Portales**  
Mental Health Resource  
359-1221 • 1-800-432-2159 crisis
- **Raton**  
Taos/Colfax Comm. Services  
445-2754
- **Rio Rancho**  
Rio Rancho Family Health Center  
896-0928 • 1-888-920-6333 crisis
- **Roswell**  
Counseling Associates  
623-1480
- **Ruidoso**  
The Counseling Center  
237-5038 • 437-7407 crisis  
1-800-634-3666 crisis
- **San Felipe**  
San Felipe Behavioral Health  
& Family Services  
867-9740
- **Santa Fe**  
Santa Fe Rape Crisis Center  
988-1951 • 986-9111 or  
1-800-721-7273 crisis
- **Santa Rosa**  
Las Vegas Medical Center  
Community Based Services  
472-3768 • 425-1048 crisis
- **Shiprock**  
Home for Women & Children,  
Rape Crisis Service  
368-5124
- **Silver City**  
El Refugio, Rape Crisis Svcs.  
538-2125
- **Socorro**  
Socorro Mental Health  
835-2444
- **Taos**  
Community Against Violence  
758-8082 • 758-9888 crisis  
Taos Mental Health  
758-1125
- **Truth or Consequences**  
S.T.A.R.T.  
894-0889 • 894-5475 pager
- **Tucumcari**  
Mental Health Resources  
461-3013  
1-800-432-2159 crisis

**New Mexico Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Units**

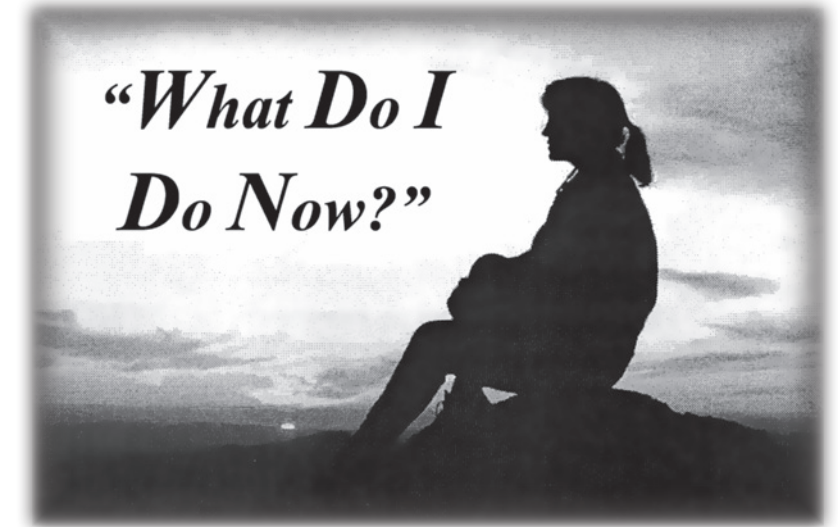
- **Alamogordo**  
Otero County SANE Unit  
443-7900 • 443-2156 crisis
- **Albuquerque**  
Albuquerque SANE Collaborative  
883-8720 • 884-7263, emergency  
Para Los Ninos, UNM Health  
Sciences Center Pediatric Sex  
Abuse Exams  
Contact: Renee Ornelas, MD  
272-6849
- **Clovis**  
Clovis Plains Regional Med. Center  
SANE  
769-7335 ask for SANE Rep.
- **Farmingington**  
Sexual Assault Services/  
Northern NM  
505-325-2805 • 505-326-4700 crisis
- **Las Cruces**  
SANE  
526-3437 crisis  
1-888-595-7273  
Office: 521-5549
- **Portales**  
Roosevelt County SANE  
359-1800, ext. 531
- **Roswell**  
Esperanza House SANE Unit  
625-1457
- **Santa Fe**  
Santa Fe St. Vincent SANE  
995-4999 • 989-5952 crisis
- **Shiprock, Navajo Nation**  
Northern Navajo Medical Ctr.  
SANE  
368-6818

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# INCEST SURVIVORS



## WHY THE NEED FOR THIS BROCHURE:

This brochure is intended to supply you with detailed information about incest if you or someone you love are wondering or have already remembered having had an incest experience. It may have left you feeling confused or foggy as to what actually happened, was it really wrong, and what constituted incest, anyway?

These and other questions will be addressed here, along with referrals to places where you can get more information and counseling. This brochure was written to support you in your struggle to know once and for all what really happened in your childhood.

Developed by MARTHA KLEIN, LISW for the New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.

## WHAT IS INCEST?

Incest is an inappropriate sexual behavior between people who are considered to be family to each other. Inappropriate sexual behavior can include exhibitionism, voyeurism (being forced to watch sexual acts or having someone watch you), fondling of private body parts over or under clothes, mutual masturbation, oral sex, anal sex, and intercourse.

We usually think of fathers molesting daughters when we think of incest. While this type of inappropriate sexual contact does occur, incest also occurs between siblings, cousins, mothers and son, mothers and daughters, grandparents, and offspring, etc. It also occurs between people who are not biologically family but who have the same extension of trust and familiarity as have people related by blood. This means people who are “aunts”, “uncles”, best friends of the family, and with Native Americans can include Medicine Men and other respected Elders.

It is estimated by FBI statistics, that across our society one out of every four females and one out of every six males are victims of sexual abuse before the age of eighteen. This means that hundreds of thousands of people are survivors of this crime. Incest happens to children of all ages, from infancy through young adulthood. The highest risk group are girls between the ages of seven and eleven.

The key word in defining incest is “inappropriate”. Sexual behavior that makes you feel funny, confused, afraid, dirty or shameful may have been inappropriate sexual contact. If there was an element of secrecy in the contact, that is, if the adult or sibling made you promise to keep quiet about what happened, the contact was probably inappropriate.

Natural curiosity about your body happens for everyone during childhood. Having sexual contact forced on you or being tricked into it involves a lever of coercion that may be subtle or very obvious. You need to determine for yourself if the contact felt wrong to you or not.

## WHAT HAPPENS NOW THAT I REMEMBER?

The task of discovering your own personal truth is one that may take some time. If you are beginning to discover memories that have been blocked or unclear up to now, you may be experiencing some or all of the feelings and behaviors listed:

- Shock or numbness - you feel nothing
- Nightmares/Not being able to sleep
- Restless sleep/Fear of the dark
- Depression/Disorganization
- Feeling *jumpy*
- Denial that the incest happened
- Denial that the incest was serious

- Fear of being alone
- Unable to make love
- Cynicism
- Feeling out of control
- Angry with yourself and/or others
- Dependency on familiar friends
- Wondering what you did to deserve the abuse
- Being worried that you will never be normal again
- Eating problems
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol

Wondering or realizing that you experienced incest as a child may feel like your entire world has been turned inside out. You may feel like everything you were told or came to believe about your past and your family was a lie. You may also wonder why you were picked; if you did something to “cause” it. These questions and worries are a natural part of the process. Eventually, hopefully, you will be able to believe that it was not your fault, because, truly, the responsibility lies with the adults around you at the time. Even if you enjoyed it physically, it wasn’t your fault. You were a child, he or she was the elder. As a child, you most probably didn’t want sex; you probably wanted to be loved and held, and to have your family care about you. It was the adult’s responsibility to keep you safe, and if you were sexualized as a child, you were robbed of this basic right to be safe. Some of the feelings and behaviors you may now be experiencing can be caused by the realization of the danger you were in as a child, and your need for safety.

Experiencing these new feelings and perspectives will take time and patience. Speaking for all survivors everywhere, we encourage you to go to a counselor or therapist for help while you try to fit the pieces back together. It is important to remember that whatever strategy was used on you to keep secret the crime, you are now breaking that secret. This can be a terrifying feeling even if you are now an adult and know that the perpetrator can’t reach you. Breaking this rule of silence may make your child-self feel nervous and scared. You do not have to endure these major changes alone. You were isolated and alone when all this happened to you as a child. You deserve to have an ally to help you through this.

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?

Incest is a crime that lives in the dark and in order to re-claim your life you must eventually talk with someone about your worries. You do not have to have all the specific details of every sexual contact before you can talk with someone. For some people, distinct memories are a long time in coming. For now, your feelings are enough to show that something wrong happened to you when you were young.

The following is a list of mental health agencies with counselors trained to help survivors of sexual abuse. You may decide you want to talk with someone over the phone before you can go in to see them. You may want to join a group for incest survivors. Either way, find a therapist who believes your feelings and memories. Give yourself the time and compassion. You will need both.

*‘No matter what is true of your past, the world is in need of your best contributions. You can only give your best by becoming your best self; and this is only possible if you consider yourself deserving of emotional healing.’ (Betty Caponera, Ph.D., Overcoming Painful Past Experiences’)*

### New Mexico Sexual Abuse Program Coordinators

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|---|---|
| ➤ <b>Alamogordo</b><br>The Counseling Center<br>437-7404  | ➤ <b>Farmington</b><br>Presbyterian Med. Svcs.<br>Community Counseling<br>325-0238 • 325-1906 crisis<br>San Juan County Rape Crisis<br>599-6168 |
| ➤ <b>Albuquerque</b><br>Albuquerque Rape Crisis Center<br>266-7711<br>Programs for Children &<br>Adolescents<br>272-2190 • 272-2800 after 5pm<br>Sequoia Adolescent Treatment<br>Center<br>344-4673 | ➤ <b>Gallup</b><br>Western NM Counseling Svcs.<br>863-3828<br>1-800-649-0181 crisis   |
| ➤ <b>Artesia</b><br>Artesia Counseling Center<br>746-9848 • 365-7606 crisis   | ➤ <b>Grants</b><br>Cibola Counseling Services<br>287-7985 • 1-800-287-0212 <sup>crisis</sup> (after hours)                                      |
| ➤ <b>Aztec</b><br>Daybreak Center<br>334-3444 • 342-1802 crisis   | ➤ <b>Hobbs</b><br>Guidance Center of Lea County<br>393-3168 • 393-6633 crisis<br>392-0966 for adolescents                                       |
| ➤ <b>Belen</b><br>Valencia Counseling Svcs., Inc.<br>864-1909 • 865-3359  | ➤ <b>Jemez Pueblo</b><br>Pueblo of Jemez Soc. Services<br>834-7117  |
| ➤ <b>Bernalillo</b><br>La Buena Vida • 867-2383   | ➤ <b>Las Cruces</b><br>La Pinon Rape Crisis Center<br>526-3437<br>1-888-595-7273 crisis   |
| ➤ <b>Carlsbad</b><br>Carlsbad Mental Health<br>885-4836 • 885-8888 crisis   | ➤ <b>Los Alamos</b><br>Southern NM Human<br>Development<br>882-5101<br>Southwest Counseling<br>647-2800 • 526-3371 crisis                       |
| ➤ <b>Clovis</b><br>Mental Health Resources<br>769-2345 • 1-800-432-2159 <sup>crisis</sup> (after hours)   | ➤ <b>Las Vegas</b><br>Las Vegas Comm. Based Svcs.<br>454-5115 • 425-1048 <sup>crisis</sup> (after 5pm)  |
| ➤ <b>Deming</b><br>Border Area Mental Health Center<br>546-2174 • 1-800-426-0997 crisis   | ➤ <b>Los Lunas</b><br>Valencia Counseling Services<br>865-3359 • 865-3359 crisis  |
| ➤ <b>Espanola</b><br>Northern NM Family Crisis Center<br>753-1656 • 1-800-206-1656 crisis   |   |
| ➤ <b>Estancia</b><br>Valencia Counseling Services<br>384-0220 • 865-4739 crisis   |   |