

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.
- > **Farmington**
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

Basic Principles Of Self-Protection

- ✓ Have a clear understanding of healthy sexual expression. Generally know what is exploitative or harmful. Be aware that sexual contact as a condition of service provision or by providers is abuse.
- ✓ Be aware that everyone has a right to some privacy. Your body, personal details about yourself, etc., do not need to be discussed or displayed in a manner that is without dignity.
- ✓ Know that there are some situations that you are allowed and even encouraged to say 'NO'. Any and all sexual activity can be refused.
- ✓ Have access to someone you trust who has the time to listen. Tell this person any concerns or uncomfortable feelings that arise.
- ✓ Know your personal rights. Everyone should know where the boundaries are and when a caregiver or other individual has crossed the line.
- ✓ Feel good about yourself. I'm special and I am powerful. I will stop or report someone who tries to make me feel differently.

Getting Help

If you have been sexually abused, you do not have to suffer alone. Discreet help is available.

Timely medical care is essential. Call the police and your local rape crisis center for getting a medical exam. Evidence collection may be taken at this time for use should you wish to prosecute. This procedure will not be charged to you personally.

If you report to police, you may also be eligible for Crime Victim's Compensation for your medical expenses, (505) 841-9432. Your sexual assault medical exam will be paid by the State of New Mexico regardless of reporting.

In addition, you may use the confidential services of the rape crisis center regardless of whether you have reported the abuse to the police. That will be your decision alone.

New Mexico Coalition of
Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.
3909 Juan Tabo NE, Suite 6
Albuquerque, NM 87111
(505) 883-8020 (within the Albuquerque Area)
(888) 883-8020 (outside of the Albuquerque Area)
e-mail: nmcsaas@swcp.com
Web site: www.swcp.com/nmcsaas/

**Sexual Abuse of Persons with
Developmental Disabilities**
An Educational Guide



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At Risk

Studies have consistently shown that 65-85% of adults with developmental delays have been sexually abused, compared with 25% of the non-delayed population. Much of this abuse begins in childhood and continues into adulthood. (For women with disabilities, 75% are raped in their lifetime (1 in 1.5), Seattle RRPDD, 1984.)

The overwhelming majority of the abusers are well-known to the victim. Common abusers include family members and paid caregivers.

WHY are people with developmental disabilities more at risk?

- Generally dependent on others for their care
- Frequently taught to be compliant to requests from caregivers
- Often isolated or living in institutional/group settings
- Inadequate sexuality education, no frame of reference for healthy sexual expression
- The concept of privacy is not something they are familiar with
- May have more limited communication skills, therefore more difficulty with disclosing abuse
- Often not believed or not viewed as credible.

Perpetrators of abuse against an individual with developmental delays have little fear of consequences because many cases go both undetected and unreported. This increases the likelihood that the abuse will be repeated, many times over a period.

Avoiding Sexual Abuse

Parents and caregivers must learn to identify and prevent sexual abuse. They need to learn to detect subtle changes in mood, tone, or behavior to assure that any potential abuse does not escalate or continue.

Symptoms To Look For In An Individual:

- ✗ Seems fearful of people
- ✗ Resists physical exams
- ✗ Has added difficulties in school or social situations
- ✗ Sleep disturbances
- ✗ Depression
- ✗ Increased sexual “acting out” behavior

A major obstacle to detecting sexual abuse in this population is the fact that the common symptoms of sexual abuse are often overlooked and attributed to the victim’s disability. Do not dismiss suspicious events or behavior as being part of the disability.

Symptoms To Look For In A Living Environment:

- ✗ Lack of privacy and dignity for the resident
- ✗ The expectation of complete compliance as a condition of residence
- ✗ High client-to-staff ratio, which limits supervision & opportunities for disclosure
- ✗ Staff without a positive attitude towards the residents
- ✗ Institutional settings that cluster potentially sexually aggressive and vulnerable individuals together
- ✗ Loose standards for “therapeutic restraint”

How can you HELP make it safer?

- ✓ Make sure a facility carefully screens staff before employment.
- ✓ Choose a facility that supports regular visits by outside Client Advocacy agencies.
- ✓ Be certain that appropriate sexuality education is taught. Do not assume that it’s not necessary even if it makes you uncomfortable.
- ✓ Boost self-esteem. People who feel good about themselves are harder to victimize.
- ✓ Be available to talk in an un-rushed manner on a regular basis.
- ✓ Teach that there are some valid situations for noncompliance.

Teaching Self-Protection

Any program of defensive strategies for people with developmental disabilities should also acknowledge that they may still not be able to prevent the abuse and that the sole responsibility of what happens falls on the perpetrator. Be very careful that it is not implied that if you are abused you must not have followed the rules.

People with developmental disabilities can learn skills that will reduce their vulnerability to sexual abuse. When introducing personal safety concepts it is important to gauge your presentation to their level of understanding and verbalize your instructions and ideas appropriately. Stick with the concrete, avoid the abstract. Break down complex ideas into smaller, clearer notions. Check frequently to make sure your message is being received as intended.

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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| ➤ Alamogordo The Counseling Center 437-7404 | ➤ Farmington Presbyterian Med. Svcs. Community Counseling 325-0238 • 325-1906 crisis San Juan County Rape Crisis 599-6168 |
| ➤ Albuquerque Albuquerque Rape Crisis Center 266-7711 Programs for Children & Adolescents 272-2190 • 272-2800 after 5pm Sequoia Adolescent Treatment Center 344-4673 | ➤ Gallup Western NM Counseling Svcs. 863-3828 1-800-649-0181 crisis |
| ➤ Artesia Artesia Counseling Center 746-9848 • 365-7606 crisis | ➤ Grants Cibola Counseling Services 287-7985 • 1-800-287-0212 ^{crisis} (after hours) |
| ➤ Aztec Daybreak Center 334-3444 • 342-1802 crisis | ➤ Hobbs Guidance Center of Lea County 393-3168 • 393-6633 crisis 392-0966 for adolescents |
| ➤ Belen Valencia Counseling Svcs., Inc. 864-1909 • 865-3359 | ➤ Jemez Pueblo Pueblo of Jemez Soc. Services 834-7117 |
| ➤ Bernalillo La Buena Vida • 867-2383 | ➤ Las Cruces La Pinon Rape Crisis Center 526-3437 1-888-595-7273 crisis Southern NM Human Development 882-5101 |
| ➤ Carlsbad Carlsbad Mental Health 885-4836 • 885-8888 crisis | ➤ Las Vegas Southwest Counseling 647-2800 • 526-3371 crisis |
| ➤ Clovis Mental Health Resources 769-2345 • 1-800-432-2159 ^{crisis} (after hours) | ➤ Los Alamos Los Alamos Family Council 662-3264 • 662-4422 crisis |
| ➤ Deming Border Area Mental Health Center 546-2174 • 1-800-426-0997 crisis | ➤ Los Lunas Valencia Counseling Services 865-3359 • 865-3359 crisis |
| ➤ Espanola Northern NM Family Crisis Center 753-1656 • 1-800-206-1656 crisis | |
| ➤ Estancia Valencia Counseling Services 384-0220 • 865-4739 crisis | |