

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

**Roswell**

Esperanza House, Inc.  
575-625-1095  
Susan Wilson, L.I.S.W.  
575-623-9385

**Ruidoso**

La Frontera NM  
575-257-5038  
575-437-8680 crisis  
800-634-3666 crisis

**Santa Fe**

Santa Fe Community Guidance  
Center  
505-986-9633  
Solace Crisis Treatment Center  
505-988-1951 • 505-986-9111 or  
800-721-7273 crisis

**Silver City**

La Frontera NM  
575-388-2693 • 800-426-0997 crisis  
Silver Regional Sexual  
Assault Support Services  
575-388-2693 • 800-426-0997

**Socorro**

Socorro Mental Health  
575-835-2444

**Taos**

Community Against Violence  
575-758-8082 • 575-758-9888 crisis  
Tri-County Community Services, Inc.  
575-758-1125

**Truth or Consequences**

La Pinon Sexual Assault Recovery  
Services  
575-526-3437 (Las Cruces)  
Sierra Vista Hospital  
575-894-2111

**Tucumcari**

Mental Health Resources, Inc.  
575-461-3013  
800-432-2159 crisis

**New Mexico Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner's Unit**

**Alamogordo**

SANE Program of Otero and  
Lincoln County  
575-430-9485  
(Emergency and Administrative)

**Albuquerque**

Albuquerque SANE Collaborative  
505-883-8720 • 505-884-7263  
Emergency

Para Los Ninos, Pediatric Sex  
Abuse Exams  
505-272-6849

**Farmington**

Sexual Assault Services of  
Northwest New Mexico  
505-325-2805 • 505-326-4700 or  
866-908-4700 Emergency

**Las Cruces**

Las Cruces La Pinon SANE Project  
575-521-5549 • 575-312-7780 or  
888-595-7273 Emergency

**Las Vegas**

Las Vegas, SANE  
Alta Vista Regional Hospital  
505-718-8215

**Portales**

Arise Sexual Assault Services  
575-226-4665 • 575-226-7263  
Emergency

**Roswell**

Esperanza House SANE Project  
575-625-1457 • 575-625-1095

**Santa Fe**

Christus St. Vincent Regional  
Medical Center SANE Program  
505-913-4999 • 505-989-5952  
Emergency

**Silver City**

Silver City/Gila Regional Medical  
Center SANE Program  
575-313-9978

**Taos**

Taos/Holy Cross Hospital SANE  
Program  
575-751-8990 • 575-758-8883  
Emergency

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This publication is printed with the permission of the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, with minor edits for the New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc. This project was supported by New Mexico Human Services Department, Behavioral Health Services Division and New Mexico Department of Health, Office of Injury Prevention.



An Informational Brochure for Victims of Rape

**‘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 Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.*

## What Now?

This brochure is designed to help you with difficult questions following a rape. It describes what it is, how to get the right assistance, how to understand the legal system, and how to get started on your road to healing. It may not feel like it today, but there is hope for getting through this experience.

## Was I Raped?

This is the most common question that a victim asks following a forced or coerced sexual act. If consent was not given, your experience could be considered rape. Consent is only possible if you are completely coherent (not drunk, high, ill, blacked out), you have reached the age of consent, or you have the capacity to consent mentally and physically.

## What is Rape?

*Caution – the following description is necessarily graphic due to the nature of the crime.*

Rape is any unwanted, forced, tricked or coerced sexual act which includes a range of unlawful behavior. In New Mexico, the legal term for rape is ‘criminal sexual penetration’. Victims can be adult or child, male or female. The physical acts of criminal sexual penetration include the following:

- Sexual intercourse: the penetration of penis or any other object into the vagina, however slight
- Cunnilingus: mouth to female genital area, or being forced to perform this act
- Fellatio: mouth to penis, or being forced to perform this act
- Anal intercourse: penetration by the penis or any other object into the anus, however slight

Ejaculation or physical injury does not have to occur for these acts to be considered rape. The law describes that if these acts are forced or coerced on another and they result in great mental anguish or great bodily harm to the victim, they qualify as criminal sexual penetration.

## Additional Brochures

The following brochures about sexual abuse are also available from the New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.:

### For Young Children:

- ⊗ *Safe, Strong and Free*  
(Spanish and English)

### For Mid-School Aged Children:

- ⊗ *Top 10 Questions for Kids* (Spanish and English)

### For Parents:

- ⊗ *Talking To Your Children About Sex: How to use open discussions about sex, privacy, respect and values to prevent the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and teens* (Spanish and English)
- ⊗ *Parent Empowerment* (Spanish and English)
- ⊗ *Male Victims of Rape* (Spanish and English)
- ⊗ *From Victim to Survivor* (Spanish and English)
- ⊗ *Sexual Abuse of Persons with Developmental Disabilities*
- ⊗ *Overcoming Painful Past Experiences* (Spanish and English)
- ⊗ *A Guide for Friends & Family of Sexual Violence Survivors*
- ⊗ *Prevent Child Sexual Abuse: Facts about sexual abuse and how to prevent it*
- ⊗ *Understanding Children’s Sexual Behaviors: What’s Natural and Healthy* (Spanish and English)
- ⊗ *Do Children Sexually Abuse Other Children: Preventing sexual abuse among children and youth* (Spanish and English)
- ⊗ *Protecting Children with Disabilities from Sexual Assault: A Parents Guide*
- ⊗ *Responding to Sexual Abuse in New Mexico: An Educators Guide*
- ⊗ *First Responders Disability Awareness*
- ⊗ *Elder Abuse in New Mexico Remedies and Resource*
- ⊗ *Responding to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Stalking: A Guide for Criminal Justice Professionals in New Mexico*

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

### Alamogordo

La Frontera NM  
575-437-7404

### Albuquerque

Rape Crisis Center of Central NM  
505-266-7711  
Para Los Ninos  
505-272-6849

### Agave Health

505-338-3320

### Programs for Children &

### Adolescents

272-2190 • 272-2800  
After 5pm

### Sequoia Adolescent

Treatment Center  
505-344-4673

### Anthony

Valle del Sol  
575-882-5101

### Artesia

Counseling Associates  
575-623-1480

### Bernalillo

Valle del Sol  
505-867-2383

### Carlsbad

Carlsbad Mental Health  
575-885-4836

### Clayton

Tri-County Community  
Services, Inc.  
575-374-2032

### Clovis

Mental Health Resources, Inc.  
575-769-2345 • 800-432-2159

### Deming

La Frontera NM  
575-546-2174  
800-426-0997 crisis

### Espanola

Ana Guldan  
505-927-6587  
PMS Valley Community  
Health Center

505-747-7400

Tewa Women United

505-747-3259

### Estancia

Valle del Sol  
505-384-0220

505-865-4739 crisis

### Farmington

Desert View Family  
Counseling Center

505-326-7878

Farmington Community Health  
Center (PMS)

505-566-0345

Sexual Assault Services of

Northwest New Mexico

505-325-2805

### Ft. Sumner

Mental Health Resources, Inc.  
575-769-2345

877-579-8001 crisis

### Gallup

Western NM Counseling Services  
505-863-3828

800-649-0181 crisis

### Grants

Valle del Sol  
505-287-7985 • 800-287-0212

### Hobbs

Guidance Center of Lea County  
575-393-3168

575-393-6633 crisis

575-392-0966 for adolescents

### Las Cruces

La Frontera NM  
575-647-2830

La Piñon Sexual Assault  
Recovery Services

575-526-3437

888-595-7273 crisis

### Las Vegas

NM Behavioral Health Institute at  
Las Vegas Community Based Services

505-454-5134 • 505-425-1048

### Lordsburg

La Frontera NM

505-542-3304

### Los Alamos

Los Alamos Family Council

505-662-3264 • 505-662-4422 crisis

### Los Lunas

Agave Health

505-866-2300

Valle del Sol

505-865-3350 • 505-865-3359 crisis

### Lovington

Guidance Center of Lea County

575-396-3818

### Portales

Arise Sexual Assault Services

575-226-4665 • 575-226-7263

Mental Health Resources, Inc.

575-769-2345 (Clovis) • 800-432-2159

### crisis

### Raton

Tri-County Community Services, Inc.  
Mental Health Clinic

575-445-2754

### Reserve

Border Area Mental Health Services,  
Inc.

575-533-6649

### Rio Rancho

Rio Rancho Family Health Center

505-896-0928 • 888-920-6333 crisis

Rio Rancho Valencia Counseling

505-891-2990

### Roswell

Turquoise Health and Wellness

575-623-1480

After a rape, it is common to feel overwhelmed, not just with the emotional and physical reactions of the rape, but with the whole idea of dealing with the criminal justice system. Victims do not report to the police for several reasons. Many fear that their names and the details of their past sexual conduct will be exposed.

However, it is important for victims to understand that they do not need to be concerned with these issues. First, although some facts about their assault may be shared with the press, their names and details of the assault will not. Second, many rape cases never go to trial. Some assailants are never apprehended, and of those who are, may plea bargain to avoid a trial and possibly an even longer sentence. Third, if a case does go to trial, a victim's past sexual history cannot be brought up unless it is relevant to the case. In the event that it is, it must be presented to the judge in a private in camera hearing, out of the hearing of the jury members, to determine if the evidence will be allowed in the trial.

Finally, it is important to realize that pursuing a prosecution can be quite an empowering feeling for a rape victim. When a woman is raped, she is placed in a situation where she feels powerless and out of control. It may take some time for her to regain the power that she lost during the act of being raped. One way that she can expedite this process is by prosecuting. After a rape, a victim has a lot more power than she probably thinks; she had the power to identify her rapist and to help put him in prison. Going through a prosecution, therefore, can help a victim regain some of the power she lost during the rape.

### ***You Have Survived!***

Your life may seem changed – as though you're now in a different world. It has changed for you and the adjustments may often be difficult. Just reading this brochure is a positive step toward further survival. We're glad you survived, and we hope you take advantage of all the people willing to help you through this.

The relationship between the rapist and the victim is insignificant. These acts are considered rape regardless of whether the offender is known (co-worker, boyfriend, minister, father, husband, brother, friend) or if the offender is a stranger. Most rapists are known to the victim – over 93% as reported by New Mexico Law Enforcement in 2007.

Rape happens to all types of people: young, old, gay, straight, outgoing, shy, wealthy, poor. It happens to people of all races, in all areas of the state (urban, rural, Native and border communities). The good news is knowing that most males do NOT rape. While men who do rape often have a history exceeding dozens of victims each, the majority of men do not ever rape. This is important to know during your healing process. Trust is difficult to come by following a rape, but not impossible.

Regardless of how, or where, or why the rape happened, you have survived a frightening, confusing and traumatizing experience. We urge you to not go through this alone. Professionals in the medical, legal, and advocacy community are ready to start you on your path to healing.

### **Social Factors**

Rape victims range in age from infant to the elderly, according to national statistics. Teens 16-19 are 3.5 times more likely to be victims of rape than the general population. By the time females are 18 years of age, one of every four will have experienced some form of sexual abuse. For males, one in every six will have experienced abuse by the time they are 18.

In 2012 New Mexico law enforcement reported that 72% of criminal sexual penetration cases were perpetrated by a known person to the victim. 83% of you also will have met your assailant at least once before. Some of you will know him casually or will experience rape on a first or second date. This type of sexual assault is called non-stranger rape. It can be particularly confusing because you thought that you could trust this person and they violated that trust. Among married couples, one of every seven women are raped by their husbands. Usually, only one out of every ten victims reports her rape to law enforcement. However, in New Mexico, law enforcement report that 17% of known rapes were reported to them.

And about rapists? The vast majority of sex offenders are male. However, females also commit rape. Most men who rape are between the ages of 15 and 24. Rapists are from every walk of life, of every race and socio-economic level. Men rape out of anger, and/or a need for absolute control over someone, not because they need sex.

Their need to control, humiliate, frighten, and degrade other human beings allows them a sense of power, of being superior over at least one other person, even if it is for a very short while. Sexual assault is the tool they choose to obtain power and control.

No matter who the person was, no matter the relationship, if the sexual activity was forced, coerced or unwanted they committed rape and rape is a crime.

### **What should I do?**

You have survived a violent crime. Rape can be traumatic and frightening and may affect you physically and emotionally. Every victim reacts differently to being raped.

What's the right thing to do if you've been raped? Take care of yourself in the best way **for you**. For some people, that means reporting the crime immediately and fighting to see the rapist brought to justice. For others it means seeking medical or emotional care without reporting the rape as a crime. Every person is different.

There are three things that everyone who has been raped should do, though:

1. Know that the rape **wasn't** your fault.
2. Seek medical care.
3. Deal with your feelings.

Whatever happened, it wasn't your fault. **No one** has the right to have sex with you against your will. The blame for the rape lies solely with the rapist.

### **Emotional Factors: Understanding How to Get From Victim to Survivor**

1. **You are not alone.** Rape is the most frequently committed of violent crimes. Many others have experienced what you are going through. Whatever you are thinking and feeling is common for many rape victims/survivors.

### **Medical and Other Costs**

The State of New Mexico pays 100% of the evidence collection and up to \$150 for injury repair, ambulance and prescriptions provided to you as a direct result of a rape. Most New Mexican hospitals bill the State. If you receive a bill, you may call the New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs toll free at (888) 883-8020. If the bill has not been paid by the State of New Mexico, the Coalition will advise the medical agency that provided services to you to submit billing for State reimbursement.

If your medical bills (for injury repair, prescriptions, etc.) are over \$150 and/or you have paid for mental health services or experienced lost wages as a result of your rape, you may apply for compensation from New Mexico Crime Victims Reparation Commission (505-841-9432). Reimbursement from NMCVRC requires that you filed a police report following your assault and that you apply within one year from the assault.

### **Legal Aspects**

If you are raped, you do not need to hire your own attorney. Rape is considered a crime against the State, and therefore will be prosecuted by the District Attorney's (DA's) Office in the county where the crime occurred. Once you have reported the crime to the police and a suspect has been arrested, the DA decides if there is enough evidence to take your case to court (prosecute) and find the suspect guilty. If the DA does not decide to take your case, it is not because they do not believe you – rape can be very difficult to prove, and the DA's office must feel that the evidence you and the police have brought forward is strong enough to be considered by a judge and a jury. You do not need a witness who saw your rape in order to prosecute a rape case.

If the DA's Office is not able to take your case, you still have another legal option: you may sue your rapist in civil court. You hire an attorney who will sue the rapist for an amount of money that you feel is equal to the emotional, physical and/or actual damages (lost wages, etc.). Rape victims have successfully sued their rapists, but you will need to decide whether a law suit will be worth your time, money, and efforts.

If you must pay for an abortion, apply for compensation through New Mexico Crime Victims Reparation Commission (505-841-9432) or contact your local Crime Victims Assistance Organization.

It is important to ask your doctor or counselor for specific health information about these options so that, if you find it necessary, you can make a safe, sound choice.

#### 4. Evidence Gathering

In addition to the previously stated concerns, the medical team at the emergency room or doctor's office will suggest that you have a Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit performed. The Kit is used as part of the evidence if you decide to press charges. It is your decision whether to have evidence collected or not. This is a specimen gathering kit designed to collect different samples of blood, hair, vaginal mucous, etc. It is ideal if you are able to arrive for this portion of the medical exam in the same clothes you had on during the assault. Do not douche, brush teeth, shower or wash up before going to the hospital or doctor's office. Your body has important information on it about the rapist, and it is important to not wash it away. The medical team will pay close attention to the parts of your body penetrated by the rapist's penis, mouth, tongue, fingers or foreign objects. From these areas of your body, they will collect samples with a cotton swab. These samples may contain semen, blood type or a hair sample of the rapist. Samples of your hair and blood will also be collected to distinguish them from the rapist. These, in turn, may be able to be used later in legal proceedings to help connect the rapist to your attack. The clothing you wore will be collected, if you agree, and sent to a crime lab. The clothing usually contains critical pieces of evidence about the rapist.

You do not need to decide about prosecution before this rape evidence is collected. However, if the evidence is to be collected, it must be done within 120 hours after the assault. The quicker the evidence can be collected, the better samples of evidence will exist. You may agree to have evidence collected even without reporting to the police, giving yourself some time to decide about police involvement without losing the important evidence left on your body. All information in the kit remains completely confidential.

2. **You kept yourself alive.** Rape is often a life-threatening experience. Whatever you did to stay alive was exactly the right thing to do. Even if your attack ended in rape or other injury, you did exactly the right thing to escape from the situation with your life. Some people may be asking why you didn't scream or fight back; when you feel threatened and fear for your life or safety, you do what your instincts tell you in order to survive.

In some instances, to not do what a rapist says – to even scream – could result in severe injury or death. There is little you can do to compensate for a rapist's physical size, especially when the element of surprise is in his favor. If you feel guilt or self-blame, focus on the fact that above all, YOU SURVIVED!

3. **You will have some reactions to your assault.** The thoughts and feelings you are now experiencing result from not knowing whether you would live to see another day or not. Most of us go through life thinking that we will live a normal life span. When something happens to shatter that belief, however, the fact that you thought you faced death for even a split second will carry strong yet subtle effects with it. Having someone completely controlling your body and actions often leaves you feeling out of control in every aspect of your life following the rape. The reaction and feelings you may have now or in the near future may include some or all of the following:

- Self blame
- Putting yourself in harm's way
- Shock or numbness – you feel nothing
- Feeling out of control
- Nightmares / Not being able to sleep
- Angry with yourself and/or others
- Restless sleep / Fear of the dark
- Dependency on familiar friends
- Depression / Disorganization
- Wondering what you did to deserve the attack
- Feeling Jumpy
- Being worried that you will never be normal again
- Denial that the rape happened
- Eating problems / Upset stomach
- Denial that the rape was serious
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Fear of public places

- Cynicism
- Fear of being alone
- Fear of new relationships
- Unable to make love

#### 4. **Counseling: The Road to Healing**

It is common to want to just forget what happened to you – to not think about it, to put it behind you. You will never forget it; but dealing with it, talking about it with a counselor, and learning how to get through it will make remembering much less painful. Having a qualified person to talk about the assault and your thoughts and feelings can take pressure off of handling them alone. It is important to see a counselor for awhile to help you regain your perspective on life, other people, men, and yourself. You had to endure the sexual assault alone; you don't have to endure the after effects alone.

**What you can expect.** For most survivors of rape, the feelings and behaviors described will fade away between six months and a year after you begin rape counseling. You will gradually regain a sense of being in control of your own life. You may experience a time of not talking about the rape. You will be able to sleep through the night and feel positive about the future. You will learn to put the rape in perspective to the rest of your life. Part of the healing involves recognizing that the rape exists as an event in your past – an important one – but that you need to go on with the rest of your life.

**How to get counseling.** Call the Rape Crisis Center or Community Mental Health Center near you for more information. In New Mexico, rape crisis counseling services are free of charge at rape crisis centers and free or for very minimal charge at your local Mental Health Centers. All counseling is completely confidential, whether you have reported your assault to the police or not. See the back of this brochure for agencies in your area.

#### **Physical Factors: The Medical Exam**

The first thing someone who has just been rape should do is seek medical attention. Most communities have access to a SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) Unit which have trained nurses to assist someone who has been raped. If a SANE Unit is not available, go to the nearest emergency department. If you choose, the SANE Unit may also collect evidence from your clothing.

You may want to have a friend or family member go along with you for support. Some rape crisis centers may provide an advocate who can be with you for the exam.

It's important to get medical attention for the following reasons:

#### 1. **General Physical Health**

Some women experience extreme physical trauma during a sexual assault. Going to an emergency room, doctor's office or health clinic is important so that you can be checked and treated for deep bruises, broken bones, internal tears, etc. If you are in a community where a Rape Crisis Center or Sexual Assault Team exists, you may request that one of their counselors or advocates accompany you through the exam.

#### 2. **Sexually Transmitted Diseases**

Syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, chlamydia, and other vaginal infections can be contracted during sexual intercourse. Some of them can be treated and eliminated with medications. It is important to tell the health care professional in what parts of the body you were raped (vagina, anus and/or mouth), as sexually transmitted diseases can be transmitted or transferred wherever sexual contact was made. Although HIV may be transmitted sexually, there are less than a handful of reported cases of HIV infection contracted through rape. This does not mean that it absolutely won't happen, but the chances of contracting AIDS from a single event would be rare. There are tests that can be taken if you fear AIDS might have been transmitted; however, you must wait three to six months after the assault took place to be tested.

#### 3. **Pregnancy**

If you experience vaginal penetration during the assault and are physically able to conceive, you could get pregnant as a result of the rape. Some doctors will offer you morning after medication (Plan B) to prevent pregnancy from occurring. Plan B may be given up to 120 hours post assault but it is most effective when taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse.

Additional options for terminating a pregnancy would include an abortion. There may be an abortion clinic in your community which will perform an abortion, for you as a rape victim, at no charge or at a greatly reduced fee.