

Types of sexual violence

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Please note the word 'Rape' is used frequently in this document

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What is sexual violence?

We use the term 'sexual violence' to denote any sexual activity that occurs without consent. But that's not a phrase you hear every day, and many people aren't sure what it means – or whether or not what happened to them 'counts.' We hope this information helps you to understand what sexual violence is.

Sexual violence is defined as any unwanted sexual action or act (including online) (1) that includes one or more of the following:

- pressure
- manipulation
- bullying
- intimidation
- threats
- deception
- pressure

To put it more simply, it is any sexual engagement or act that occurred without consent.

There are lots of different types of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse, rape and sexual assault which you will find more information about later on in this document.

People generally associate the word "violence" with punching, kicking, hitting, beating, stabbing, or shooting. Sexual violence, on the other hand, does not always have any of these things. Sometimes it can take forms in which people just feel *persuaded* or *intimidated* into having sex - these are still forms of sexual violence. Here at Say it Loud, we use the term 'sexual violence' as this best describes an act in which consent was not considered. It does not mean you **HAVE** to have been violently attacked in order to get support from us - your experience is valid and you deserve support.

Rape

Rape happens when someone didn't want to have sex or didn't give their consent for sex to happen.

Rape is defined by The Sexual Offences Act 2003 as someone commits rape if all of the following happens:

- They intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with their penis and the CPS adds: any part of the body (e.g. finger, tongue, toe) or by anything else (e.g. bottle).
- The other person does not consent to the penetration.
- They do not reasonably believe that the other person consents



It doesn't matter who the person committing the rape is – if there is no consent then it is always rape. And that includes within marriage and relationships.

Rape is often called by other names such as 'date rape', 'marital rape', etc, but it doesn't matter if a victim or survivor was on a date with the person who raped them, married to them or had never met them before. Whatever the situation and whatever the perpetrator's relationship to the victim or survivor, if there was no consent then it was rape.

What is sexual assault?

We use the term 'sexual assault' to denote any sexual activity that occurs without consent. When someone touches another person sexually without their consent, it is known as sexual assault. Alternatively, when someone forces another individual to engage in sexual behaviour with them without their consent. Unwanted kissing and sexual touching being examples.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 says that someone commits sexual assault if all of the following happens:

- They intentionally touch another person.
- The touching is sexual.
- The other person does not consent to the touching.
- They do not reasonably believe that the other person consents.
- The touching can be with any part of the body or with anything else.

It could include:

- Kissing.
- Attempted rape.
- Touching someone's breasts or genitals – including through clothing.
- Touching any other part of the body for sexual pleasure or in a sexual manner – for example, stroking someone's thigh or rubbing their back.
- Pressing up against another person for sexual pleasure.
- Pressuring, manipulating or scaring someone into performing a sexual act on the perpetrator.
- Touching someone's clothing if done for sexual pleasure or in a sexual manner – for example, lifting up someone's skirt. (2)

Often, survivors who have experienced sexual assault will deem it 'not as bad' as rape, however all sexual activity without consent is a form of sexual violence - meaning, it should not have happened and you deserve support.

In England and Wales, there are lots of terms that are used to talk about different sexual offences and forms of sexual violence. It is important to remember that all sexual activity without consent is a form of sexual violence and it is always 'bad enough' to get support for.



Sexual violence fact sheet

WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Sexual violence is an umbrella term used to describe any kind of unwanted sexual act or activity, including rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, and many others.

MYTH: IF SOMEONE GETS REALLY DRUNK, IT'S THEIR OWN FAULT IF THEY END UP GETTING RAPED. THEY SHOULD HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES SAFE.

People have the right to drink alcohol without getting raped. Having sex with someone who is very drunk, drugged or unconscious is rape – and the blame must always be with the rapist.

MYTH: WOMEN OFTEN LIE ABOUT RAPE BECAUSE THEY REGRET HAVING SEX WITH SOMEONE OR BECAUSE THEY WANT ATTENTION.

Stories in the media can give the impression that women often lie about sexual violence. In fact, false allegations of rape are very rare. Most people who have been raped or experienced sexual violence or abuse never tell the police.

MYTH: IF SOMEONE DIDN'T SCREAM OR TRY TO FIGHT THEIR ATTACKER OFF, IT WASN'T RAPE.

there are many reasons why someone might not scream or struggle. In fact, many people find that they cannot move or speak at all – this is a very common reaction. Some rapists also use manipulation or threats to intimidate or control the other person. No matter whether or not someone 'fights back', if they didn't freely consent to sex then it is rape.

MYTH: IF YOU ARE IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE, IT'S ALWAYS OK TO HAVE SEX WITH THEM.

Everyone has the right to say 'no' to any type of sexual activity at any time – including with their partner. Consent must be given and received freely every time. Rape in a relationship is illegal.

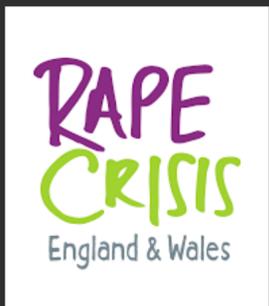
Where can I get support?

It can be scary to reach out for support, but you deserve to be listened to and given the right support when and if you need it. Below is a list of services that may be of help to you.



Say it Loud: At Say it Loud, we are used as the first point of contact if you are unsure what has happened to you and you don't know who to talk to or sometimes we are used as just a safe space to vent if needed. We provide emotional support via our chat line used on Instagram by trained volunteers. We also provide a free platform in which we educate the general public as well as supporting loved ones of survivors. Our chat-line runs from 5pm - 8pm Monday to Friday. You can contact us on instagram @sayitloudteam, via our website www.sayitloudspace.com or by our email contact@sayitloudspace.com

Rape Crisis England & Wales is the charity working to end sexual violence and abuse.



They are the membership organisation for Rape Crisis Centres who deliver specialist services to those affected by sexual violence in England & Wales. Together with their member Rape Crisis centres, they aim to educate, influence and make change. They provide specialist information and support to all those affected by sexual violence in England & Wales. You can call their helpline on: 0808 802 9999 or visit their website at: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk/>



Survivors UK provides an online helpline and other services for adult men (aged 18+) who want to talk about rape or sexual abuse.



Childline offers free, confidential advice and support for children and young people.

You can have a 1-2-1 counsellor chat online, or call them free on 0800 1111.

