

## **SESSION 5: UNDERSTANDING RAPE AND DATE RAPE**

### Anticipated Learning Objectives:

Students will learn the definition of rape, and how everyday dating situations can turn into rape. Students will also learn strategies to avoid date rape.

### Materials/Equipment:

Video : Rape: Get the Facts, 23 minutes

“Rape: Facts and Myths” handout

“The Truth About Date Rape” handout

Resources Handout

### Procedure:

- ❖ Review the previous lesson topics with students briefly. Announce that they are now going to see a video on the topic of Rape. Show the video.
- ❖ Ask if there are any questions or comments about the content of the video, and discuss these.
- ❖ Teachers should hand out the “Rape: Facts and Myths” handout, and go over this with the class. If you wish, have students take turns reading the different myths, pausing after each for questions or comments.
- ❖ Pass out “The Truth About Date Rape” and “Resources” handouts. For the remainder of the class, discuss with the students the date rape prevention tips that are indicated.
- ❖ At the very end, take a minute to thank the students for their attention to the program. If they have any other questions that come up, or wish to discuss any of the issues discussed at greater length, they can speak confidentially to their guidance counselor or school social worker, or call one of the resources indicated on the “Resources” handout.

**SESSION 5 SUMMARY:** Rape is forced sexual intercourse, with force meaning everything physical to psychological coercion. Rape is often not reported, but what has been reported is shocking enough – one sexual assault every two minutes, and one rape every six minutes in our country. Date rape may seem different, but in the end, it is the same as every other rape. Students should know ways to avoid rape, and know resources in and out of school they can use to discuss these issues in more detail.

## **RAPE: FACTS AND MYTHS**

**Rape:** Forced sexual intercourse, including both psychological coercion and physical force.

**Sexual Assault:** a wide range of victimizations, distinct from rape or attempted rape. These crimes include completed or attempted attacks generally involving unwanted sexual contact between the victim and offender. Sexual assaults may or may not involve force and include such things as squeezing and grabbing.

Myth # 1: Rape and sexual assault don't happen very often.

Facts: In 2006, there were 272,350 victims of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault (87,000 victims of completed rape, 70,000 victims of attempted rape, and 91,000 victims of sexual assault). Consider also that these numbers are artificially low for two reasons: 1) It is estimated that 60% sexual assaults/rapes are not reported to police. 2) National surveys do not include children under 12, who are common victims of sexual assault and rape. **EVERY TWO MINUTES, SOMEONE IN AMERICA IS SEXUALLY ASSAULTED. EVERY SIX MINUTES, SOMEONE IN AMERICA IS RAPED.**

Myth # 2: It will never happen to me.

Facts: One out of every six American women has been the victim of attempted or completed rape in their lifetime (a total of 17.7 million – 14.8% completed, 2.8% attempted). In 2003, about one in every ten sexual assault or rape victims was male (a total of 2.78 million).

Myth # 3: Rapes are mostly committed by strangers.

Facts: Approximately 73% of rape victims know their assailant. About 38% are raped by a friend or acquaintance, 28% by an intimate, and 7% by another relative.

Myth # 4: Unless a weapon is used it isn't rape.

Facts: Anytime someone uses force with intercourse it is rape. The force may include weapons, intimidation, drugs, alcohol or a victim's own diminished mental capacity.

Myth # 5: Rape is about sexual needs.

Facts: Rape is about the use of sex as a weapon to hurt, humiliate or dominate another person. It takes the power and control away from someone, and violates their most private and personal space. Rape is about violence. Studies of incarcerated sex offenders have shown that 66% were sexually active with wives and/or girlfriends at the time they were committing rapes.

Myth # 6: Most rape victims dress in sexually attractive ways that invite the rape.

Facts: Rape affects sectors of our population that do not conform to our society's ideals of beauty or sexuality. This includes children, the elderly and people with developmental disabilities (the highest at-risk population for sexual abuse). Rape is never the victim's fault, nobody asks to be raped, no matter how the rapist attempts to justify the behavior.

Myth # 7: Date rape is different from "real" rape.

Facts: Although a sexual assault committed between people who know each other, like each other, and are attracted to each other would seem different, in the end, it is the same as any other rape. If one person continues to force sexual contact after the consent of the other person is withdrawn, it is rape, and a crime has been committed. This is true even in relationships between husbands and wives.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT DATE RAPE

**Date rape**, or acquaintance rape, is when the victim knows the rapist. Like all rape, it is an act of violence. Victims do not want to believe that someone they knew would intentionally hurt them, and so blame themselves. They feel responsible because they went with the rapist. They think they did something to lead the other person on. They feel embarrassed or angry for letting themselves be deceived or tricked. It is often facilitated through poor communication and sex role stereotypes that feed into date rape. People may not understand each other's sexual intentions and expectations, and may believe that men should be aggressive where women should be passive and give in.

### **Can date rape be avoided?**

You can take steps that may lower your chances of being raped.

- 1) **Express yourself clearly, and do not be afraid to say no.** Make it clear what your limits are *before* you get into a sexual situation. Don't let your date assume that you're going to give in to whatever his or her sexual expectations are. Even if you have been sexually active with this person in the past, that doesn't mean that you must do so again.
- 2) **Avoid secluded spaces, such as parks, woods or deserted beaches.** Meet in public places where help will be nearby. Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- 3) **Avoid alcohol and other drugs.** These impair your judgment and slow your response time. Be aware of how much your date uses them, too. Alcohol and drugs are involved in approximately half of all rapes.
- 4) **Double date with friends or go in a group until you know the person better.** Be careful of relying on your date for transportation, especially if you don't know the person well.
- 5) **Plan the date.** Know the details. Where are you going? What time is the event? When will you be home?
- 6) **Carry money for a phone call, or a prepaid phone card.** Keep it with you, not in your purse. If you are in danger, call 911, it's a free call.
- 7) **Always have money on your person.** Carry enough cash, and be prepared to pay your own way, especially on a first date.
- 8) **Do not leave a party or event with someone you do not know.** Call for a ride from parents or other trusted adults, even if you have been drinking or using drugs.
- 9) **Assert yourself.** Insist on being treated with respect. Don't be afraid to refuse an invitation or a gift. Don't believe that you owe your date anything because the person paid for your dinner or night out.
- 10) **Trust your instincts.** If something doesn't seem right, leave or call for help.
- 11) **Be on the lookout for date rape drugs** (see below). When you are at a party, get your own drink and keep it with you at all times. If you accidentally leave your drink unattended, even for just a few seconds, get a new drink.

### **What are date rape drugs?**

Rohypnol, GHB, ketamine, Soma and Ecstasy are the most commonly used date rape drugs. Other sedative drugs that are available by prescription and available in many households have also been used in date rape and sexual assault. The drugs are odorless and nearly tasteless, so they can be easily added to a drink without a person's knowledge. They cause the victim to feel confused, dizzy and disoriented. The victim may pass out or be unable to fight off unwanted sexual advances. They also cause memory loss, so victims may not remember much of what happened while they were under the influence of the drug.

### **What should you do if attacked?**

Every situation is different, but in one study, actively resisting the rapist was successful in 61% of cases reported. You may decide to run, scream, kick, hit, bite, etc. Yelling "RAPE" or "POLICE" is more effective than "NO" or "HELP." Tell the person you have a sexually transmitted disease, or do anything to disgust them, i.e. urinate, vomit, etc. Keep in mind that your main goal is to escape safely, so do what you must to avoid further harm or endangering your life. Never feel guilty about what you did – or did not – decide to do.

### **If it happens to you:**

- 1) Get help. Talk to your parents or other trusted adults from whom you can get emotional support. Support is always available from the **rape crisis line 1-800-832-1200**
- 2) Go to a hospital. Do not change clothes, bathe, or use the bathroom before going to the hospital. A doctor will need to examine you and take evidence. Date rape can result in sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy or other injuries.
- 3) Report the rape. You should be comfortable with the decision, but remember that reporting sexual assault and date rape are an important part of ending the violence.
- 4) Seek counseling. Feelings of anger, confusion and guilt are normal. Talking about it helps the healing process. To find a trained counselor or support group, call the crisis line listed above.

### **Was it really rape?**

Victims of date rape are often confused and wonder if what happened to them was really rape. It's hard to believe that someone you know, and possibly trusted, would harm you. Remember: rape is never the victim's fault. It does not matter if the victim went with the rapist, dressed in a certain way or consumed alcohol or other drugs. Date rape is as "real" as rape by a stranger, and it's just as serious.

### **Additional Resources**

National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

National Sexual Violence Resource Center [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org)

Rape Treatment Center at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center [www.911rape.org](http://www.911rape.org)

