



# EMERSON COLLEGE

## **To All Emerson Students:**

The Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery reports that,

- 1 in 4 women will be the victim of rape or attempted rape during her college years.
- 1 in 3 women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime.
- 7-10% of all adult rape victims are men.
- Over 60% of sexual assault survivors were acquainted with their attacker.

Acquaintance (date) rape, a form of sexual assault, is an unfortunate reality of virtually all colleges and universities. Although it cannot always be prevented, the more you know about it, the more likely it is you can avoid being put into a situation where it can occur. This pamphlet has been created to provide you with some specific information about sexual assault, and offer you some practical guidelines to reduce your risk of being assaulted.

Emerson College does not tolerate sexual assault in any form. Such acts of violence are prohibited by this College's codes of conduct, and are considered felonies in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Individuals who violate the law are subject to harsh penalties through a court of law and/or the campus judicial system.

Emerson College is committed to preventing the occurrence of sexual assaults, and is prepared to respond responsibly to any report of sexual assault that is brought to its attention. If a victim of a sexual assault wishes to report an assault and have the case prosecuted in court, the College's Public Safety Department is available to be of assistance. A survivor also has the option to simultaneously or exclusively file a complaint through the campus disciplinary system. Professional counseling services are available through the College Counseling Center to any Emerson student involved in a sexual assault.

On behalf of the Emerson community, I ask that you give your undivided attention to the contents of this guide and help us make a positive difference on our campus. Cultivating and maintaining a campus environment that is safe and respectful of others is everyone's responsibility.

Sincerely,  
Ron Ludman, Ph.D.  
Dean of Students

## **RAPE IS A CRIME OF VIOLENCE**

**It is motivated by the desire to control and dominate, not by sexual desire.**

### **Facts About Sexual Assault**

**Acquaintance rape is rape.** It is a felony. If convicted, you could serve up to twenty years in prison.

High school and college women are more likely to be raped by someone they know than by a stranger.

Persons between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five are the most vulnerable to acquaintance rape.

The use of alcohol or drugs, by both the victim and the offender, are often factors in sexual assault cases.

Men can also be victims of sexual assault.

Dates and parties are not always safe.

It's OK to say no without giving an explanation.

No one wants to be raped.

### **Legally, What Is Sexual Assault?**

In Massachusetts law, there are two major categories of sexual assault against adults: *rape* and *indecent assault and battery*.

The crime of *rape* occurs when the offender "has sexual intercourse or unnatural intercourse with a person and compels such person to submit by force and against his or her will, or compels such person to submit by threat of bodily injury (Chapter 265, Section 22, MGL)." Rape and attempted rape are punishable by up to twenty years imprisonment.

Under Massachusetts law, both men and women may be the victims of rape, and both may be the perpetrators of a rape. Rape may occur when the victim is unable to give consent because he or she is unconscious. Rape may occur between people who know each other, and between people who have previously had consensual sexual relations.

The crime of indecent assault and battery occurs when the offender, without the victim's consent, intentionally has physical contact of a sexual nature with the victim. This contact may include an offender touching a woman's breasts or a

man or woman's buttocks or genital area. Indecent assault and battery may be punished by up to five years imprisonment.

### **What Is Acquaintance Rape?**

**Acquaintance rape is a rape committed by someone known to the victim.**

This might be a friend, classmate, co-worker, instructor, relative, or casual acquaintance such as a clerk in a store. It is important to remember the acquaintance is not a separately defined crime. Any person, whether an acquaintance or not, who compels a person to submit to sexual intercourse against his or her will, by force or by threat of bodily injury, commits the crime of rape. Studies indicate that women are more likely to be sexually assaulted **by a person known to them** rather than by a stranger. In addition, most college women who have been raped knew their attacker, and the attacker was the woman's date in more than one-half of the rapes.

Victims of acquaintance rape are often involved in situations where they trust their acquaintance not to be an assailant. Some assailants foster a false sense of friendliness in order to sustain a level of trust in their intended victim. They use this technique to gain their victim's initial cooperation in going to an apartment or vehicle where they can more easily exert force or threat of force on the victim.

### **What Can You Do To Prevent Sexual Assaults In Social Situations?**

**Certain contributing factors repeatedly surface in acquaintance rape situations: ineffective communication, the use of drugs and alcohol, and sex role stereotypes.** Understanding some of these factors can help prevent sexual assaults.

This pamphlet offers men and women ways to understand both their roles in intimate relationships and the issue of sexual assault in a college environment. Men and women need to understand their right to be free from harm, and the legal consequences that may fall upon persons who compel sexual relations by force or threat of force.

**If by force or threats, you compel a person to have sex against his or her will, even if you know the person or have had sex with him or her before you are committing a rape - even if you think he or she has been teasing and leading you on, even if you have heard that women say "no" but mean yes, even if you think it's "manly" to use force to get your way.**

**Being turned down by sexual relations is not necessarily a rejection of you personally.** A person who says "no" to sexual relations is expressing his or her unwillingness to participate in a specific act at a specific time.

**Accept a person's decision.** "No" means no. Don't read in other meanings. Don't continue after the person says "no".

**Don't assume** that just because a person flirts or dresses in a manner you consider sexy that he or she wants to engage in sexual relations.

**Don't assume** that previous permission for sexual relations means a person is under a continuing obligation to have sex with you.

**Don't assume** your date wants the same degree of intimacy that you do.

**Don't assume** spending money on a date entitles you to sex.

**Don't force** anyone either verbally or physically to have sex with you.

**Don't allow** others to attempt forced sex with another person.

### **What Can You do to Minimize the Risk of Being Sexually Assaulted?**

**Say "no" when you mean no. Communicate your limits clearly.** Know what you are feeling, and express yourself clearly.

**Be assertive.** Passivity might be misunderstood as permission. Be direct and firm with someone who is pressuring you sexually. If someone starts to offend you, respond promptly and firmly. Overly polite approaches might be misunderstood or ignored.

**Trust your intuition.** If you feel you are being pressured into unwanted sexual relations, don't hesitate to express your unwillingness, even if it might appear rude. Leave the situation as soon as possible.

**Think ahead about getting home.** Be prepared when you are away from home to be able to leave the situation if you need to. Coordinate plans with friends and arrange transportation. Always carry cab fare.

**Attend large parties with friends you can trust.** Agree to look out for one another.

**Avoid excessive use of alcohol and drugs.** Alcohol and drugs interfere with clear thinking, effective communication and your ability to respond in your own best interest.

**Date Rape Drugs.** GHB and Rohypnol (ruffies) are colorless and odorless drugs that can be placed in drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), causing unconsciousness and amnesia. **Do not** accept drinks from strangers. **Discard** any drink that you have left unattended.

## **What You Can Do If You Are Sexually Assaulted**

Sexual assaults are terrifying and traumatic.

While there are many things you can do to reduce your risk it may not always be possible to avoid sexual assault. **Regardless of what you did or did not do, if you are assaulted it is important for you to know that it is not your fault.**

After a sexual assault, it's not uncommon to feel fearful, confused, guilty, ashamed or isolated. Many people find it helpful to talk with someone about these feelings. There are many concerned and professionally trained people at Emerson College and in the community who are prepared to help you.

**1. Get to a safe place and call the police.** Get to a place where you will be safe from further attack.

For your own protection, **call the police (911) immediately**, especially if the assailant is still nearby. The police will help you whether or not you choose to prosecute the assailant. For an assault on campus, call Emerson College Public Safety (x8888). For an off-campus assault, you may call Emerson College Public Safety or the local police department.

**2. Call someone you trust.** Don't try to deal with this situation alone; it is important to tell someone. It is an enormous burden to bear alone. Call a friend, family member or someone whom you feel you can talk to (e.g. Residence Life staff member, Counseling Center, Health Center, Public Safety or other individuals on the Emerson staff).

**3. Get medical attention.** Beth Israel-Deaconess Hospital, Mass General Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Boston Medical Center are experienced and prepared to help sexual assault victims (see back page for phone numbers).

It is extremely important that you seek medical attention immediately to assess and treat physical injuries you may have sustained, to determine risk of any sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/Hepatitis exposure and pregnancy. Some treatments must be initiated within 24 to 72 hours following the assault to be effective.

### **Later Medical Evaluation**

Although seeking immediate medical attention is preferred for the reasons noted above, some victims will delay in doing so. Regardless of the time that may have passed, a medical exam is strongly recommended even after the fact.

**4. Try to preserve all physical evidence of the assault.** Do not drink, bathe, douche, brush your teeth, change your clothes or comb your hair. It's only natural to want to do these things, but you may be destroying evidence that could be helpful in prosecution of the perpetrator. In the course of your medical examination this evidence will be collected by a specially trained nurse. If changing clothes is necessary, clothing worn during the assault should be placed in a paper bag.

**5. Emotional care.** Regardless of whether you report the assault, it is often helpful to seek counseling for the traumatic experience you have survived.

The crisis intervention and counseling services provided by Emerson College are available to you regardless of where the assault may have happened.

Special rape crisis counseling resources are also available through community resources and the hospitals listed in the directory at the end of this brochure.

### **Crisis Intervention and Counseling Services**

The Emerson College Counseling Center is a place where sexual assault survivors and concerned friends can safely discuss their feelings associated with the assault. The Center is staffed with therapists who are experienced in helping victims of crime and other traumatic incidents. Sessions are designed to explore the impact of an assault on every day functioning and to develop skills to regain control over one's life. The Counseling Center also provides referrals to other agencies in the greater Boston area. To make an appointment, **call 824-8595.**

The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC) operates a 24-hour confidential hotline that provides survivors of sexual assault with telephone counseling and personal support. Specially trained rape crisis counselors may also be available to provide support and advocacy in dealing with police, hospital and judicial proceedings. BARCC has many other services, including support groups and referrals to help sexual assault survivors. **The hotline telephone number is: 492-7273 (492- RAPE)**

### **Reporting the Assault**

Reporting a sexual assault to the police does not commit you to further legal action. The earlier you report an assault, the easier it will be for police to investigate the crime, and to prosecute the case successfully if that is your choice. It helps to preserve your options for the future.

Many police departments including Boston and Cambridge have officers who have undergone special training and are certified by the state in rape investigation. In the initial meeting with the police, you will be asked to tell the police what happened, where it happened and what your attacker looked like.

**Regardless of which police department you report the crime to, you can be assured your name will not be made public.**

### **Judicial/Disciplinary Options**

**External:** If you wish to have the assailant prosecuted, the police and district attorney's office will handle the legal proceedings without expense to you. You do not need to hire an attorney.

**Internal:** If the perpetrator is a member of the College community, you also have the option to file a complaint through the College's disciplinary system (see *Student Handbook*). In either instance, a College representative will be available to assist you through the process.

### **Emerson's Sexual Assault Team**

A student victim of sexual assault may disclose information regarding the assault to any member of the College community. Any member of the Emerson community who is not a member of the Sexual Assault Team who receives first hand information that a sexual assault has occurred from the student victim should strongly urge the student victim to report the event to one of the departments that comprise the Sexual Assault Team. The Sexual Assault Team consists of the professional staff of the following departments and centers: Department of Public Safety (x8555), Office of the General Counsel (x8908), Counseling Center (8595), Center for Health and Wellness (8666), Office of the Dean of Students (x8640), and Department of Housing and Residence Life (x8620).

## **Resource Directory**

### **POLICE DEPARTMENTS:**

Emerson College Public Safety Department	617-824-8555
In an Emergency	617-824-8888
Boston Police	911
(outside of Boston)	617-343-4200
Brookline Police	911
(outside of Brookline)	617-730-2222
Cambridge Police	911
(outside of Cambridge)	617-349-3301

### **AMBULANCE:**

Boston, Brookline, or Cambridge	911
Emerson College Public Safety	617-824-8555
In Emergency	617-824-8888

### **HOSPITALS:**

Beth Israel-Deaconess Hospital	617-754-2450
Boston Medical Center	617-414-7612
Brigham and Women's Hospital	617-732-5636
Cambridge Hospital	617-498-1000
Massachusetts General Hospital	617-726-2121
New England Medical Center	617-636-5566

### **CRISIS INTERVENTION AND COUNSELING**

Emerson College	
Counseling Center	617-824-8595
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center	617-492-7273
Gay & Lesbian Helpline	617-267-9001
(4pm-11pm M-Sun)	

### **OTHER EMERSON RESOURCES**

Center for Health and Wellness	617-824-8666
Dean of Students	617-824-8640
Office of Residence Life	617-824-8620
Public Safety Escort	617-824-8559

### **END NOTES**

Portions of this pamphlet were taken with permission from "Sexual Assault: A Guide for Men & Women," prepared by The Boston University Task Force on Violence and Harassment.