

# WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

## DEFINITIONS, FACTS, & RESOURCES

The Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention (SAVP) Office at Vassar College aims to prevent and respond to sexual assault, relationship abuse, stalking, and sexual harassment through prevention education, collaboration, outreach, and advocacy. SAVP is committed to taking a survivor-centered approach, which means that if a student is victimized, they are given their options and make the decisions about what services they would like to access and whether or not they would like to report the incident.

### SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is any sexual contact without consent. Acts may include unwanted sexual touching, fondling, attempted rape, harassment, exposing or flashing, or forcing a person to pose for sexual pictures. Rape is non-consensual sexual intercourse, including vaginal, anal, and/or oral penetration by a body part or an object, no matter how slight the penetration or contact. Rape is a form of sexual assault. Rape and sexual assault are crimes motivated by power and control. Perpetrators use rape and sexual assault as a weapon to hurt and dominate others.

If you think you may have experienced a sexual assault:

- It is not your fault.
- You are not alone.
- Consider seeking medical care for any injuries, STD/STI or HIV medication, or to preserve evidence.
- Know that you do not have to make a decision to report the incident before accessing counseling, medical, or advocacy services.

### SOME FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT

- Approximately 90% of college-aged individuals are raped by someone they know. Most rapes occur in the survivor's home, their workplace, or other spaces they are familiar with.
- Rape and sexual assault can happen to individuals of any race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, class, ability, citizenship and immigration status, and age.
- Individuals in the LGBTQ+, genderqueer, and/or gender nonconforming community experience disproportionately higher rates of sexual assault and violence than the general population.
- If a person is in a relationship with someone or has had sex with them before, this does not mean that they cannot be sexually assaulted or raped by that person.
- Alcohol and drugs can prevent someone from being able to consent. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs does not imply consent.
- In most cases, a survivor may be unable to fight back due to trauma, impairment, fear, and/or other factors. Whatever a person does to survive the assault is an appropriate reaction.
- Rape is a lot more than unwanted sex. Rape is a violent crime that often causes survivors to fear for their life and safety.

\*Material adapted from RAINN (Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network).

# ARE YOU SAFE?

If you are concerned about your own or someone else's safety, call **911** or **Vassar Safety & Security at (845) 437-7333**.

If you are safe and are looking for information about on/off campus resources or reporting options, you can call a **Vassar Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Advocate at (845) 437-7333** or visit [savp.vassar.edu/resources](http://savp.vassar.edu/resources) for a full list of resources and options.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

At Vassar, some individuals and campus resources can offer confidentiality while others have specific obligations to respond when they receive a report of a crime or a campus policy violation. If you are unsure of someone's duties and ability to maintain your privacy, ask them before you talk to them.

**Confidential support resources** do not have to let anyone know that you came forward for support or help, unless there is imminent danger to someone's life.

- Vassar Counseling Services: (845) 437-5700
- Vassar Counseling Services 24-hour Counselor: (845) 437-7333 (24/7)
- Vassar Health Services: (845) 437-5800
- Center for Victim Safety & Support in Poughkeepsie
  - Rape Crisis/Crime Victims: (845) 452-7272 (24/7)
  - Domestic Violence: (845) 485-5550 (24/7)
- SAFE Exam at Vassar Brothers Medical Center: (845) 454-8500 (24/7)
- SAFE Exam at Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital: (845) 483-5000 (24/7)
- On- or off-campus clergy

**Private resources** do not have to let anyone know that you came forward for support or help, unless there is imminent danger or community safety concerns. They also fill out an anonymous report (without any identifying information) that is kept confidentially with the SAVP Office.

- SAVP Director & Victim/Survivor Advocate: (845) 437-7863
- SAVP Violence Prevention Educator: (845) 437-7975
- SART Advocates: (845) 437-7333 (24/7)
- Director of Health Education: (845) 437-7769
- Student Fellows and House Student Advisors

**Responsible Employees** are required to notify the Title IX Office of disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship abuse, and/or stalking. A survivor may decide whether and when to respond to subsequent outreach from the Title IX Office.

- All other non-student employees (e.g. President, Administrators, Faculty, Coaches, Staff, etc.) are considered responsible employees.
- Title IX Coordinator: (845) 437-7924
- Dean of Students: (845) 437-5315
- Residential Life Administrators & Staff: (845) 437-5860 (24/7)
- Safety & Security: (845) 437-7333

All services are available for individuals of any race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, class, ability, citizenship and immigration status, and age.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Full descriptions of Vassar policies, on/off campus resources, and reporting options, can be found on the SAVP Office website at [savp.vassar.edu](http://savp.vassar.edu) and/or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action website at [eoaa.vassar.edu](http://eoaa.vassar.edu).