

TALKING TO SOMEONE WHO CARES MAY BE YOUR FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO BREAK THE SILENCE THAT HAS BEEN IMPOSED ON YOU.

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton does not charge clients for counselling services or participation in groups. However, donations are always welcome.

WE BELIEVE:

- ~ sexual violence is an abuse of power and trust;
- ~ people can heal;
- ~ in valuing diversity and respecting all people;
- ~ individuals should be free to make their own life choices;
- ~ each person should have the opportunity to learn and grow;
- ~ in creating a safe environment and maintaining confidentiality;
- ~ inability to pay should not be a barrier to receiving service;
- ~ in providing support and advocacy for people who have been affected by sexual violence;
- ~ services must be accessible to children, adolescents, women and men;
- ~ communities must take action to protect vulnerable people and to become free from violence;
- ~ public education and advocacy are vital for eliminating violence;
- ~ offenders, not victims, must take responsibility for violence;
- ~ teamwork is essential;
- ~ volunteers are crucial to our agency and provide a link to communities;
- ~ and in working with other agencies to further common goals.



The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is a non-profit organization funded by the United Way of Edmonton and Area, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), Alberta Provincial Government, service clubs, foundations, and public donations.

Registered under the Societies Act of Alberta since 1975.

Donations gratefully accepted.

A registered charitable organization.
Charitable number: 107971772 RP0001



**Sexual Assault
Centre of Edmonton**

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males molested as children



**Sexual Assault
Centre of Edmonton**

- ~ providing crisis intervention
- ~ public education
- ~ counselling

www.sace.ab.ca

MALE SURVIVORS

Sexual assault is any forced, unwanted and non-consensual sexual activity, including touching, kissing, exhibitionism, and intercourse - anal, vaginal, or oral. Sexual abuse is a crime of violence, the purpose of which is to overpower, control, or humiliate another person.

Although long identified as a "women's issue", society is becoming increasingly aware that males are also vulnerable to sexual assault. Most males experience sexual abuse as children or as teenagers. However, males can also be assaulted as adults. It is recognized that, while male and female survivors face many of the same issues, there can be issues that are specific to male survivors. Barriers to male healing can include:

limited or non-existent treatment programs;
lack of societal recognition that such abuse happens to boys and men;
prejudice;
homophobia; and
labeling.

MYTHS AND FACTS

Societal and personal beliefs about male survivors may be a barrier preventing male survivors of sexual violence from seeking help. By confronting some of the myths, men who have been effected by sexual violence may feel more comfortable talking about their experiences.

MYTH: Sexual abuse of males is a rare occurrence.

FACT: The Badgley Royal Commission Report on "Sexual Offences Against Youth and Children" states that approximately one in three males experience some form of sexual violence during their lifetime. Both men and women are vulnerable to, sexual exploitation as children.

MYTH: Males who are sexually abused do not suffer to the same extent as female victims.

FACT: Sexual abuse is a crime of violence and all victims suffer. Male victims can experience the same feelings as female victims. Some of these reactions can include; self-blame, fear, anger, relationship problems, questions about sexuality, addictions, and issues around trust. Not everyone will experience all of these reactions, nor to the same extent as another survivor.

MYTH: Men and boys are only abused by homosexual men.

FACT: The majority of sex offenders are actually heterosexual males; only a few are homosexual men. Women can also be sex offenders. Most often, their victims are boys or teenagers. Sexual assault can also occur in dating relationships where coercion or threats can be applied to enforce compliance.

Most offenders are known to the victim beforehand, and because of this they are not expecting an attack. The victim may also not label the attack as sexual abuse if they know the offender.

MYTH: Males assaulted by another male are, or become, homosexual.

FACT: Sexual abuse is not an act of sex, passion or desire; it is a crime of violence. The sexual orientation of the victim is not changed by such an attack. A straight man assaulted by another man does not become homosexual.

This myth can cause many boys or men to avoid telling anyone for fear of being labeled "gay". It is not uncommon for others, including some police and family members, to believe this myth and to react negatively to disclosures.

WHAT IF THE SURVIVOR IS YOU?

As a survivor, many thoughts and emotions may arise following a sexual assault. Some common thoughts and feelings are guilt, shame, embarrassment, anger, betrayal, and depression. Some survivors may not display any emotions following an assault. All of these reactions are normal and are specific to the individual who survived the assault.

There are certain issues that may arise specifically for male survivors. These include:

Self Blame- It is not uncommon for males to react sexually to an assault. Our bodies are hardwired to respond to touch even if that touch is not wanted.

Sexual Identity Questioning- Some survivors may feel confused about their sexual identity.

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton offers one-to-one and group counselling for male survivors. Contact SACE during business hours for more details. You can also call the 24 Hour Crisis Line for emotional support or if you have questions.