



gender based violence

A SURVIVOR'S GUIDE



KWANELE
ENOUGH

Purpose of this booklet

To help survivors of sexual abuse and their families understand their rights and the assistance that is available to them, a straightforward guide has been prepared. For formal service providers like hospitals and the police, this handbook is a helpful source of handy information.

What is sexual assault?

Any sort of unwanted sexual contact counts as sexual assault. Unwanted touching can involve kissing, hugging, grabbing, attempted penetration, and penetration, but is not limited to that. Regardless of age, gender, sex, social status, culture, religion, race, etc., it can happen to anyone. It could happen once, several times, or repeatedly over a long period of time. Anyone can do it, including (but not limited to): friends, strangers, close friends, family members and anyone in positions of authority.

What is Gender Based Violence (GBV)?

Gender-based violence (GBV) are harmful acts committed against a person because of their gender.



Types of Gender Based Violence (GBV)?

GBV can happen in many forms such as physical, sexual, emotional or financial and can be committed by a partner, friend, family member, someone you know, strangers or institutions. Most of these harmful acts are committed by a man against a woman. The man is often known by the woman.

1 Emotional Violence

Shouting, humiliation, denying freedom of movement forced marriage, verbal insults, not allowed to socialize, restricted from communicating or visiting family

2 Physical Violence

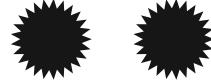
biting, slapping, kicking, beating, burning, kicking, punching, maiming or killing, or the use of objects or weapons

3 Financial Violence

denying access to employment, denying access to advancement such as education and training, workplace discrimination

4 Sexual Violence

Sexual acts such as rape, sexual harassment, genital mutilation, exposing a child to pornography, photographing a child in sexual poses, encouraging a child to perform sexual acts, performing sexual acts in a child's presence



Stop gender-based violence



kwanelesouthafrica.org

If you have been sexually assaulted:

Get to somewhere safe, then immediately tell someone you trust.

DO NOT touch or remove anything from the place where you were attacked.

AVOID washing your body or your hair.

AVOID washing clothing.

Wrap clothing in newspaper or cloth, or keep them in a paper bag. These can be used by experts to aid in catching your attacker

DO NOT place them in a poly or plastic bag.

USE a paper bag.

DO NOT allow anyone to clean up or interfere with the place the attack happened.

As soon as possible, go to a hospital or health center. You can go to a Thuthuzela Care Centre at certain public hospitals. At a Thuthuzela Care Centre you can access forensic and medical help, counselling, referrals, and you can report the assault.

Even if you don't want to report, the forensic evidence can be kept in case you change your mind later.



The medical facility or Thutuzela Care Centre

The survivor should go to the hospital as soon as possible after the incident. Wait no longer than 72 hours (3 days). You can call the police after seeking emergency medical attention.

The survivor should walk right up to the registration counter with a support person by their side. Please disregard the line; this is an emergency. Let the survivor in immediately. Given that they may be traumatized and anxious, the doctor or nurse should treat the survivor with compassion and respect.

Two reasons to go to the hospital are:

- 1. To obtain safe medical care.**
- 2. To gather medical data that will help identify the attacker**

In addition to doing a thorough physical examination of the survivor's body, including their private parts, the doctor or nurse will need to get personal details about what happened during the assault. The survivor has the right to be treated with respect and decency, and to be provided with the patience and encouragement to respond honestly to questions.

The survivor should go to the hospital as soon as possible (at the very least, within 72 hours after the assault). The treatment will aid in preventing pregnancy, HIV infection (using PEP), and other sexually transmitted diseases (STIs).

The medical examiner is required to complete a J88 form. The J88 is the most significant piece of written documentation of the physical signs that indicates a rape may have occurred. Copies of the form should be handed to the survivor and the police, and the original should be retained at the hospital.

About Thutuzela Care Center (TCC)

In order to lessen secondary victimisation and prepare a case that may be successfully prosecuted, South Africa's anti-rape policy has introduced Thuthuzela Care Centers (TCCs), which are one-stop shops. Since 2006, 51 new centres have been opened.

How does the TCC work?

Step 1: You can report a rape case directly to a TCC (based at community clinics or hospitals) or to a police station

Step 2: TCC staff will assist to get you immediate medical attention at the Centre

Step 3: TCC staff will arrange counselling services at the Centre

Step 4: TCC staff will assist you to open a police case (if you want to do so immediately or even at a later stage)

Step 5: TCC staff will arrange for ongoing counselling and court preparation (if the case goes on trial)

The Thuthuzela project is led by the NPA's Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit (SOCA), in partnership with various departments and donors as a response to the urgent need for an integrated strategy for prevention, response and support for rape survivors. Since its establishment, the SOCA Unit has been working to develop best practices and policies that seek to eradicate victimisation of women and children, while improving prosecution, particularly in the areas of sexual offences, maintenance, child justice and domestic violence.



**The Thuthuzela Care Centres
have trained counsellors**

Services offered at the Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs)

- Welcome and comfort from a site co-coordinator or nurse.
- An explanation of how the medical examination will be conducted and what clothing might be taken for evidence.
- A consent form to sign that allows the doctor to conduct the medical examination.
- A nurse in the examination room.
- After the medical examination, there are bath or shower facilities for survivor use.
- An investigation officer will interview the survivor and take his/her statement.
- A social worker or nurse will offer counseling.
- A nurse arranges for follow-up visits, treatment and medication for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), HIV and AIDS.
- A referral letter or appointment will be made for long-term counseling.
- The survivor is offered transportation home by an ambulance or the investigating officer.
- Arrangements for the survivor to go to a place of safety, if necessary.
- Consultations with a specialist prosecutor before the case goes to court.
- Court preparation by a survivor assistant officer.
- An explanation of the outcome and update of the trial process by a case manager.

There are many TCCs located all over South Africa. You can access the list of locations on our website at Kwanelesouthafrica.org

Reporting the attack to the police.

Go to the police station with someone you trust.

When you arrive at the police station, go to the main desk and ask to be directed to the area where you can make a report. Interviews have to be conducted alone, away from other visitors to the police station.

The survivor is allowed to bring a friend or loved one along for the interview, and they may anticipate it taking place in a comfortable or familiar setting.

A docket must be opened, registered on the Crime Administration System, and an affidavit must be made as soon as the police have adequate information.

A statement is a report that is produced outlining the events of the assault. If you are certain that you have read and understood the entire declaration, then only sign it.



The affidavit must explicitly state the following: the time, place, and date of the attack the nature of the crime and the way it was committed. the first person the abuse victim told about the assault. Any information on the accused attacker(s) or potential witnesses who might help find the attacker.

Supporting Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

Be a Safe Space. Reassure the survivor that they can be vulnerable around you and can help keep them safe if needed. Make the survivor feel heard, believed, comforted, and validated.

There is No ‘Right Way’ to Feel after GBV. Each survivor is impacted differently and there is no ‘right way’ to feel. Don’t judge that the survivor is acting ‘crazy’ or does not look ‘upset enough’. Survivors can feel anything from anger, guilt, despair, fear, numbness, shame.

Be Survivor-led. It can be tempting to try approach their needs from how you would want to react, but an important step in healing is to reclaim control and autonomy. You can be a part of this by trusting that they can make their own decisions and that you can support them, rather than telling them what to do or trying to rescue them. .

Reassure Them That It Is Not Their Fault.

Social attitudes about gender-based violence can often make survivors feel like they did something to deserve the violence. Even when survivors know theoretically that it is not their fault, internalized messages can still make them feel responsible. In these cases, it can be helpful for them to be reminded externally that the abuser is the one to blame and at fault. A helpful strategy is to remind them that walking alone or trusting the wrong person are not crimes, whereas rape and gender-based violence are punishable by law.



WHAT TO DO WHEN A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER IS A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

- You Allow the survivor to approach you.
- Listen to their needs.
- Ask how you can support them with any basic urgent needs first Some survivors may need immediate medical care or clothing.
- Ask the survivor where she/he feels comfortable talking to you.
- If a survivor is accompanied by someone, do not assume it is safe to talk to the survivor about their experience in front of that person.
- Ask the survivor to choose someone s/he feels
- comfortable with translating for and/or support them if needed.
- Ask for permission from the survivor before taking any action.
- Treat any information shared with confidentiality.
- She/he may not want even her closest friends and family to know what has happened.
- Provide practical support like bringing water, a private place to sit, a tissue etc.
- Listen more than you speak.
- Be comforting and supportive and reinforce that what happened to them was not their fault.
- Respect the rights of the survivor to make their own decisions.
- Give your phone or communication device to the survivor to contact someone s/he trusts.
- End the conversation supportively

