

RAPE:

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Rape is any form of sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual penetration carried out against a person without that person's consent. The act may be carried out by physical force, coercion, abuse of authority, or against a person who is incapable of giving valid consent, such as one who is unconscious, incapacitated, has an intellectual disability, or is below the legal age of consent. Women, as well as men and children can be raped.

TYPES OF RAPE

Rape occurs in different forms and under various circumstances. Some of the types of rape include:

1. **Partner Rape:** This is also known as spousal rape or marital rape, is a type of rape involving a person's partner or previous partner (no matter whether the partners are married).
2. **Acquaintance Rape:** This type of rape happens between two people that know each other. Often acquaintance rape is known as "date rape" as the two people involved may be in a social relationship at the time. It is important to remember that consent for sexual activity can be revoked at any time and a prior relationship does not mean that rape cannot occur.
3. **Group rape:** This is also known as gang rape and it occurs when a group of people participate in the rape of a single victim. Rape involving two or more violators (usually at least three).

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSENT

Consent to any sexual activity is pivotal to the reduction and prevention of sexual assault and coercion. Consent is a voluntary, sober, enthusiastic, informed, mutual, honest and verbal agreement. It is an active agreement and cannot be coerced.

Consent must be sought and gotten. Consent is never implied and cannot be assumed, even in a relationship. Dating a person does not give the natural permission to have sex with the other partner.

People who cannot give consent are those who are- Minors (someone who is below the age of 18) unconscious, asleep, intoxicated, drugged, or otherwise unable to say 'yes', have a psychological or decision-making disability that impacts on their ability to understand what they are consenting to.

**The absence of a
"NO" does not mean "YES".
Both people should be involved in
the decision to have sex.**

THE EFFECT OF RAPE ON SURVIVORS

Rape has a large and wide-ranging impact on the survivor and the society. These ranges from physical to emotional and psychological effects.

The **Physical Effect** of rape could be one or more of the following: Injuries from beating or choking, such as bruises, scratches, cuts, and broken bones; swelling around the genital area; bruising around the vagina; Injury to the rectal-vaginal area (for example, tearing of the tissue that connects the anus to the vagina); Sexually transmitted infections (such as

herpes, gonorrhoea, HIV/AIDS, and syphilis, etc); Unintended pregnancy; Many a time the physical effects may result to adverse medical problem.

Psychological Effects on victims may include: Severe anxiety, Depression, Difficulty in concentrating or sleeping, Nightmares, Inappropriate guilt feelings, Emotional numbness or irritability, Flashbacks, Extreme fear, (in extreme cases- homicide or suicide) etc.

ACCESSING JUSTICE AND LAWS ON RAPE

The first step to accessing justice is for individuals/citizens to be aware of their rights. If a woman or a girl does not know her rights, she may condone acts of abuse, thinking that it is normal. Many women and girls whose rights have been and are still being trampled upon, have suffered in silence partly because of lack of knowledge of their rights and what they can do to get justice.

There are so many fundamental rights enshrined in different international and national conventions and laws. Below are some of the laws that deals with issue of rape and other forms of gender based violence.

International Charters/Conventions

- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, on the Rights of Women in Africa, 2003
- Africa Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1999
- International Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989
- African Charter on Human and People's Rights, 1986
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979

National

- Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), 2015
- African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Ratification and Enforcement Act) 2004
- Child Rights Act, 2003
- Criminal Code Act, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1990

Lagos State

- Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2015
- Lagos State Law Against Domestic Violence, 2007
- Child Rights Law of Lagos State, 2007

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS OF RAPE:

Sexual and gender-based violence have severe psychosocial consequences on victims. The emotional wounds may be less visible than the physical wounds, but it often takes far longer to recover from the emotional impact. Psychosocial services which is of great use is most times unavailable in developing countries due to lack of resources and cultural resistance or stigmatization of mental health support. However, these services can be effective, especially if tailored to the exact need of those in need of the services.

Early and adequate psychosocial support can:

- Prevent distress and suffering from developing into a more severe health problem.
- Reintegrate survivors back into the society by allaying their fears and helping them to resume their normal lives.
- Help people cope better and become reconciled to everyday life.

- Protect against negative outcomes, such as psychological distress and mental disorders, including anxiety disorders (such as post-traumatic stress disorder), mood disorders, and substance use disorders.
- Promote the wellbeing of individuals.
- Help to prevent certain behavioural disorders that may stem up as a result of being exposed to various forms of violence.

HANDLING A RAPE INCIDENT

Rape can have devastating impact on the survivor. The survivor may experience some powerful emotions after the incidence, they may feel anger, fear, sadness and may also feel confusion about what to do. In order to get justice in a case of rape, handling of evidence is very important. Although, it may be very difficult to calm down after the experience of a terrible violation such as rape, one thing everyone needs to know is that, not taking the right decision or step may compound the situation, including not being able to secure prosecution of conviction. Reporting the crime can help survivors to regain a sense of personal power and control. They will also be helping to prevent the criminal from doing the same thing to another person.

Below are some of the practical steps to take immediately after rape occurs in order to minimize both short and long-term health risks and strengthen the chances of bringing the perpetrator to justice.

1. Do not clean or disturb anything in the area where the assault occurred.
2. Preserve all physical evidence of the assault. Do not shower, bathe, douche, eat, drink wash your hands or brush your

teeth. You need to have a medical examination done before you can do any of these.

3. Save all of the clothing you were wearing at the time of the assault. Place each item of clothing in a separate bag and keep it in a safe place.
4. If you have access to a telephone, call a friend, a family member, or someone else you trust who can be with you and give you support. If you are not sure who to call, go ahead and call any of the numbers listed below.
5. Write down as much as you can remember about the circumstances of the assault, including a description of the assailant. If you are unable to read and write, you are also encouraged to orally record the incident on your phone. Just do a voice recording of what happened- where it happened, the time, how it happened etc.
6. If you are in Lagos, arrange to go to a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) close to you (go to the bottom of this handbill for suggestions of Centre that you can visit.)
7. You will also need to report to the nearest Police Station to you to ensure that the matter is documented, investigated and the perpetrator duly arrested and prosecuted.
8. Report the case as soon as possible, if possible, within 24 hours.

References

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/rape-crime/Rape-as-a-weapon-of-war>
https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Consent-to-sexual-activity#:~:text=People%20who%20can not%20give%20consent,what%20they%20are%20consenting%20to.

SOME ORGANISATIONS/GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENT AND AGENCIES (MDAs) THAT PROVIDE SERVICES

S/N	AGENCIES	ADDRESS	CONTACT/ PHONE NUMBER	WEBSITE/EMAIL ADDRESS	NATURE OF SERVICE PROVIDED
1	Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation	Block 18 Lagos State Secretariat Alausa	08036256457	Lagosstatewapa.org	Provision of psychosocial support and empowerment for survivors of domestic violence
2	The Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA)	Behind Ministry of Justice, Block 2 Alausa Secretariats.	0813-796-0048 0906-288-7857 0800-033-3333	info@dsvrtlagos.org	Offers services to sexual and domestic violence survivors and provides referrals
3	Cece Yara Foundation	2a, Akin Ogunmade-Davies Close, Gbagada Phase II, Gbagada Lagos	0908-569-2612 0908-569-2326 0800-800-8001 0700-700-7001 (TEXT) 0908-569-2623	info@ceceyara.org	Counselling and support services for sexually abused children, advocacy and support, justice and law enforcement
4	Centre for Women's Health And Information	34 McNeil Road, By Sabo, Yaba. Lagos	0802-313-0167	cewhin@yahoo.com	Promote research for women and young people's reproductive and sexual health and rights.
5	Centre For Citizens with Disabilities	No. 3 Salvation Road, Opebi Ikeja	0803-397-7025	ccdigeria@gmail.com	Offers legal aids support, representation and capacity building
6	Child Protection Network (CPN), Lagos State Chapter	SOS Children's 12, Industrial Estate Road Ilupeju by PZ Industries off Town Planning Way, Oshodi Lagos	0806-584-1438	Cpnlagos@yahoo.com	Members of the network offer a variety of services regarding prevention, impact mitigation and protection of children from all forms of abuse
7	Mirabel Centre	Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja (LASUTH)	0818-7243-468 0701-349-1769 0818-724-3468	Partners4justice@yahoo.com timayen@yahoo.com Sarc@pnigeria.org	Provision of sexual assault management services (health & psychosocial support)
8	Pastor Bimbo Odukoya (PBO) Foundation	12, Industrial Estate Road, Ilupeju, Lagos	0803-580-0201 0809-393-3439	Admin@pbofoundation.org	Rehabilitation of abused children
9	Project Alert on Violence Against Women	21, Akinsanya Street Off Isheri Road, Taiwo Busstop, (Behind Frsc) Ojodu Berger, Ikeja Lagos	0818-009-1072	Projectalert@projectalertnig.org info@projectalertnig.com	Provision of support services; shelter and medical support; empowerment, police station accompaniment
10	Women at Risk International Foundation (WARIF)	6, Turton Street, off Thorborn Avenue, Sabo Yaba, Lagos	0809-210-0008	info@warifng.org	Provides appropriate, efficient and effective Services/Health



IN
SUPPORT
OF



**Spotlight
Initiative**
To eliminate violence
against women and girls



The Centre for Women's Health and Information (CEWHIN)

34, McNeil Road, Off Montgomery Road, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos State.

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