

Preventing Sexual Assault & Reporting Incidents

Sexual assault is an act of violence. Sexual assault should not happen in a learning environment, but it can, even with people you know and trust. Most sexual assaults are committed by acquaintances. This is sometimes referred to as acquaintance rape. For this reason, it is important for you to be assertive, direct, and clear in your communications. Be aware of your non-verbal and verbal communication. Always be on alert when you get in a car with someone you have just met (perhaps at a party or from online), no matter how nice the person seems. Also, it is a good practice to never leave your drink unattended if at a party or social gathering. The use of alcohol and drugs at social gatherings dramatically increases the risk of sexual assault for college students.

If you have been sexually assaulted on campus, report the crime to the Campus Police or the Coordinator for Title IX jani.attebery@centralaz.edu. Reporting does not mean you must take legal action. This is a choice you can make later. By reporting the crime, though, you may help to stop a rapist. Chances are that the person has raped before and will rape again, until apprehended. If you have been raped, preserve physical evidence that could be useful later on. Do not change clothes, bathe, or use the bathroom. Do seek medical care immediately, whether or not you report the crime. In addition to taking care of obvious injuries, you need medical care to protect you from unwanted sexually transmitted diseases/infections.

The law warns that knowing someone—even intimately—is never an excuse for forced sex. Clear communication should be used to reach an understanding with a friend or date. Do not assume an earlier understanding still holds; do not ever assume communication can be clear if either party is abusing alcohol or other drugs.

In social situations, both women and men must use good judgment because the stakes are high for both. The best precaution is to stay in control and remember that a wrong decision in the area of sexual activity may remain with you for a lifetime.