

- to the police. All services are free and confidential.
- **The Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center** offers victim support 24-hours daily. Victims may consult the advocates directly by calling (352) 264-6760. All services are free and confidential.
- **The Center for Sexual Assault/Abuse Recovery Education (CARE)**, located on the third floor of the Student Health Care Center (Infirmary), room 320, 392-1161 ext. 4362, is a university-sponsored agency providing individual and group counseling for persons dealing with any form of sexual exploitation. CARE is a specialty service with professionals trained in sexual victimization recovery. All records are kept confidential.
- **The University Counseling Center** offers confidential, no cost counseling services to currently enrolled students coping with any form of sexual exploitation issues. Professional psychologists and counselors provide short-term, individual, couples, and group counseling. The Center also coordinates with other campus and community resources to assist students in their recovery and continued academic progress. Appointments for counseling services may be made in person or by phone (352) 392-1575, during office hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday). Students in need of immediate assistance are seen on an emergency non-appointment basis. The Center is located in 301 Peabody Hall, adjacent to Criser Hall. See the Center's web page for further information at www.counsel.ufl.edu.
- **Student Mental Health Services**, located in the Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, is available for a wide range of personal, interpersonal, and emotional concerns.
- **The Alachua County Crisis Center**, is a 24-hour, seven day/week system of suicide and crisis intervention, supportive counseling, and therapy available to anyone in Alachua County. Services are provided by telephone, by face-to-face counseling (by appointment or walk in), and by emergency response outreach teams. Anyone in distress (or concerned with another's emotional issues) may call, anytime, (352) 264-6789 for immediate assistance.

If you are concerned about the problem of sexual assault and want to participate in prevention education programs or if you have any ideas to share, contact any of the agencies listed under victim assistance agencies.

What Victims of Sexual Assault Can Expect From The University of Florida Police Department

It is the policy of the University of Florida Police Department to ensure that sexual assault victims are afforded sensitivity and maximum humane consideration.

All officers, regardless of duty assignment, receive specialized training in the investigation of sex offenses. Topics discussed in this training are Florida law, university philosophy and policy, officer sensitivity to the needs and feelings of the victim, support resources, and methods of successful investigation.

- Officers will ensure that a victim advocate is available throughout the process to address a victim's needs and concerns as well as those of significant others.

- Officers will treat a victim with courtesy, sensitivity, dignity, and understanding.
- Officers will act thoughtfully without prejudging or blaming a victim.
- A victim's request to speak to an officer of the same gender will be accommodated.
- Officers will meet privately with a victim in a location of the victim's choice.
- Officers will make arrangements for medical treatment with respect for a victim's choice of medical facility.
- Officers will inform a victim of services available both on and off campus.
- Officers will answer a victim's questions at any time and will explain the criminal justice system and process.
- Officers will diligently investigate each case thoroughly and consistently, and will keep a victim informed on the progress of the case.
- **A victim's name and identifying information will be withheld from the public and the press, in accordance with the Florida Public Records Law.**

What You Can Do If Someone You Know Has Been Sexually Assaulted

If you know someone who has been sexually assaulted, you can be of help. In the aftermath of a sexual assault, the victim may be experiencing fear, insecurity, and/or frustration and need care and support from others. You, as a friend (or spouse or family member), can play an important role by providing reassurance and support.

Allow your friend to reflect upon what has happened and the feelings experienced, but do not press for details. Let her/him set the pace. Listening is one of the best things you can do at this time. In short, be a trusted friend.

If your friend has not received medical attention, encourage her/him to do so. For additional help and support,

call the University of Florida Police Department's Office of Victim Services. An advocate can accompany you and your friend to the medical facility and expedite medical attention. Know that there is a possibility the medical facility will notify the police. However, it is up to your friend to make the final decision as to whether a formal police report will be initiated.

You can be a valuable resource to your friend by seeking out and providing information that will assist in understanding available options. For example, you can let your friend know that reporting the rape and collecting evidence does not automatically lock her/him into pursuing prosecution of the offender. What it does do is assist the police in identifying the method and possible identity of the assailant. Since rapists tend to rape more than once, any information that can be provided may prevent the sexual assault of someone else. You may be asked to testify in judicial proceedings regarding your friend's remarks, actions, and state of mind, especially if you were one of the first people she/he approached. Jotting down a few notes may prove to be of benefit later.

Making the decision to report a sexual assault to the police and to undergo the subsequent processes of evidence collection and possible judicial proceedings will be very difficult for your friend. Although it is only natural that you will want to give advice, you must avoid trying to control the situation. A victim of sexual assault needs to regain control and must be allowed to make her/his own decisions.

Whatever decisions are made, your friend needs to know that she/he will not be judged, disapproved of, or rejected by you. The victim of sexual assault can suffer a significant degree of physical and emotional trauma both during and immediately following the rape that may remain for a long time. By being patient, supportive, and non-judgmental you can provide a safe accepting climate into which your friend can release painful feelings.

Sometimes friends or family members take the sexual

The Office of Victim Services within the University of Florida Police Department provides a civilian support person for anyone who may become a victim of crime while on the university campus. The victim advocate provides information on options available to victims of crime and supports victims in making the decisions that are best for them, regardless of whether or not the victim decides to report the crime to law enforcement. The victim advocate ensures the right of the victim to be informed and treated with fairness throughout the criminal justice process, and provides support while the victim has a medical examination and is being interviewed by the police. The victim advocate provides accompaniment during court proceedings and transportation to court appointments. In addition,

the victim advocate will provide information about campus service providers and local resources, assist in applying for a medical withdrawal from classes if needed, and serve as a liaison with UF Student Judicial Affairs, providing accompaniment through the judicial process. The victim advocate also assists with the

process of applying for compensation for medical bills as a result of crimes.

An advocate is available 24-hours daily through the University of Florida Police Department by calling (352) 392-1111. Victims may also consult directly with an advocate weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. by calling (352) 392-5648.

All services are free and confidential.



The Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center is contacted whenever the Gainesville Police Department or the Alachua County Sheriff's Office receives a call about a sexual assault. Sexual assault victims may also call (352) 264-6760 themselves if they do not want to report the crime to a law enforcement agency. The victim advocate offers support while the victim has a medical examination and is being interviewed by the police. In addition, advocates will accompany victims through legal proceedings and also through the process of applying for compensation for medical bills as a result of crimes. All services are free and confidential.