

# THE UFPD ADVOCATE

NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES  
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA POLICE DEPARTMENT  
(352) 392-5648  
FALL 2011

## WHAT IS THE OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES?



The Office of Victim Services (OVS) assists all victims of crime including, but not limited to, sexual assault, battery, intimate partner violence, stalking, and/or harassment. Services provided by OVS include:

- ✦ Crisis intervention
- ✦ Accompanying victims to criminal justice/ Student Conduct proceedings
- ✦ Obtaining financial reimbursement for losses or expenses incurred as a result of victimization
- ✦ Filing for Injunction for Protection Orders (Restraining Orders)
- ✦ Advocating for students with professors if special accommodations are necessary

The role of the victim advocate is to educate a victim of crime on what options are available, and to support and assist him/her in whatever option s/he chooses. A victim can feel comfortable knowing that anything discussed with the victim advocate will be kept completely confidential, allowing them to explore all of their options in a safe, non-judgmental environment. These services are all free, and available on a 24 hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week basis.

Additionally, the Office of Victim Services is available to make presentations on campus on a variety of different topics including victim advocacy, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking/harassment, child abuse, and workplace violence.

For more information on the services provided by OVS, please call (352) 392-5648 from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. or (352) 392-1111 after hours and on weekends.

## KNOW THE FACTS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence, or Intimate Partner Violence, is defined as a pattern of abusive behaviors by one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family, or cohabitation. Each year, an estimated 3.4 million people are victims of intimate partner violence in the United States. Here are some signs of someone who has been a victim of intimate partner violence.

### Physical Reactions:

- Bruises
- Incident that requires medical attention and hospitalization
- Lacerations
- Traumatic brain inj
- Broken bones
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Lowered immunity



### Emotional Reactions:

- Fear
- State of Panic
- Guilt
- Grief
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Mood swings
- Emotional numbness
- Social withdrawal
- Feelings of helplessness

These, and many others, are normal reactions to experiencing a traumatic event, such as being the victim of a crime. You do not have to go through the healing process alone. If you or someone you know is experiencing such symptoms, talk about it with a trusted family member or friend. Or seek help from one of the resources available to you on campus such as the University Counseling and Wellness Center, (352) 392-1575 or a UFPD Victim Advocate (352) 392-5648. Take the first step towards healing by reaching out.



**Did You Know...** the month of November is American Diabetes Awareness month signified by a gray ribbon (more common by a light blue circle). On the University of Florida campus, on November 18th there will be the following activities:

- 1) Century Tower Lighting Ceremony  
Please join us and the rest of the Gator nation as we light the tower in recognition of World Diabetes Day. The annual Tower Lighting Ceremony is set to take place Friday, Nov. 18 at Century Tower at 5:30 p.m.
- 2) Diabetes Screening Events  
Diabetes screenings will be available, free and open to the public, Thursday, Nov. 17 in the Shands Atrium and Friday, Nov. 18 at the Reitz Union Collonade both between 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.

For more information and events visit <http://diabetes.ufl.edu/>

## FORENSIC NURSE EXAMS

One of the options available to victims after a sexual battery is a forensic exam. In previous years, a victim would have to file a police report in order to receive a forensic exam. However, as a result of legislation passed during the 2007 session, victims are no longer required to report a sexual battery in order to have the physical evidence collected. Medical evidence that may be present following a sexual battery can only be collected up to 96 hours after the sexual battery has occurred. Therefore, victims wishing to have an exam must do so within 96 hours of the incident.

Certified Forensic Nurse Examiners are trained to provide specialized, quality care to victims of physical and sexual abuse. The nurse takes a narrative account of the victim's story while assessing for injuries. The evidence collection process includes a pelvic exam and swabbing areas for DNA. The Forensic Nurse Examiner also provides the victim with emergency contraception and emergency antibiotics to try to prevent an STD infection. After the exam has been completed, the victim has the option of filing a police report for 90 days. If the victim decides not to file a police report during the 90 day period, the evidence kit will be destroyed. If the victim decides to file a police report, the kit will be submitted as evidence. The nurse can also be called to court to testify about the evidence she collected.

It is the victim's choice whether or not to have the exam, but without the exam the case is harder to prosecute because of the lack of physical evidence.

In Alachua County, trained Forensic Nurse Examiners are available to complete forensic exams at the Alachua General Hospital Emergency Room (801 S.W. 2nd Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32601) until November 1st, 2009. After November 1st, victims should be seen at the Shands at UF Emergency Room. There are many other options available to victims of sexual battery. If you would like to learn more about these options, please call (352) 392-5648 from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. or (352) 392-1111 after hours and on weekends.

## CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ASSISTANCE CLINIC

The Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Clinic (IPVAC) is one of the first of its kind that provides victims of domestic, dating, and/or sexual violence with free services including but not limited to comprehensive and coordinated legal, medical, and social services that they may not have otherwise been able to afford. A collaboration between the University of Florida College of Law, UF College of Medicine, Shands Teaching Hospital, and the Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network make this clinic possible. An IPVAC team provides a holistic approach to helping a victim, consisting of Certified Legal Interns (CLI's), a social worker, an outreach counselor and various medical staff at UF's outpatient clinic. The director of IPVAC, Teresa Drake, J.D., founded and supervises the IPVAC clinic and has years of experience working with victims of domestic violence. Before founding this clinic, Teresa worked as an assistant state attorney in the Gainesville community prosecuting crimes specific to domestic violence for many years. Since its opening, the clinic has been a vital service for the UF and Gainesville community. The IPVAC holds office hours at Virgil Hawkins Civil Clinic, UF's Pediatrics clinic, and UF's Ob-Gyn clinic. For more information about the IPVAC clinic please go to the IPVAC website: <http://www.law.ufl.edu/clinics/civil/ipvac/>. The IPVAC clinic's number is 352-273-0805 and can be reached during normal business hours.

If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic, dating or sexual violence, please get in touch with someone who can help, whether that be a law enforcement officer, a victim advocate, or the IPVAC. You are not alone.

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## What Can YOU Do?

The Office of Victims Services offers an internship for both personal development and for class/research credits if necessary. Being an OVS intern allows for you to gain hands-on experience with what victims advocates do. One intern per fall or spring semester will be selected to assist in community awareness activities, educational presentations, and training programs. The intern will also shadow the victim advocates during professional duties, such as criminal justice proceedings, crisis response, and meetings with other campus organizations. Preferred qualities for this position include a background in criminology, psychology, or a related field; basic knowledge of the criminal justice system, Florida criminal laws, and victimization issues; excellent oral, written, and computer skills; public speaking experience; and ability to work independently. If you are interested in an internship with the Office of Victim Services, please submit a resume and cover letter explaining your interest in the position to [lkt@ufl.edu](mailto:lkt@ufl.edu). An advocate will contact you to schedule an interview.