

Sexual Assault and Family Violence Support

Sexual Assault Support Services

24 hour crisis support is available from various services around Tasmania. It is free to access.

They can provide support in a number of ways, including

- Attending the hospital with the survivor should they wish to undergo medical or forensic examination
- Attending the police station should they wish to make a statement
- Assisting the survivor to connect with counselling services for ongoing counselling and support

24 hour crisis support phone:
1800 MYSUPPORT (1800 697 877)

North West

Laurel House
Phone: (03) 6431 9711
www.laurelhouse.org.au

North

Laurel House
Phone: (03) 6334 2740
www.laurelhouse.org.au

South

Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS)
Phone: (03) 6231 0044
www.sass.org.au

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Family Violence Counselling and Support Services (FVCSS)

All FVCSS services are voluntary and free of cost.

Services include:

- Information, counselling, and support
- Safety planning
- Assistance to access a police response to intimate partner family violence matters
- Referrals and advocacy

Family Violence Counselling Support Service

9.00am – midnight weekdays

4.00pm – midnight weekends and public holidays

Phone: 1800 608 122

Telephone and online counselling:

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Lifeline counselling and support 24/7

Phone: **13 11 14**

**If someone is at immediate risk or in danger
call Tasmania Police on 000**



Sexual Assault
and Family Violence
FORENSIC SERVICES



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What is Sexual Assault?



What Is sexual assault?

Sexual assault is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel uncomfortable, frightened, or threatened. It can occur when a person is forced, tricked, or coerced into sexual behaviour without agreeing to it.

Sexual assault includes inappropriate touching or kissing of a person's body, even through clothes (indecent assault), or having sex with someone without their consent (rape).

Rape typically refers to sexual intercourse with another person without their consent. It involves penetration of a person's vagina, genitalia, anus or mouth by a penis, other body part, or an object.

Sexual assault can also involve exposing another person to sexual behaviour without their consent, such as masturbating in front of them or forcing the person to watch pornography.

It is a crime to use threats or intimidation to force another person to have sexual intercourse.

It is a crime to have sexual intercourse with a person under the age of 17 or to involve them in any sexual act.

Sexual assault can occur to anyone. All ages, genders, and backgrounds.

What Is consent?

Consent means that a person freely agrees to the sexual activity.

Someone **does not** consent if they do not say or do anything to communicate consent.

There are some situations where, even if the person says "yes", they cannot consent. These include if

- they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol,
- they have a serious mental or intellectual disability which affects their ability to understand what is happening,
- they are forced, threatened, or kept against their will,
- they are coerced,
- they are confused about the act or who the person was

A person cannot consent to sexual activity if they are under 17, unless the *similar age defence* applies. This is where two young people have sex or do a sexual act together and they both consent, and

- both are over 15 years old and the age gap between them is not more than 5 years, or
- both are over 12 years old, and the age gap is not more than 3 years.

If you have been sexually assaulted it is never your fault.

What to do if you have been sexually assaulted?

Your options following a sexual assault are:

- To seek information, advice or counselling from a Sexual Assault or Family Violence Support organisation
- To have a medical examination only (assessment and treatment of injuries and provision of emergency contraception and antibiotics for STI if needed)
- To have a forensic medical examination (a medical examination AND the recording of injuries and collection of biological samples which can be used as evidence)
- To report the assault to the police (either formally or informally)
- Not to report the assault to the police
- Any combination of the above
- To do nothing at all

Even if you are unsure whether to proceed with a report, having a forensic examination done means that you will have more options available to you in the future.

If you have had a recent sexual assault and are going to have a forensic examination and/or report to the police, there are some things you can do to make it more likely that evidence will be collected. If possible:

- Don't wash, shower, or change your clothes
- Don't eat, drink, or clean your teeth
- Don't go to the toilet

To arrange an examination, contact an Emergency Department, Tasmania Police, or one of the Crisis Support Organisations listed.