Community Resources for victims and bystanders of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking

Student Assistance by Mercy - CALL SAM is a free call center (1-855-225-2726) staffed with counselors who will assist Francis Tuttle students and parents with getting help when they need it. It is confidential and staffed 24 hours per day 7 days per week.

YWCA Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services
(www.ywcaokc.org)

24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline: 405-917-9922 or 24-hour Sexual Assault Hotline

Housing for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault
Inez Kinney Gaylord Emergency Shelter
The YWCA provides the only shelter for battered women and children in Oklahoma County. Ours is an emergency shelter, providing help in obtaining legal services, transportation, housing information, medical care, child care and advocacy services for up to two months. Clients attend domestic violence education and support groups during their stay. Our Child Advocates offer education and support to help children avoid further victimization, verbalize feelings, learn appropriate ways to express emotions and understand what is occurring in their families. Our shelter is a safe place for women and children to escape domestic violence. Open 24-hours/7days a week, the shelter provides immediate, emergency shelter and supplemental services to more than 350 women and children every year.

Transitional Housing
The YWCA’s transitional housing program is for women and children who are victims of family violence. Participants have up to two years to obtain the education and job skills training needed to begin a new life. Services include case management, child care, counseling, legal services and transportation. There are seven apartments, including one handicapped accessible unit. All are equipped with furnishings and basic household items, the apartments are a two-year housing program that allows a woman to get back on her feet while going to school, job training or working toward self-sufficiency.

What are Crisis Services?
The YWCA provides a wide array of wraparound services to help victims and children escape and heal from domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Domestic Violence Victim Assistance Program (DVVAP)
DVVAP provides on-site assistance at the police station in filing victim protection orders and safety planning. The DVVAP director also accompanies victims to court when appropriate.

Counseling and Community Groups
Counseling is provided for domestic violence victims and their children to help them heal from trauma. These services provide a variety of education, support, counseling and referral services to survivors of
family violence through the Women and Children's Community Domestic Violence Education Groups, Individual Counseling and Women's Wellness Groups.

Children's Counseling Program
The YWCA offers a broad range of services to meet the unique needs of children who have been affected by domestic violence or sexual assault by providing crisis intervention, domestic violence education, trauma intervention programming and safety planning for children who have experienced trauma in their lives. This program is also CARF accredited.

Prevention Education and Economic Empowerment Program (EEP)
Prevention Education allows thousands of children and students to receive information and education on the sensitive issues surrounding sexual assault and family violence. In an effort to prevent rapes and dating violence, and to change the general attitudes towards victims of rape, interactive scenarios are presented to schools, churches, businesses and community organizations.

One of the biggest reasons women stay in abusive relationships is a lack of financial independence. EEP provides women with career and life skills, career opportunities, mentoring, job placement and other assistance to break down that barrier. Counseling is provided for domestic violence victims and their children to help them heal from trauma. These services provide a variety of education, support, counseling and referral services to survivors of family violence through the Women and Children's Community Domestic Violence Education Groups, Individual Counseling and Women's Wellness Groups.

Providing support for victims of Sexual Assault
The YWCA provides an array of services to help the primary and secondary survivors of sexual assault regain control over their lives. From responding to calls on our 24-hour Rape Crisis Hotline, to hospital advocacy and follow-up counseling, the YWCA is meeting the needs of hundreds of sexual assault survivors each year. We also serve as a resource center to the community by offering information, speakers, and referrals.

Hospital Advocacy
The YWCA Hospital Advocates are on-call 24-hours per day to provide emotional support, advocacy and crisis counseling to sexual assault survivors at hospital, police stations and throughout the legal system. The Hospital Advocacy team is comprised of both staff and volunteers. Training is offered several times a year to those who want to volunteer. For more information on Hospital Advocates, please contact Karla Docter at kdocter@ywcaokc.org.

Active bystanders can help stop sexual violence. Here are things you can do to help a Friend:

Sexual Assault
The process of recovering from a sexual assault or rape takes time. As a friend, your help during this process is essential. Survivors need a great deal of support and caring as they begin to address and survive a very frightening and violent experience. Friends and family can help by:

- Listening and being available.
- Believing and not judging.
- Offering a safe place to stay or even staying with the survivor.
Recognizing that recovery takes a long time.
Respecting the decisions that the survivor makes.
Being gentle, sensitive, and respectful of the survivor's wishes for closeness or affection.
Dealing with your own feelings.

If your friend has been recently assaulted, please review the recommendations below for a list of steps you may want to discuss with your friend about in obtaining further professional assistance.

**Recommendations for Sexual Assault Reporting**

- Go to a place where you feel safe and contact someone who can help you. This may be a friend, family member, campus police officer or a crisis counselor from the Rape Crisis Center (405-943-7273).
- Do not bathe, clean up in any way, or change clothing, if you plan to make a police report. If you must urinate, try to capture the urine in a plastic or glass cup for evidence testing. If you must change clothes, put each item in a separate paper bag and take them with you.
- Try NOT to disturb (clean up or rearrange) the scene.
- Think about whether or not to report the crime (all forms of sexual assault are crimes); it often helps to seek support from someone you trust while you make your decision.
- Go to the Emergency Room to get health care and treatment. It is important to receive medical attention, whether or not you plan to report the crime to the police.
- You can call Police and report the sexual assault, EVEN if you don't want to prosecute or haven't yet decided whether or not to report the crime.
- As soon as you have a quiet moment, write down everything that you remember about the assault, including a description of the assailant/attacker.
- Talk with a trained counselor or understanding person.

**What is Stalking?**

Stalking is unwanted pursuit. Most victims are stalked by current or former intimate partners such as dating partners, spouses, cohabitating partners.* What was viewed initially as positive romantic attention, may turn into repeated, unwanted attention, harassment, and conduct that characterize stalking. Cyber stalking occurs when technology or electronic communication are used to stalk a victim.

*But it's important to remember that a stalker can be someone you do not know at all.

**Stalking is a crime under Oklahoma State Law (Title 21-Section 1173).**

According to law, a stalker can be legally defined as "any person who willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follows or harasses another person with the intent to cause that person reasonable fear for their safety, or the safety of their immediate family."

**Behaviors Stalkers Exhibit:**

- Show up wherever you are
- Follow you
- Repeatedly call you, including hang-ups
• Drive by or hang out at your home, school, or work
• Send unwanted gifts, letters, cards, or e-mails
• Monitor your phone calls or computer use
• Use technology (e.g., hidden cameras, spyware or GPS systems) to track you
• Find out about you by using public records or on-line search services
• Hire investigators to go through your garbage, or contact friends, family, neighbors, or coworkers, to gain information about you
• Threaten to hurt you, your family, friends, and/or pets
• Damage your home, car, or other property
• Any other actions that control, track, or frighten you

Security Measures You Can Take:

Stalking is unpredictable and dangerous, but you can increase your safety by taking the following steps:

• Trust your instincts. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel unsafe, you probably are.
• Seek support by telling family, friends, roommates, RA's, professors, and coworkers. Ask them to help watch out for your safety and not to give out your information.
• Change your e-mail address, screen names, and phone numbers; be selective about giving these to others. Change passwords and clear your computer of all spyware.
• Use an unlisted phone number.
• Decide in advance what to do if the stalker shows up at your home, work, or school.
• Don't communicate with the stalker or respond to attempts to contact you.
• Change your locks, and install dead bolts or security systems, and make sure all your windows and doors have working locks.
• Contact the police. Oklahoma has stalking laws, and the stalker may also have broken other laws if they assault you or steal or destroy your property.
• Consider getting a court order that requires the stalker to stay away from you.

Domestic Violence/ Dating Violence

What is Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Dating Violence Abuse?

Relationship abuse involves the use of intimidation and/or force by one person in a relationship over the other. It can include any form of verbal, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse or violence, and occurs in both heterosexual and same-sex relationships. In an abusive relationship it is not unusual for the abuser to express remorse after a violent outburst and then ask forgiveness, promising that “it will never happen again.” Unfortunately, it usually does.

What Can I Do to Help?

Remember, you can't “fix” the situation for your friend. But here are some things you can do that are helpful for both of you:

• Ask. Have you noticed bruises on your friend's body? Does your friend seem sad, distracted, or depressed? Does your friend seem to miss a lot of school or work? Have your friend's sleep or eating habits changed? Does your friend have low self-esteem? These may be signs of relationship abuse or violence. Usually, fear
keeps victims from leaving relationships, and shame may prevent disclosure to someone else about what is happening. For these reasons it's okay and important to ask your friend if she or he is being abused.

- Listen and believe. Let your friend talk; don't be judgmental, interrupt, or give advice. Just sitting and listening can provide the reassurance that you care and are there for your friend. Be patient; sharing about an abusive relationship can be difficult and scary.
- Offer to help find appropriate resources. Ask your friend in what ways you can help. For example, your friend may ask for your help in contacting the police. Be clear about setting limits about what you can and can't do. Setting limits supports your friend and empowers both of you.

Find some outside support for yourself while you help. Helping a friend in crisis can be difficult. It's normal for you to have strong emotional reactions to the situation too.