

Macalester College



# Sexual Assault Response Guide

For Macalester College faculty, staff, & students  
who are supporting a survivor of sexual assault

Student Affairs Office  
119 Weyerhaeuser Hall  
651-696-6220

*Last revised 10-30-09*

*Adapted from Emory University, Aline Jesus Rafi, 2008*

Dear Macalester Community Member,

Attached you will find resources to assist you in responding to a student's report of sexual assault. Unfortunately, sexual assault is an issue that many college students struggle with, and Macalester College students are no exception. Sometimes, without warning, students turn to friends, faculty, and staff to support them in times of personal crisis, irrespective of our prior training or specific responsibilities. In the event that a student is disclosing his/her experience of sexual assault with you, please know that you are not alone in supporting this student. Trained faculty and staff are available to respond to students who have experienced sexual assault and we encourage you to contact the Student Affairs Office for more information. You are in a special position to act as a resource, giving both support and referral information, and we can help you do that or refer you to someone who can. This packet has been provided so that you will be able to act initially as a helpful resource in a student's time of need.

This packet includes:

- Conversational tools for talking with someone who has been sexually assaulted
- A guide to help you in the response and referral process
- Information about the student's rights and options in getting medical care, academic support, ongoing emotional support, and ensuring on-campus safety
- A list of contact information for relevant campus and community departments and resources
- An incident report form

Also available from Student Affairs is a *Student Resource Guide* to give to a student who comes to talk about an instance of sexual assault that he/she has experienced. This information is part of this packet but can also be given to you for distribution by contacting the Student Affairs Office at x6220. If a student reports a sexual assault, it is important to contact the Student Affairs Office even if the student does not want to move forward with legal or judicial processes. You can keep the name of the student confidential. Tracking assaults that take place on campus is required by Federal law and knowing when assaults occur assists us in developing better strategies to respond to incidents that interfere with maintaining an environment free from harassment, intimidation, and violence.

As a Macalester community member, you have the support of the Student Affairs Office to assist you with any personal and/or student concerns. We appreciate the important role you take in helping to make Macalester College a comfortable and safe place where our students can live to their fullest potential.

Sincerely,

Laurie Hamre  
Vice President for Student Affairs

Jim Hoppe  
Dean of Students

Lisa Landreman  
Associate Dean of Students

## Sexual Assault Response Guidelines

Faculty/staff/students acting in a first-point-of-contact capacity to a sexual assault survivor play a valuable role in supporting students in a time of crisis. It is important, however, to recognize that unless you are a trained counselor, you are responding in a non-professional role and so need to ensure you are referring students to professionals trained to handle these incidents as appropriate.

The following points are not designed to be used as a checklist but as a general guide of the type of questions you could ask to ascertain if the student is in immediate danger or needs medical attention, and options for the next appropriate place for referral. If the student is in immediate danger calling the local police or campus security should be encouraged.

### Responding to the Student [*key first responses*]

- Affirm the student for making the decision to reach out to someone
- Reassure the student that there are many resources available
- Identify the student's primary area of concern (e.g., confidentiality, others' disbelief, health)
- Provide the student with the *Student Resource Guide* and review it together

### Information Gathering [*to assess immediate danger or appropriate next steps*]

- Is the student in immediate danger or in need of immediate medical attention? (if yes, call 911) Does he/she feel safe?
- Is he/she fearful she/he might see this person again? Are there any concerns about possible repercussions of disclosure?
- Explain that you can keep the details of the incident (including her/his name) confidential but that you have an obligation to make an anonymous report to campus security if the incident happened on campus
- When and where did the assault occur?
- Was the assailant an acquaintance or unknown? If an acquaintance, was he/she a student or other member of the Macalester community?
- Who else has the student told?

### Enlist an Ally/Support Person

- Is there anyone the student would like to be with him/her now?
- Inquire about the student identifying a supportive friend to accompany her/him to subsequent appointments
- Educate the resistant student about the importance of seeking support from others, but respect their choice
- Educate the student about common feelings of self-blame, fear of being disbelieved, feelings of shame—the validation/support of a friend can be helpful in countering these feelings
- Share the list of possible Macalester support people and assist in connecting them if they choose (information listed at the back of this document)

### Determine Appropriate Medical Referral

- Was the assault within the past 72 hours? If it was, the student has the option to obtain a medical exam for the purpose of evidence collection. The student does not have to decide about legal action at this time
- If the student does not wish to have evidence collected, follow-up care can be pursued at Health and Wellness Center
- Review options and determine student's preferences for medical follow-up, contacting the St. Paul Police department, and/or changing residence (contact the Student Affairs Office)

### Consultation with the Student Affairs Office/Campus Security

- The Student Affairs Office and Campus Security should be made aware that a sexual assault occurred, even if the student does not want her/his name shared or to file a report—complete an incident report form (attached) or contact the Campus Security or the Student Affairs Office.

## Supporting a Student Who Has Been Sexually Assaulted:

## Things to Keep in Mind

**She/he may be worried about being disbelieved.** It is important to reassure her/him that you do believe her/his disclosure of sexual assault. This can be difficult for survivors of sexual assault because they tend to respond with disbelief to lessen their own feelings of vulnerability to assault. Also, keep in mind that sexual assault can occur regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

**She/he may be worried that the assault was her/his fault and that she/he is to be blamed.** Try to help the student explain why she/he believes it is her/his fault; you may need to respond with understanding that she/he wishes there was something she/he could have done to prevent the assault. She/he may also be reassured to hear that no one ever deserves to be assaulted; however, she/he may take little comfort in that if she/he is using self-blame to regain feelings of control over personal safety.

**The reported assailant may be someone you know.** Eighty to ninety percent of sexual assaults on a college campus are committed by acquaintances. If you know the person, you may struggle with your own feelings of disbelief that she/he could be capable of such behavior. However, false reports of sexual assault are very rare.

**She/he may benefit from a friend or advocate accompanying him/her to appointments.** This may entail an Emergency Room visit or a next day appointment at the Health and Wellness Center. Ask if a friend can be helpful by accompanying her/him. Sexual Offense Services of Ramsey County provides advocates to accompany survivors as well.

**Individual's coping strategies can vary. Some find talking about the assault helpful and others do not.** You may want to let the student know that you are available to her/him at anytime she/he may want to talk about the experience, but only if you are comfortable with this. Even if she/he chooses not to discuss it is helpful to check in with her/him. It is important to acknowledge that this is a stressful time for her/him. If you are not comfortable continuing to speak with the student about this incident, recommend the people she/he could talk to (e.g., Student Affairs Office, Sexual Offense Services Advocate, Sexual Assault Support Team, Health and Wellness Staff, off-campus counseling).

**There are psychological and medical risks that may follow untreated sexual assault.** Many students attempt to minimize or deny their experience. This approach may make them unwilling to get necessary medical and emotional care. If the student is unwilling to follow-up with medical evaluation and counseling, be as persuasive as possible and try to help her/him keep her/his appointments.

**You may have your own questions and concerns.** Please feel free to contact the Student Affairs Office at 651-696-6220 to discuss your specific questions.

## What to Say to a Traumatized Person

### First, prepare a comfortable environment that is:

- **Safe**—away from people who resemble the perpetrator, with companion if desired, physical comfort is addressed (offer water, comfortable chair, tissues), exit path is clear
- **Quiet**—turn off radio, TV, office machines
- **Private**—shut the door (or leave slightly ajar), talk to the student alone (BUT don't separate her/him from support: "I'd like just the two of us to talk briefly. Is it ok if your friend waits in the hall for a few minutes?")

### Things you could try:

- "Thanks for coming in (*or telling me or calling*)."
- "Take your time."
- "Tell me about it." *or* "What happened?"
- "You are safe here."
- "It's not your fault."
- "Thank you for trusting me with this information."
- "When something painful happens, it often helps if you don't try to carry it alone."
- "You have a right to all of your feelings."
- "Maybe you made some choices you wish you hadn't. That's for you to decide. But you didn't ask to be violated."
- "Whatever you did to get through it was the right thing to do."
- "You have already survived."
- "What else is would you like me to know?"
- "I'm glad you told me."

### Things to do:

- Open your posture: uncross arms, put hands in lap, uncross knees, keep legs close together, make eye contact without staring. Avoid talking across a desk.
- Give options, not advice. Explain advantages and disadvantages of each option.
- Focus on choices that must be made first. It can be overwhelming to consider the implications all at once: police intervention, medical care, whom to tell, work and school arrangements, counseling support, effects on personal relationships, support groups, changing living arrangements, determining where the perpetrator is now, what he or she might do next, etc. Some things can wait. **Immediate threats to health and safety come first.**
- Give written information and referrals. The person may be too much in shock to remember the conversation.
- Take care of yourself: meditate, exercise, journal, talk confidentially with a member of the Student Affairs Office

## Things not to do:

- Do not suggest that the student have any future contact with the perpetrator. If possible, strategize about how to minimize contact. (If the student files a formal report, removing the alleged perpetrator from shared courses and other activities would happen while case is pending.)
- Do not contact parents. If the student wants parents contacted this is something the Student Affairs Office would do. If the student does not want the Student Affairs Office involved, you are encouraged to consult with the Student Affairs Office before contacting parents.
- Do not insist that the student utilize any particular option, such as police notification, no matter how strongly you think it would be the right thing to do.
- Do not threaten violence or other retaliation against the perpetrator.
- Do not touch the student without her/his permission, not even to give him/her a hug or reassuring pat.
- Don't let the conversation go on indefinitely. Work patiently toward determining the next steps.
- Do not offer shower, fresh clothes, or food (in case of oral assault or possible need for surgery) if the student is going to have a medical examination within the next few hours.
- Do not provide health care, even Advil or a Band-Aid, unless you are a medical professional.
- Do not disclose your own history of being victimized. There is a time and place to speak out, but right now the focus is on the person you are assisting. When a person is in crisis, she or he often tries to take care of others, which deflects attention from the immediate problem.
- Do not make decisions that the student can make for herself/himself.

## Common immediate reactions to trauma:

*These reactions may seem illogical to others, but they have their own logic in protecting the person's body and psyche.*

- Guilt, often presented as ethical self-criticism ("I should have left with everyone else; I shouldn't have had that much to drink"); rather than as feeling ("I feel betrayed, embarrassed that I drank that much").
- Dazed, shut-down look; staring at objects or body, lack of eye contact
- "Inward" posture (hold arms & legs close to body)
- Fluctuations in physical presentation such as posture, facial expression, eye contact
- Difficulty recalling events, changes in the story of the incident
- Displaced feelings (angry at friend, submissive toward health care provider)
- Protecting perpetrator ("I don't want to get my friend in trouble." "I was beating on his chest and saying 'no,' but I guess he didn't hear me.")
- Denial of impact of the event ("I'm fine", "It wasn't that bad")
- Jumpy, easily startled
- Confusion about what happened, what to do or a feeling like he or she can't make any decisions

# What to Say When You Don't Know What to Say

## Phrases which encourage self-expression:

- "Tell me about it."
- "I see. . .o.k. . .Uh huh. . ."
- "I'm sensing that there may be more to your statement than I understand. Can you tell me that in a different way?"
- "Let me see if I understand fully what the facts are and how you're feeling about it" (then paraphrase what s/he's said).
- "Let me summarize what you've said so far and you can tell me if I got it right."
- "You've experienced something traumatic and it seems like it is affecting you in some negative ways. Have you discussed this with someone before? Do you ever think about talking to a counselor?"

## Be comfortable with silence:

- Try not to fill up too much space with talking or overwhelming her/him with information to fill the silence.
- "Often there are long periods of silence in this type of conversation, so don't be surprised if you are quiet for a few moments."
- "I am happy to just listen, or I can answer questions, or I can help you sort through some things. It's up to you."
- "Take your time, I'm not in a hurry."

## Helping in decision making:

- "What do YOU want to do?"
- "How do you feel about that?"
- "What do you think would happen if you did that?"
- "What have you tried/thought of so far?"
- "What does that mean to you?"
- "Do you want to do \_\_\_\_\_?"
- "It seems to me that you have several ideas about what would help."
- "It sounds as though you're having trouble deciding whether or not to report the incident. What are your thoughts?"

## Other things to say when you don't know what to say: *[taken in context of what the student may have said]*

- "Sounds like you really had a tough time."
- "Although I cannot exactly understand your feelings, I can understand how upset/angry you must be."
- "It would be really hard to sleep after something like that."
- "What else would you like me to know about what happened?"
- "It can take a long time to work through such difficult feelings."
- "You really handled the situation well – calling the police, coming to me, talking to a friend, going to the hospital, etc."
- "Is your mother/roommate/partner able to support you? *(If not)* It must be hard for you to be upset and then for him/her/them to be upset too."
- "It must be really hard when your family/friends/partner doesn't seem to understand how you feel."
- "It's really courageous for you to be willing to share this with me. I can only imagine how difficult it must be to tell someone about it."

# Student Resource Guide

Dear Macalester Student,

You are courageous to be seeking out support for your experience of sexual assault and we want to assure you that you are not alone in dealing with this act of violence. We can only empathize with the myriad of feelings you are likely experiencing right now and how difficult it must be to decide what to do. We have compiled this packet as a way to assist with some of the decisions you will want to consider and help acquaint you with options and resources available to you.

Some of the decisions you need to make may be very difficult to make alone. Members of the Macalester College and larger St. Paul community are here for you, whether through medical attention, requesting academic support, counseling, and/or navigating legal and campus processes. We are available to assist and support you as you begin to think through your options and make a plan for your recovery.

There are many resources available to you and this packet is just a start. For more information please do not hesitate to contact the Student Affairs Office, a member of the Macalester Sexual Assault Support Team (SAST), or an individual listed in the resources on the last page of this packet. Any of these individuals can provide you with free confidential assistance as you move through the healing process.

Take Care of you.

Sincerely,

Laurie Hamre  
Vice President for Student Affairs

Jim Hoppe  
Dean of Students

Lisa Landreman  
Associate Dean of Students

## Defining Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is any sexual activity involving a person who does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault takes many forms, some of which do not involve penetration. It can be:

- Rape
- Sexual contact (touching, grabbing, fondling)
- Non-contact offenses (obscene phone calls, exposing)
- Incest
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual exploitation

Sexual assault is violence, although it may not always include a weapon, overt threat or physical force. It can be more subtle, as when authority, size, age, or status is used to scare, or manipulate the victim.

**Consent** is clear, unambiguous, affirmative, and mutually understood permission and agreement for each level of increased intimacy, from holding hands to intercourse. If physical force, coercion, intimidation, and/or threats are used, there is no consent. If the victim/survivor is mentally or physically incapacitated or impaired so that they cannot understand the sexual situation, there is no consent. This includes impairment due to alcohol or drug consumption and being asleep or unconscious.

**Same-sex sexual assault** is when a sexual assault occurs and the victim and the perpetrator are the same sex. This does not necessarily mean that the victim or the perpetrator identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. It also involves any unwanted sexual contact without consent and/or obtained through the use of force, threat of force, intimidation, or coercion.

**Sexual assault can happen to anyone.** Females, males, and transgender people; people of all ages, ethnicities, economic backgrounds, religions, and sexual orientation can be victims. It can happen on a date, or between friends, acquaintances, partners, or strangers.

**If you have been assaulted, the first thing to do is to GO SOMEWHERE SAFE.** If you feel in danger, call campus security at 651-696-6555 or local police at 911. Seek emotional support from a counselor, friends, trusted staff, or faculty. If you are safe, then the remainder of this guide will assist you in what you can do if you are assaulted.

### Options:

#### First things to consider following physical safety

If you have experienced sexual assault, you have options regarding

1. Medical care
2. Emotional support
3. Reporting to campus officials
4. Reporting to local police

#### 1. Medical Care

Medical care is the first decision you need to consider for a few reasons:

- a. Not all injuries are immediately evident, so it is important to seek medical attention
- b. It is possible that your assault may have resulted in a pregnancy
- c. It is possible that your assault may have resulted in a sexually transmitted infection or disease

- d. If you should decide at any point that you want to pursue legal action, forensic evidence needs to be collected within 72 hours.

Do not change clothes, bathe, shower, or douche before seeking medical attention. Doing so may destroy important medical evidence in the case that you choose to pursue legal action. If you have changed clothes, bring your soiled clothing with you for evidence collection.

The recommended hospital for sexual assault survivors in the vicinity is:

**Regions Hospital**

640 Jackson Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 254-3456

You may take a friend or victim advocate with you to the hospital. **Sexual Offense Services of Ramsey County** is available 24 hours a day and can provide a trained advocate to accompany you to the hospital. Campus security can provide you with a cab voucher to pay for your round trip cab ride to the hospital. The fee is charged to your student account.

**Sexual Offense Services of Ramsey County**

1619 Dayton Avenue, Suite 201  
St. Paul, MN, 55104  
Business Phone: 651.643.3022  
24 hr. Crisis Phone: 651.643.3006  
[www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph/yas/sos.htm](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph/yas/sos.htm)

The campus **Health and Wellness Center** is not able to conduct examinations in order to collect evidence necessary for criminal or civil action against an assailant. For such an exam, victims must visit a hospital emergency room.

Again, even if you don't pursue legal action about the assault, it is still important to assess and treat any injuries and determine the possibility of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. You may get treatment from:

**Health and Wellness Center**

651-696-6275  
Open Monday-Friday 8 am -5 pm  
or  
A medical professional of your choice

## 2. Emotional Support

Whether or not you choose to report the assault, you should consider seeking professional support. Even if you think you can handle the situation yourself, counseling can provide guidance to your healing in a confidential setting.

### Common Responses to Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is a traumatic experience which usually creates a crisis for the survivor. Everyone handles crises differently. You may experience a wide range of reactions including:

- **Shock & disbelief** – that the assault happened
- **Fear** – of the offender returning; of people finding out; general feelings of anxiety and vulnerability
- **Eating and/or sleep disturbances**
- **Shame & guilt** – because of long held myths that the victim “asked for” or deserved sexual assault
- **Confusion** – about why the assault happened, why the offender chose you to assault, what needs to happen next, and about your feelings for the accused offender
- **Anger** – toward the offender, toward systems, toward friends and family, or self
- **Grief & feelings of loss** – are common and normal

Many students attempt to minimize or deny their experience with sexual assault. This approach may make them unwilling to get necessary medical and emotional care. Feelings related to sexual assault may occur immediately or months or years later. It is not unusual for feelings to come and go, often connected to other stressful times or events. Counseling is often a helpful component of self-care after an unwanted sexual experience. You are encouraged to pursue help through the Macalester College Sexual Assault Support Team, the Health and Wellness Center, Sexual Offense Services, or other community resources.

### Macalester College Sexual Assault Support Team (SAST) *(individuals listed on the last page)*

This group includes members of the Macalester College faculty and staff who are trained to respond and support students who have experienced sexual assault. Working with a support member does not obligate you to file a report of the sexual assault to the college or the police.

### Health and Wellness Center

Free and confidential services that are designed to help you process the event and work toward recovery are available to all students. Located on campus in the Leonard Center.

651-696-6275

### Sexual Offense Services of Ramsey County

1619 Dayton Avenue (close to campus)

Suite 201

St. Paul, MN, 55104

Business Phone: 651.643.3022

Crisis Phone: 651.643.3006

[www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph/yas/sos.htm](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph/yas/sos.htm)

Provide free confidential crisis counseling and advocacy services to assist in your recovery process.

Consultations with staff from Sexual Offense Services of Ramsey County, the Macalester College Sexual Assault Support Team, and the Health and Wellness Center are confidential and will not initiate an official report or investigation without your permission. Campus officials are required to notify campus security or the Student Affairs Office that an assault has taken place, but your name and any identifying information will only be included upon your consent. If you have questions or doubts about your readiness to make an official report, you may want to discuss the incident with one of these confidential resources first.

### **Other Support Options**

Sharing your experience with a trusted friend can provide you with important emotional support. If you live on campus, your RA (Resident Assistant) has received training on responding to sexual assault and students in crisis and you may find them to be a great source of support and resource. You can also turn to the professional staff member who lives in your building, your Hall Director, for assistance. You may find that a friend or acquaintance has had a similar experience and that you are not alone. However, in addition to these support options, we recommend that you seek professional guidance for on-going support as you plan for your long-term recovery.

## **Reporting Your Assault**

It is your decision whether to report the sexual assault, but you are encouraged to do so. The College will make every possible effort to avoid unnecessarily revealing your identity during the course of any investigation which may result from a reported assault. Reporting your case to any campus official does not obligate you to report it to the police, nor reporting it to the police obligate you to report it to the College—these are separate processes.

### **3. Reporting on campus**

If you want to report your sexual assault to a campus official you can contact any of the following:

- Sexual Assault Support Team – can take a report, provide support, and explain your options
- Student Affairs Office – can take a report, provide support, explain your options, and investigate
- Macalester College Harassment Committee (MCHC) – can take a report and investigate a reported case
- Online Report form – Can be anonymous: <http://www.macalester.edu/sexualassault/>
- Campus security – can take your report, assist in securing your safety, and refer you to community and campus resources

Phone numbers for these offices and individuals are listed on the last page of this document. When you report your case you are welcome to bring your own support person with you. You will have formal and informal avenues you can pursue if you choose to adjudicate your case, or you can decide not to pursue the case at any time in the process. You may also decide to report your case anonymously. Three members of the Macalester College Harassment Committee (MCHC), made up of faculty and staff, will investigate the case if you choose to move forward in an informal or formal process. More details about this process can be found in the student handbook or at [www.macalester.edu/mchc/](http://www.macalester.edu/mchc/)

### **4. Reporting to the police**

If you want to report your assault to the police, you can initiate a report by contacting the St. Paul Police Department, and an officer will contact the appropriate authorities if the assault occurred outside their jurisdiction. Your report will not obligate you to follow through with legal action or action through the College.

## **Preventing Future Contact with the Reported Offender**

If you live on campus, you have the option of changing your residence. If the reported offender is in any of your classes, they will be removed from your shared classes, residence, and other activities while under investigation. If you choose not to file charges or pursue the incident but still want to avoid contact with the perpetrator, you can receive assistance through the Student Affairs Office, located in 119 Weyerhaeuser, x6220.

## Support Resources

### Macalester College Harassment Committee

Jim Hoppe, Dean of Students, x6220

Becky Hoye, Faculty member, Chemistry Department, x6252

Gabrielle Lawrence, Director of Alumni Relations, x6315

Dianna Shandy, Faculty member, Anthropology Department, x6439

Nadya Nedelsky, Faculty member, International Studies Department, x6439

Lisa Landreman, Associate Dean of Students, x6220

Karin Aguilar San Juan, Faculty member, American Studies Department, x6148

Api Sulisty, Employment Services, x6284

### Sexual Assault Support Team

Lisa Broek, Health and Wellness Center, x6055

Keith Edwards, Director of Campus Life, x6323

Consuelo Gutierrez-Crosby, Civic Engagement Center, x6363

Cindy Haarstad, Campus Center, x6259

Laura Klunder, Assistant Director Campus Programs, x6311

Eily Marlow, Civic Engagement Center, x6738

Sedric McClure, Multicultural Counselor, MAX Center, 6014

Robin Hart Ruthenbeck, Associate Director Campus Programs, x6874

Jaine Strauss, Faculty member, Psychology Department, x6114

Denise Ward, Associate Dean of Student Services, x6385

Wendy Weber, Faculty member, Political Science Department, x6653

Alina Wong, Assistant Director of the Lealtad-Suzuki Center, x6652

### Other Helpful Campus Resources

Campus Security, x6555

Health and Wellness Center, x6275

Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, x6298

### Off Campus Resources

Emergency police or medical, 911

St. Paul Police Department, non emergency, 651-291-1111

Regions Hospital Emergency Room, 651-254-5000

United Hospital Emergency Room, 651-241-8260 (24 hrs.)

Sexual Offense Services, 651-643-3006 24 hr. crisis hot line; business line, 651-643-3022

Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, 651-209-9993

Ramsey County Attorney's Office, Criminal Division, 651-266-3222;

Ramsey County Attorney's Office, Victim/Witness Program, 651-266-3099