

# MYTHS & FACTS

## SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS

**MYTH:** Men are never the victims of sexual assault.

**FACT:** While the majority of sexual assault victims are women, men are also victimized. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, in 2003 1 in 10 victims of rape were male.

**MYTH:** Women often “cry rape” to get back at former lovers or to protect their reputation. In other words, women often lie about having been raped.

**FACT:** The percent of unfounded – or falsely reported – sexual assault is low. The FBI’s 1996 Uniform Crime Report stated that 8% of rapes were unfounded. While the Uniform Crime Reporting Program no longer publishes data on unfounded offenses because many agencies no longer provide the data in a manner consistent with statistical presentations, the data that they are able to obtain suggests that this rate has gone down to 6% in 2008.

**MYTH:** A person who dresses provocatively, flirts heavily and drinks too much is asking to be sexually assaulted.

**FACT:** NO ONE EVER ASKS TO BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED! No style of dress or behavior can be considered legal consent for sexual intercourse. Furthermore, a person who is intoxicated according to legal standards cannot consent to having sex.

**MYTH:** Any healthy person can defend themselves against sexual assault if they really want to. If they don’t fight back, it means they wanted it.

**FACT:** In frightening situations, people have many different reactions. The most common of these are fight, flight or freeze. Because many victims of sexual assault are terrified, intoxicated or physically overpowered, they are often incapable of physically fighting off their attacker.



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