

# Sexual Violence

*This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.*

Sexual violence can happen any time, to anyone, anywhere. Many times, the person responsible is a friend, coworker, neighbor, or family member.

Sexual violence can be non-physical - for example, sexual harassment, threats, and peeping. Other acts of sexual violence involve physical contact, including unwanted touching and rape.

Sexual violence can contribute to long-term health problems, such as chronic pain, headaches, stomach problems, and sexually transmitted diseases. Victims are often fearful and anxious, replaying the attack over and over in their minds. They may have problems with trust and be wary of relationships. The anger and stress they feel may lead to eating disorders, depression, or thoughts – or attempts – of suicide. Victims of sexual violence are more likely to smoke, abuse alcohol, use drugs, and engage in risky sexual activity.

Stop sexual violence before it begins. Don't be a bystander; if possible, find a way to intervene and prevent an assault from occurring. Students benefit greatly from mentoring programs or other skill-based activities that address healthy sexuality and dating relationships. Parents should be on the lookout for violent attitudes and behaviors in their kids. And everyone should support policies that help eliminate sexual harassment at work, school, and anywhere else in the community.

For more information, go to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and type "Sexual Violence" in the search box.

*For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.*