

MODULE EIGHTEEN
MALE SURVIVORS

I. INTRODUCTION

NOTES:

This module will cover the literature gap on male versus female sexual assault victimization; male assault history; male sexual assault as an act of aggression; the psychology of trauma; the prevalence of sexual assault in adult men; males and reporting; are offenders homosexual; the myth of prison rape; prevalence of adult male sexual assault; assault profiles; help seeking; system response; the individual survivor's experience; meanings for male survivors; responses to assault on masculinity; survivor response to sexual assault; masculinity and recovery; particular complexities with male victimization; helping strategies; unique issues facing male survivors and getting back on track.

II. LITERATURE GAP

- a. Society is becoming increasingly aware of male rape. However, experts believe that current male rape statistics vastly under-represent the actual number of males age 12 and over who are raped each year. Rape crisis counselors estimate that while only one in 50 raped women report the crime to the police, the rates of under-reporting among men are even higher (Brochman,1991).
- b. Until the mid-1980s, most literature discussed this violent crime in the context of women only. The lack of tracking of sexual crimes against men and the lack of research about the effects of male rape are indicative of the attitude held by society at large -- that while male rape occurs, it is not an acceptable topic for discussion.
- c. Male sexual victimization is under-represented in the literature as a result of selective study only in particular settings. Prison populations have been scrutinized, and children have been studied in some depth. There are also some studies of hate crime survivors that have included sexual violence as part of the victimization. However, research on the sexual victimization of adult men is dramatically under-studied when compared to females. This lack of data translates to providers not knowing the scale or magnitude of male sexual victimization, or the impact of the crime is on individual survivors.

III. MALE ASSAULT IN HISTORY

Historically, the rape of males was more widely recognized in ancient times. Several of the legends in Greek mythology involved abductions and sexual assaults of males by other males or gods. The rape of a defeated male enemy was considered the special right of the victorious soldier in some societies and was a signal of the totality of the defeat. There was a widespread belief that a male who was sexually penetrated, even if it was by forced sexual assault, thus "lost his

manhood," and could no longer be a warrior or ruler. Gang rape of a male was considered an ultimate form of punishment and, as such, was known to the Romans as punishment for adultery and the Persians and Iranians as punishment for violation of the sanctity of the harem (Donaldson, 1990).

NOTES:

IV. MALE SEXUAL ASSAULT AS AN ACT OF AGGRESSION

Nicholas Groth, a clinical psychologist and author of *Men Who Rape: The Psychology of the Offender*, says all sexual assault is an act of aggression, regardless of the gender or age of the survivor or the assailant. Neither sexual desire nor sexual deprivation is the primary motivating force behind sexual assault. It is not about sexual gratification, but rather a sexual aggressor using somebody else as a means of expressing their own power and control.

V. PSYCHOLOGY OF TRAUMA

- a. Much has been written about the psychological trauma associated with the rape of female survivors. While less research has been conducted about male rape survivors, case research suggests that males also commonly experience many of the reactions that females experience. These reactions include: depression, anger, guilt, self-blame, sexual dysfunctions, flashbacks, and suicidal feelings (Isley, 1991).
- b. Other problems facing males include an increased sense of vulnerability, damaged self-image and emotional distancing (Mezey & King, 1989). Male rape survivors not only have to confront unsympathetic attitudes if they choose to press charges, they also often hear unsupportive statements from their friends, family and acquaintances (Brochman, 1991). People will tend to fault the male survivor instead of the rapist.
- c. Stephen Donaldson, President of Stop Prisoner Rape (a national education and advocacy group), says that the suppression of knowledge of male rape is so powerful and pervasive that criminals such as burglars and robbers sometimes rape their male survivors as a sideline solely to prevent them from going to the police.

VI. MALES AND REPORTING

- a. Law enforcement sees a small sample of survivors who are men. Statistics reveal approximately 5%-10% of male sexual assault survivors report. There are many reasons men may not report, among them are that the offenders often use feminine terms to refer to their masculine survivors. The larger culture also has made quite an industry out of sexual violence against women to the exclusion of men as survivors. If men have accepted these values and are subsequently assaulted, silence may be preferable to being feminized by negative system responses.
- b. However, the biggest reason for many males is the fear of being perceived as homosexual. Male sexual assault has nothing to do with the sexual orientation of the attacker or the survivor, just as a sexual assault does not make the survivor gay, bisexual or heterosexual. It is a violent crime that affects heterosexual men as much as gay men. The phrase "homosexual rape," for instance, which is often used by uninformed persons to designate male-male rape, camouflages the

fact that the majority of the rapists are not generally homosexual (Donaldson, 1990).

NOTES:

VII. ARE OFFENDERS HOMOSEXUAL?

In a well-known study of offenders and survivors conducted by Nicholas Groth and Ann Burgess, one-half of the offender population described their consenting sexual encounters to be with women only, while 38 percent had consenting sexual encounters with men and women. Additionally, one-half of the survivor population was strictly heterosexual. Among the offenders studied, the gender of the survivor did not appear to be of specific significance to half of the offenders. Instead, they appeared to be relatively indiscriminate with regard to their choice of a survivor -- that is, their survivors included both males and females, as well as both adults and children (Groth & Burgess, 1980). The choice of a survivor seemed to be more a matter of accessibility than of sexual orientation, gender or age. Some myths and facts taken from URL: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/booklets/maleassault/menassault.html>

Myth: Only gay men are sexually assaulted.

Fact: Heterosexual, gay and bisexual men are equally likely to be sexually assaulted. Being sexually assaulted has nothing to do with your current or future sexual orientation. Your sexuality has no more to do with being raped than being robbed.

Myth: Only gay men sexually assault other men.

Fact: Most men who sexually assault other men identify themselves as heterosexual. This fact helps to highlight another reality -- that sexual assault is about violence, anger, and control over another person, *not* lust or sexual attraction

VIII. THE MYTH OF PRISON RAPE

a. Many people believe that the majority of male rape occurs in prison; however, there is existing research which shatters this myth. A study of incarcerated and non-incarcerated male rape survivors in Tennessee concluded that the similarities between these two groups would suggest that the sexual assault of men may not be due to conditions unique to a prison and that all men are potential survivors (Lipscomb et al., 1992).

b. Research indicates that the most common sites for male rape involving post-puberty survivors are outdoors in remote areas and in automobiles (the latter usually involving hitchhikers). Boys in their early and mid-teens are more likely to be victimized than older males (studies indicate a median survivor age of 17).

c. The form of assault usually involves penetration of the survivor anally and/or orally, rather than stimulation of the survivor's penis. Gang rape is more common in cases involving male survivors than those involving female survivors. Also, multiple sexual acts are more likely to be demanded, weapons are more likely to be displayed and used, and physical injury is more likely to occur, with the injuries that do occur being more serious than with injured female rape survivors (Porter, 1986).

IX. PREVALENCE OF ADULT MALE SEXUAL ASSAULT

NOTES:

- a. A few smaller studies have begun to illuminate the size of the problem. Definitions of sexual coercion and sexual assault have not been uniform, thus, accounting for some differences in measurements, but the statistics reflect a problem of sufficient magnitude that you will need to be prepared for providing services to male survivors.
- b. VAs should note that this module focuses on the adult men who are victimized; the number of male survivors of childhood sexual abuse is high, 28% in one study that included contact and non-contact assaults. Men may request services to manage the recovery from these experiences of childhood abuse. An example of the prevalence of male sexual assault can be seen in these facts:

- Both adult males and children are survivors of sexual assault. Assaults can and do happen anywhere: homes, schools, prisons, public places, etc. 92,700 men are forcibly raped each year in the United States. (*Tjaden, P. and Thoennes, N. Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey. U.S. Department of Justice, Centers for Disease Control. (November, 1998.)*)

- One in four survivors of sexual assault under the age of 12 are boys. (*Juvenile Offenders and Survivors 1999 National Report, Office of Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, 1999.*)

- 48% of males were raped by strangers, compared with 28% of females. (*Criminal Victimization in 1999: changes 1998-1999, with trends 1993-1999. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. August, 2000.*)

- Many rapes and sexual assaults are perpetrated by other heterosexual men, in all-male environments, often as part of an initiation. Incidences of this have been documented in military organizations, fraternal organizations, athletic organizations, prisons etc. (*Scarce, 1997.*)

- The organization Stop Prison Rape conservatively estimates that 360,000 men are sexually assaulted in prisons in the United States each year. For at least 2/3 of these inmates the rapes are not isolated events, but a repeated pattern (often as gang rapes). (*Scarce, 1997*)

- 77% of sexual assaults against males take place in a residence. (*Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000.*)

- A rapist's motivation is primarily to humiliate, hurt and destroy, not to release a normal sex drive. Hence, the majority of rapes of males are perpetrated by Caucasian, heterosexual males, who often commit their crime with one or more cohorts. (*Scarce, Michael. Male on Male Rape: The Hidden Toll of Stigma and Shame. Plenum Press. New York, New York. 1997.*)

X. ASSAULT PROFILES

NOTES:

- a. With small samples it is decidedly difficult to draw valid conclusions about the larger problem, But what seems to be emerging as the profile of assaults on adult men is that they are more likely than women to be assaulted by multiple assailants, weapons are used more often than they are with women, and that injuries are more frequently inflicted.
- b. One complexity about the injury information is that these may be the attacks that came to the attention of authorities simply because the survivors needed treatment for the injuries. It is difficult to know if this injury factor is characteristic of the whole spectrum of adult male victimization. It is an important factor for you to know however, because survivors that you see are more likely to have physical injuries.
- c. The data is overwhelming that female survivors are primarily assaulted by known assailants. It is therefore quite significant that this is not established for male survivors yet. Stranger assaults do not have the same level of trust and betrayal concerns as do the non-stranger assaults.

XI. HELP-SEEKING

- a. Female survivors do not seek nearly the level of assistance that they need to take care of themselves physically or emotionally. This lack of help seeking is intensified with adult male survivors. Male survivors experience anal penetration assaults more frequently than female survivors, and medical care should be sought to prevent Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) and to evaluate for injury. This assistance is rarely sought. Because reliable data about the extent of the problem of male victimization, we can only note that a small percentage of persons seeking assistance are men.
- b. In interviews with male sexual assault survivors, researchers have learned that the stigma and shame associated with being a survivor is a major obstacle to help seeking in men, as it is for women. Further, many men are unaware of services that might be available. This may be because services are couched in gender specific names such as being located in Women's Centers or it may be because men don't know that there are other men who have also been raped, and therefore don't recognize Rape Crisis Centers as the appropriate place to seek assistance.

XII. SYSTEM RESPONSE

- a. Lack of research data also leaves unchallenged the ignorance that leads to stereotyping. Male survivors face a gap in understanding because sexual assault victimization does not lend itself to intuitive assessment, it is necessary to actively seek out information in order to understand it. In spite of popular beliefs, a man can be forced to engage in sexual conduct against his will, regardless of his sexual preference.
- b. Fears of being labeled gay, or of being viewed as un-masculine, keep men from seeking services and from reporting the crimes. These are also the uniquely male reactions that make services designed for women inappropriate, or at least unresponsive, to men's needs. A recent national survey (1999) found that less than 5% of Rape Crisis Centers in the country had services

appropriate for men. Some programs will provide services to men only to the extent that their needs are the same as women's, and some deny services altogether.

NOTES:

XIII. THE INDIVIDUAL SURVIVOR'S EXPERIENCE

a. If our belief system about ourselves is based on untruths or myths, conflict about any challenges to those beliefs during a crisis is likely to be unbearable. A male sexual assault survivor is apt to have the same confusion that women express about who's fault the assault was, and why it happened. Because the vast majority of assailants are men, the male survivor has the additional layer of complexity related to why the man assaulted him, another man. Was there something that the offender sensed about the survivor and his sexuality? Finally, the male survivor's struggle with these issues may lead him into rage more readily than female survivors.

b. All survivors are vulnerable to having their experience of the assault redefined by the reactions of others. SAFRG members, in particular, must exercise caution when interacting with male and female survivors because they are viewed as having seen it all. A negative reaction can greatly impair the survivor's ability to contain the assault experience and overcome its power.

c. Survivors struggle with the degree to which they are changed or redefined by the actions of the offender. To get a message subtly or directly that you are perceived in a way that carries stigma, e.g. survivor or homosexual, is a powerful message to confront and overcome. It is a monumental task for an overburdened psyche for survivors to try and overcome negative responses at a time when he is having negative thoughts about himself.

XIV. MEANINGS FOR MALE SURVIVORS

a. There are many parallels in the victimization experience for men and women. Women, however, often experience the assault as the inevitable outcome of a culture that despises women and gives permission to offenders to injure women. This, obviously, is not part of the man's experience.

b. On the other hand, male survivors may experience a sexual assault as an involuntary imposition of a homosexual identity and an attack on masculinity, both distinct from the experience of women. Although there are some different issues for male survivors, on an individual emotional level they are as profoundly affected by assaults as women.

c. Male survivors frequently experience emotions including: pain, anger, loneliness, shame, anxiety, and confusion over sexual intimacy. A sexual assault may leave a male survivor questioning his masculinity. This along with the fact that men are more frequently assaulted by other men may cause a survivor to question his sexual orientation. These reactions are common because our society perpetuates the myth that sexual assaults are about sexual attraction and not about domination and power. This myth also acts as an obstacle when survivors seek out assistance.

d. Masculinity in our culture has come to be associated with many roles related to physical strength and emotional stoicism. The media images of over-sized muscular bodies and no emotion

have taken masculinity to its illogical extreme. Still, the message to men is clear that these are the ideals to strive for, the goal to shape living around. Masculinity in our society equates to Strength; Being Powerful; Fearless; Suppressing Emotion; Invulnerable; Suppress pain; Warrior and Provider.

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e. Sexual assault then, is an attack on these core principles of masculinity. It imposes vulnerability, emotion and powerlessness on the unsuspecting survivor. The degree to which this particular aspect of sexual assault affects the survivor depends on how stridently the survivor clings to the traditional masculinity identity. The culture's insistence on this identity will impose some measure of pain related to this identity challenge on every man. An attack on masculinity equates to society saying a man is Weak; Powerlessness; Fear; Intense emotional pain; Vulnerable and Attacked/Defeated.

XV. RESPONSES TO ASSAULT ON MASCULINITY

There are three typologies of responses to these challenges to masculinity that have been documented in the literature. One is to give up on masculinity. This is to accept the messages of the assault and encode them into the self. Second is to try to find a way to make peace with masculinity and real life, including the assault experience. This is a cultural uphill battle that regularly tests the commitment of the survivor to this path. Finally, a survivor can deny the entire experience of the assault and adopt a constricted approach that will comply with traditional hyper masculinity, but will deny the internal life of the self. This path is the path that can, not will, but can, lead to the survivor becoming a perpetrator of violence.

XVI. MASCULINITY AND RECOVERY

Traditional masculinity complicates recovery. The vulnerability of fending off emotional flooding and the need for an outlet for that emotion creates needs that are not acceptable in traditional masculinity. Needing to feel very sad and needing help to manage are contrary to the expectations of masculinity in our culture. Numbing is ok in this masculinity framework, but then the survivor is left with potent feelings stored waiting to be processed in recovery, recovery which may never be attempted because of the costs to masculinity.

XVII. SURVIVOR RESPONSE TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

a. It is not uncommon for a male rape survivor to blame himself for the rape, believing that he in some way gave permission to the rapist (Brochman, 1991). Male rape survivors suffer a similar fear that female rape survivors face -- that people will believe the myth that they may have enjoyed being raped. Some men may believe they were not raped or that they gave consent because they became sexually aroused, had an erection, or ejaculated during the sexual assault. These are normal, involuntary physiological reactions. It does not mean that the survivor wanted to be raped or sexually assaulted, or that the survivor enjoyed the traumatic experience. Sexual arousal does not necessarily mean there was consent.

b. According to Groth, some assailants may try to get their survivor to ejaculate because for the rapist, it symbolizes their complete sexual control over their survivor's body.

Since ejaculation is not always within conscious control but rather involuntary physiological reaction, rapists frequently succeed at getting their male survivors to ejaculate. As Groth and Burgess have found in their research, this aspect of the attack is extremely stressful and confusing to the survivor. In misidentifying ejaculation with orgasm, the survivor may be bewildered by his physiological response during the sexual assault and, therefore, may be discouraged from reporting the assault for fear his sexuality may become suspect (Groth & Burgess, 1980).

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c. Another major concern facing male rape survivors is society's belief that men should be able to protect themselves and, therefore, it is somehow their fault that they were raped. The experience of a rape may affect gay and heterosexual men differently. Most rape counselors point out that gay men have difficulties in their sexual and emotional relationships with other men and think that the assault occurred because they are gay, whereas straight men often begin to question their sexual identity and are more disturbed by the sexual aspect of the assault than the violence involved (Brochman, 1991).

d. In other ways, the reactions that have been documented for male survivors are strikingly similar to female survivors. The emotional responses of survivors generally have a universality to them that permits you, as the VA, to predict some reactions along this spectrum and share information with any survivor about the possibility of these reactions and their normality given the trauma that they have weathered. In male survivors like female survivors you will see responses such as Shock; Humiliation; Embarrassment; Behavior changes; and Phobias (assault related)

e. Similarly, the longer term reactions are substantially the same. The degree to which male survivors experience hostility and depression appears to be more significant. This finding may be anomalous, but volunteers should be prepared for some degree of these issues to present themselves. As with any survivor, after careful listening, you can respond to their particular configuration of needs by giving support and information. If these feelings are described, a survivor can be told that these feelings are a normal part of the longer term part of recovery. Some of the feeling you will see are Anger; Irritability; Decreased self-esteem; Sexual problems; Depression; and Hostility.

f. Many male survivors cope with the abuse by drinking, using drugs, living recklessly, avoiding intimate relationships, numbing their feelings, dissociating, and becoming depressed, anxious or angry. David Lisak, Ph.D. (1994), in his research with 26 adult male sexual abuse survivors (many of whom were abused by women), found that the effects of the abuse on the men could be grouped according to the following themes:

- Anger
- Betrayal
- Fear
- Helplessness
- Homosexuality Issues (mostly for men abused by men)
- Isolation and Alienation
- Legitimacy (being able to take the abuse and its effects seriously)
- Loss

- Masculinity Issues (feeling okay about being male)
- Negative Childhood Peer Relations
- Negative Schemas about People (difficulty trusting others)
- Negative Schemas about the Self (feeling bad about one's self)
- Problems with Sexuality
- Self Blame/Guilt
- Shame/Humiliation

NOTES:

For a more detailed description of these themes and to read some moving quotes from the interviews with the men, the article is listed under this module number in your handout guide.

XVII. PARTICULAR COMPLEXITIES WITH MALE VICTIMIZATION

a. Male survivors of sexual assault have a very high rate of prior traumatic experiences (25%-60% childhood abuse of some form). As you know now, prior trauma is correlated with many other dangerous issues such as substance abuse, suicide, and PTSD. PTSD is of concern because the symptoms significantly affect daily living. Almost 50% of male survivors qualify for the PTSD diagnosis. One study also found high rates of survivors with disabilities in the male survivor population. You should note that vulnerability in one area may lead to vulnerability to victimization.

b. Substance abuse is of particular concern with male survivors. "Having a few" is not in conflict with masculinity and it may make emotions less potent and easier to ignore. The problem, of course, is that this method of coping with emotions will have to be used with great frequency to numb out something as pervasive as sexual victimization. Then the survivor has a new problem, an addiction that uses up resources and makes for relationship problems and health problems. Lastly, the emotional intensity does not ever go away with substance abuse, it just temporarily fades out. When it comes back, it is still as strong as it was before. The processing of the content is frustrated by the constant numbing, and as a result, the recovery is delayed.

c. Raising the ante considerably for adaptive recovery are the possible outcomes of maladaptive responses. Some male survivors become offenders and widen the sphere of pain. Some direct the violence inward. Male survivors need to be directed away from these maladaptive coping mechanisms and into supportive services that connect them with other men who have been assaulted and are coping in more adaptive ways.

XIX. HELPING STRATEGIES

a. To assist male sexual assault survivors, VA need to provide the normalizing data about how victimization frequently progresses with predictable symptoms that recede over time. They also need to preemptively mention that as painful as it is, the pain is something to experience rather than numb out.

b. Substance abuse should be identified as a danger that needs to be guarded against for long and short-term reasons. Finally, survivors need to be hooked into settings where they can connect with other male survivors who can support them. Male Survivor is a national web site that enables men to learn about victimization and chat with other male survivors with the benefit of being able to do so semi-anonymously. The alienation and isolation of victimization is a very real danger for men, and advocates can serve them most effectively if they can assist in mediating the effect of that isolation.

NOTES:

XX. UNIQUE ISSUES FACING MALE SURVIVORS

a. For most men the idea of being a survivor is very hard to handle. Men are raised to believe that a man *should* be able to defend himself against all odds, or that he should be willing to risk his life or severe injury to protect his pride and self-respect. How many movies or TV shows have you seen in which the "manly" hero is prepared to fight a group of huge guys over an insult or name-calling? Surely, you're *supposed* to fight to the death over something like unwanted sexual advances...right?

b. These beliefs about "manliness" and "masculinity" are deeply ingrained in most men and can lead to intense feelings of guilt, shame and inadequacy for the male survivor of sexual assault. Many male survivors may even question whether they *deserved* or somehow *wanted* to be sexually assaulted because, in their minds, they *failed* to defend themselves.

c. Male survivors frequently see their assault as a loss of manhood and get disgusted with themselves for not "fighting back." These feelings are normal but the *thoughts* attached to them are not necessarily true. As the VA you must remind the survivor that he did what seemed best at the time to survive-- there's nothing un-masculine about that.

d. As a result of their guilt, shame and anger some men punish themselves by getting into self-destructive behavior after being sexually assaulted. For lots of men, this means increased alcohol or drug use. For others, it means increased aggressiveness, like arguing with friends or co-workers or even picking fights with strangers. Many men pull back from relationships and wind up feeling more and more isolated. It's easy to see why male survivors of sexual assault are at increased risk for getting depressed, getting into trouble at work, getting physically hurt, or developing alcohol and drug problems.

e. Many male survivors also develop sexual difficulties after being sexually assaulted. It may be difficult to resume sexual relationships or start new ones because sexual contact may trigger flashbacks, memories of the assault, or just plain bad feelings. It can take time to get back to normal so don't pressure yourself to be sexual before you're ready.

• **Heterosexual Men**

For heterosexual men, sexual assault almost always causes some confusion or questioning about their sexuality. Since many people believe that only gay men are sexually assaulted, a heterosexual survivor may begin to believe that he must be gay or that he will become gay.

Furthermore, perpetrators often accuse their survivors of enjoying the sexual assault, leading some survivors to question their own experiences. In fact, being sexually assaulted has nothing to do with sexual orientation, past, present or future. People do not "become gay" as a result of being sexually assaulted.

NOTES:

- **Homosexual (Gay) Men**

a. For homosexual men, sexual assault can lead to feelings of self-blame and self-loathing attached to their sexuality. There is already enough homophobic sentiment in society to make many gay men suffer from internal conflicts about their sexuality. Being sexually assaulted may lead a gay man to believe he somehow "deserved it," that he was "paying the price" for his sexual orientation.

b. Unfortunately, this self-blame can be reinforced by the ignorance or intolerance of others who blame the survivor by suggesting that a gay survivor somehow provoked the assault or was less harmed by it because he was gay. Gay men may also hesitate to report a sexual assault due to fears of blame, disbelief or intolerance by police or medical personnel. As a result gay men may be deprived of legal protections and necessary medical care following an assault.

c. Some sexual assaults of men are actually forms of gay-bashing, motivated by fear and hatred of homosexuality. In these cases, perpetrators may verbally abuse their survivors and imply that the survivor deserved to be sexually assaulted. It's important to remember that sexual assault is an act of violence, power and control and that no one deserves it.

XXI. GETTING BACK ON TRACK

a. It is important for the survivor to know that his reactions are normal and temporary reactions to an abnormal event. The fear and confusion will lessen with time, but the trauma may disrupt his life for awhile. Explain to the survivor that he may experience any or all of the reactions that were covered in the RTS. Some reactions may be triggered by people, places or things connected to the assault, while other reactions may seem to come from "out of the blue." VA should reassure survivors by reminding them that no matter how much difficulty they are having dealing with the assault, it does not mean they are "going crazy" or becoming "mentally ill."

b. Talking about the assault will help the survivors feel better, but may also be really hard to do. In fact, it's common to want to avoid conversations and situations that may remind the survivor of the assault. Survivors may have a sense of wanting to "get on with life" and "let the past be the past." This is a normal part of the recovery process and may last for weeks or months. Eventually, survivors will need to deal with their feelings in order to heal and regain a sense of control over their life.

c. Talking with someone who can listen and understand -- whether it's a friend, family member, VA or therapist -- is a key part of this process. It's important to understand that survivors may not be able to function at 100% capacity for a while following a major trauma like sexual

assault. Survivors have problems concentrating or remembering things and may feel tired or edgy. Additionally, they may also take longer to recover from everyday stresses, similar to returning to work too early after having been ill. VA should tell survivors not to be too hard on themselves because they need time to recover emotionally and that may detract from their energy level for awhile.

NOTES:

XXII. MODULE XVIII – EVALUATION/MALE SURVIVORS

- Complete Module XVIII evaluation on pages 13 and 14.

TRANSFER OF LEARNING

12. I will be able to use what I have learned. 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

13. Overall, the training was valuable. 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

14. What were the most valuable parts of this module?

15. What should be added/deleted to improve this module?

16. Any other comments?

Print Name (Optional): _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

MODULE 18 – HANDOUTS

- Male on Male Rape
- Male Survivors of Sexual Assault
- The Male Experience of Sexual Violence (PDF)
- The Psychological Impact of Sexual Abuse: Content Analysis Interviews with Male Survivors by David Lisak (PDF)

Male on Male Rape

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Even though male sexual assault remains greatly under reported, the United States Department of Justice documents more than 13,000 cases of male rape every year, in the United Kingdom (UK) there are no details available that I can locate, as male rape has only recently been accepted as a separate crime in UK law.

What are rape and sexual assault?

A sexual assault is any time either a stranger, or someone you know, touches any parts of your body in a sexual way, directly or through clothing, when you do not want it. Sexual assault includes situations when you cannot say no because you are drunk, high, unconscious, or have a disability.

Rape is any kind of sexual assault that involves the forced penetration of the anus or mouth, by a penis or other object. This may not be the legal definition of where you live but it fits to a large extent. There are other definitions that may fit better for you, and that is OK as well, if you feel like you were raped then you probably were.

Rape, and sexual assault, are **not** about sex, even though they may they feel like it, they are violent crimes against another person. Rape and sexual assault, like any other forms of violence, are used to exert power AND control over another person, yet for males it can cause all sorts of problems, guilt and shame. Many feel that rape is just not suppose to happen to males, but all too often it does happen.

Most cases of male rape tend to go unreported even though they are often far more physically violent than the rape of females. There are several reasons for this, and we shall have a look at some of them soon. Rape is widely accepted as a crime of violence, and is not as such a sexual crime. The anger, violence, hatred and fear are acted out sexually as a way of dehumanizing the victim to a point where the rapist no longer has to care about you as a person. Invariably the rapist will tell you that it is your fault in some way, and although the mixture of words and violence can be a powerful way of brain washing, it is only that; brain washing. **NO ONE** deserves to be raped, same as no one deserves to be abused as a child or an adult.

Males **CAN** freeze when afraid and can thus be totally unable to protect themselves. This is especially true when been raped and afraid for your life, just as it is when you are young and been abused. It does **NOT** matter if the rest of the time you get into fights and usually win, when you are under that much fear it is totally understandable if you froze, and is **NOT** a sign of weakness. Rapists and abusers sometimes use threats or weapons to force a person to cooperate. It is important to bear in mind that cooperation does not mean consent. Sometimes cooperating with a rapist is essential to survive the situation. If you are sexually assaulted or raped, it is never your fault - you are not accountable for the actions of others.

Male rape can causes problems to do with sexuality. It is almost inevitable that on having a penis inserted into the rectum, that the victim would gain an erection. This is caused purely by an automatic reaction of the body, due to stimulation of the prostate gland, and the male "G" spot. Even if the victim ejaculates, it is only to be expected. Irrespective of being heterosexual, bisexual or gay, it should not be taken to mean that you enjoyed the experience.

Getting an erection is one of the main reasons that male rape goes unreported so often. If the victim is heterosexual, they fear that they will be accused of being gay. If the victim is gay, they think getting an erection will be taken as them "asking for it". Either way, getting an erection can be a cause of shame to many males who are raped, and do not understand that ***it is purely the way the human body is designed.*** However, most Police stations (in the UK) now have a Victim Liaison Officer, who is used to dealing with abused or raped people, and is trained to be sensitive to the needs of the victim. Now that male rape is accepted in law as rape, rather than assault, males now have the same protection in court as females in having their names protected (in the UK).

Many men, unfortunately, find it easier to blame themselves than accept that they could be overpowered and raped. Men are taught from an early age that they should be strong and able to protect themselves. Unfortunately, that is as much a myth as Father Christmas, but we all believed in him when we were young. The shame and guilt is similar to that of childhood sexual abuse, and often a survivor of childhood sexual abuse will find they seem to find themselves in situations where they are re-victimized in later life.

http://www.aest.org.uk/survivors/male/male_on_male_rape.html

Male Survivors of Sexual Assault

Rape is a men's issue for many reasons. One we don't often talk about is the fact that boys and men are sexually assaulted. We need to start recognizing the presence of male survivors and acknowledging their unique experience. The following questions and answers can help us all learn about male survivors so that we stop treating them as invisible and start helping them to heal:

- How often men are sexually assaulted?
While the numbers vary from study to study, most research suggests that 10-20 percent of all males will be sexually violated at some point in their lifetimes. That translates into tens of thousands of boys and men assaulted each year alongside hundreds of thousands of girls and women.
- If there are so many male survivors, why don't I know any?
Like female survivors, most male survivors never report being assaulted, even to people they know and trust. They fear being ignored, laughed at, disbelieved, shamed, accused of weakness, or questioned about being gay. Perhaps worst of all, men fear being blamed for the assault because they were not "man enough" to protect themselves in the face of an attack. For all these reasons, many male survivors remain silent and alone rather than risk further violation by those around them.
- Can a woman sexually assault a man?
Yes, but it's not nearly as common as male-on-male assault. A recent study shows that more than 86% of male survivors are sexually abused by another male. That is not to say, however, that we should overlook boys or men who are victimized by females. It may be tempting to dismiss such experiences as wanted sexual initiation (especially in the case of an older female assaulting a younger male), but the reality is that the impact of female-on-male assault can be just as damaging.
- Don't only men in prison get raped?
While prison rape is a serious problem and a serious crime, many male survivors are assaulted in everyday environments (at parties, at home, at church, at school, on the playground), often by people they know -- friends, teammates, relatives, teachers, clergy, bosses, partners. As with female survivors, men are also sometimes raped by strangers. These situations tend to be more violent and more often involve a group of attackers rather than a single offender. As with female rape, drugs are sometimes used to incapacitate male victims of sexual assault.
- How does rape affect men differently from women?
Rape affects men in many ways similar to women. Anxiety, anger, sadness, confusion, fear, numbness, self-blame, helplessness, hopelessness, suicidal feelings and shame are common reactions of both male and female survivors. In some ways, though, men react uniquely to being sexually assaulted. Immediately after an assault, men may show more hostility and aggression rather than tearfulness and fear. Over time, they may also question their sexual

identity, act out in a sexually aggressive manner, and even downplay the impact of the assault.

- Don't men who get raped become rapists?
NO! This is a destructive myth that often adds to the anxiety a male survivor feels after being assaulted. Because of this misinformation, it is common for a male survivor to fear that he is now destined to do to others what was done to him. While many convicted sex offenders have a history of being sexually abused, most male survivors do not become offenders. The truth is that the great majority of male survivors have never and will never sexually assault anyone.
- If a man is raped by another man, does it mean he's gay?
NO, again! While gay men can be raped (often by straight men), a man getting raped by another man reflects nothing about his sexual orientation before the assault, nor does it change his sexual orientation afterwards. Rape is primarily prompted by anger or a desire to harm, intimidate or dominate, rather than by sexual attraction or a rapist's assumption about his intended victim's sexual preference. Because of society's confusion about the role that attraction plays in sexual assault and about whether victims are responsible for provoking an assault, even heterosexual male survivors may worry that they somehow gave off "gay vibes" that the rapist picked up and acted upon. For a gay man, especially one who is not yet out of the closet, the possibility that he is broadcasting his "secret sexual identity" to others without even knowing it can be particularly upsetting.
- How should I respond if a man I know tells me he has been assaulted?
While there may be some differences in how rape impacts a male versus a female survivor of sexual assault, the basics of supporting survivors are the same for men as for women. Believe him. Know what your community's resources are and help him explore his options. Don't push and don't blame. Ask him what he wants and listen. Be cautious about physical contact until he's ready. Get help for yourself.
- Where can male survivors go for help?
See Sexual Assault/Rape: Campus and Community Resources.

PLACE HOLDER - The Male Experience of Sexual Violence (PDF)

PLACE HOLDER - The Psychological Impact of Sexual Abuse: Content Analysis Interviews with Male Survivors by David Lisak (PDF)