



# Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Toolkit

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Information about options for getting help, resources, and services

Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) and Advocacy Services  
The Fontaine Center of UGA University Health Center  
55 Carlton Street  
Athens, Georgia 30602  
[www.uhs.uga.edu/rsvp](http://www.uhs.uga.edu/rsvp)

*Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm  
Confidential Hotline and On-Call Advocacy 24/7*

24-hour Advocacy and Support Hotline: (706) 542-SAFE (7233)  
RSVP Outreach and Education: (706) 542-8690

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Dear Dawgs,

Here you will find information regarding resources and support available for students at the University of Georgia who have been impacted by interpersonal violence. Interpersonal violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual violence, physical assault, emotional abuse, stalking, harassment, or dating/roommate/family violence. We have compiled this toolkit as a resource for anyone who is wanting to learn more about Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP). For those who are accessing this guide in an effort to be more informed about the resources available to students at the University of Georgia, we want to thank you for your support and willingness to learn. If you are here because you care about someone who has been affected by violence, we appreciate you being involved and wanting to help.

If you have been impacted by any sort of interpersonal violence, we thank you for your courage to seek help and support during this time. It is common to feel overwhelmed after a trauma, so we hope that this information will help you find what you need when you need it or are ready to get help. During this time, you may be feeling a variety of emotions and you may be given a variety of suggestions by others about how to handle them. Please know that these are your decisions, and that there are many different ways of coping with what has happened to you. The RSVP team at the University Health Center will be here to support you when you are ready. An advocate is available to speak with you if you would like to discuss options and resources, or if you have specific questions or concerns in navigating this process.

Here at RSVP, we use the term survivor to address an individual who has been impacted by interpersonal violence. While some may refer to this person as a victim, we use the word survivor because it is empowering and it indicates a person who endured a traumatic experience and survived. This toolkit will provide guidance in how to be an ally of survivors of sexual violence, what resources are available to them, how to navigate friendships with accused perpetrators, and even ways for RSVP to work with your department/group/chapter to create trainings specific to your needs.

For more information, please feel free to call us 24-hours a day at (706) 542-SAFE (7233) to speak with an advocate. Services at RSVP are free and confidential.

Sincerely,

The RSVP Team

## Available Support: What RSVP Provides for Survivors

Our services are free and confidential for any UGA student. If you are unsure of what to do or with whom to talk about your situation, RSVP is a great place to start! We provide an unbiased approach to explaining your options, providing referrals for other needed care, and assisting you through whatever you may choose is best for yourself – even if that is to take no action at all. You are in control of your decisions and we are here to support you.

### RSVP services include:

- Crisis Intervention
- Emotional Support
- Accompaniment
- Reporting Options
- Academic Assistance
- Housing Assistance
- Legal Assistance
- Safety Planning
- Medical Services
- Education and Outreach

### 24-Hour Support and Crisis Intervention

RSVP offers UGA students a 24-hour hotline for support and crisis intervention at whatever time you need it most. If you have just experienced an assault, we can walk you through your options via phone and arrange to meet with you in person. If you are having nightmares or distress in the middle of the night related to interpersonal violence, we're here to talk you through it. If you aren't sure what you need, call us and we can help you figure out next steps.

### 24-Hour On-Call Advocacy

If you have recently experienced an assault or need in-person support and advocacy, our specially trained on-call advocates are there for you. RSVP on-call advocates can be reached by calling the RSVP Hotline any time of day or night to meet you at an emergency room or other location, to accompany you for a forensic evidence collection exam, or to report to a police agency.

### Free and Confidential Counseling

RSVP has trained therapists who can provide trauma-focused counseling to survivors of interpersonal violence and sexual assault. This service is free and confidential. Survivors who would prefer services outside of UGA can be referred to trusted providers to best serve their needs.

## **Counseling Referrals**

RSVP Advocates will discuss counseling options for survivors of interpersonal violence and sexual assault. There are several counseling options both on- and off-campus and at varying costs, including counseling at no cost to the survivor. We are happy to assist the survivor in this process at any point along their recovery journey.

## **Medical Advocacy and Referral**

RSVP Advocates are able to discuss options for medical treatment such as testing for sexually transmitted infections and treatment options, including where you can access these services both on- and off-campus. We can also discuss approximate costs for testing and treatment to help you figure out the best plan of action for yourself. RSVP is able to assist with maintaining confidentiality by helping navigate the costs associated with some medical services. An RSVP Advocate can also help determine if a Sexual Assault Nurse Examination (SANE) is something that might be right for you.

## **Reporting Options and Legal Advocacy**

Survivors have a variety of options for reporting and obtaining legal assistance. RSVP Advocates discuss reporting options with the survivor, along with the pros and cons of each option. Our job is to ensure transparency for the survivor about what the reporting process looks like to help the survivor determine the decision that's best for them. RSVP will never pressure a student to make any type of report as we find it important for the survivors to do what will be best for them and their healing process. When a student does decide to report, an RSVP advocate is available to attend any meetings with police, investigators or court personnel, if the survivor requests

## **Additional Assistance**

Safety planning, housing assistance, and academic support are also available for survivors. Call the RSVP hotline to speak with an advocate to discuss which options would help you with your current situation.

## Immediate Concerns After Violence

After an assault, the most immediate concern may be safety, followed by the need for medical care.

### Safety

If possible, leave your attacker and get to a place of safety to call 911. If you are not sure where you are, take note of surroundings for landmarks or street signs. If at a residence, you may be able to locate a piece of mail that has the address.

### Emergency Medical Attention

Even if you don't see or feel physical injuries, we encourage you to go to an Emergency Room, the University Health Center, or another medical facility to check for injuries. What may feel like minor aches and pains from an assault may be difficult to distinguish from a serious injury especially when you may be in shock

If you have been sexually assaulted, you may also want to get information about risks regarding sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and, pregnancy. Most emergency rooms, the University Health Center, and SANE nurses can provide preventive medicines for STIs and emergency contraception. You have the right to receive these medicines, even if you choose not to file a police report or have an evidence collection exam. It may be too early to test for infections and pregnancy, but typically you will be advised to follow up for testing within a few weeks. RSVP advocates can assist with all scheduling and arranging services for follow up care.

*\*Saint Mary's Hospital in Athens, Georgia does not dispense emergency contraception, but you may purchase it over-the-counter at a nearby pharmacy.*

### Evidence Collection

Many survivors have not yet decided whether or not to report to police, but would like the option of collecting evidence in the chance they decide later to make a report. **Evidence can be stored anonymously for up to 2 years after the exam**, during which time the survivor has the option to make a formal report. Call the RSVP hotline (706-542-7233) for further information regarding immediate concerns and what next steps are available to you.

If you think there is even a remote chance that you will pursue legal action for a sexual assault **and** the assault occurred within the past 120 hours, we recommend that you get in touch with a RSVP advocate as soon as possible to request a forensic evidence collection exam. Forensic evidence collection exams are free, confidential, and are conducted by specially-trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs). You always have the option of having a RSVP advocate with you during the exam or they can wait outside the room until your exam is complete. If the emergency room staff does not immediately offer a RSVP advocate to you, you can request one.

## Providing Support: Being There for a Survivor

If someone who has experienced sexual assault or interpersonal violence chooses to tell someone about their experience, a majority of students will disclose to a close friend first. The support a survivor receives in the aftermath can make all of the difference in their recovery and healing. If you have a friend who has trusted you by sharing what happened to them, here are some things to keep in mind.

1. **Stay calm.**
2. **Avoid victim blaming.**
3. **Believe them.**
4. **Listen.**
5. **Validate their feelings**
6. **Let them take the lead.**
7. **Get help for yourself.**

It can be a very difficult experience when someone discloses a sexual assault or rape. However, knowing how you can be supportive can be critical in a survivor's healing process. The key to helping a friend or someone you know who has been sexually assaulted is to be informed on how you can support the survivor and the importance of taking care of yourself.

According to the CDC, over half of women and almost one in three men have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetimes. Find out more about the statistics here (<https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/about/index.html>). Sexual violence is prevalent among college students – young adults between ages 18-34 experiencing the highest risk for sexual assault and interpersonal violence, accounting for 54% of all cases reported (RAINN, 2022) .

### What Should I Do (and Not Do)?

#### Start by believing the survivor.

- Make the environment comfortable.
- Acknowledge that revealing this personal and devastating experience takes a great deal of strength and courage. Remember that **NO ONE DESERVES TO BE ASSAULTED**. Remind the survivor that the assault was not their fault and they did not do anything to “cause” it.

#### Be a good listener.

Recovering from a sexual assault can take a long time. The survivor may need your support now and in the future. Let the survivor choose when they want to talk and how much they want to share. Sometimes the survivor may not want to talk at all. When the survivor does choose to talk to you, the following are things to keep in mind. **Allow them to talk** as much or as little as they need.

- DO concentrate on understanding the survivor's feelings
- DO allow silences
- DO let the survivor know you are glad they told you
- DON'T interrogate or ask for specific details about the sexual assault
- DON'T ask “why” questions such as “why did you go there?”, “are you sure?” or “why didn't you scream?”
- DON'T tell them what you would have done or what they should have done or what you think they NEED to do now.

**Encourage** the survivor to seek counseling and post-trauma services. **Find your own support. As a secondary survivor, you may also be affected.** If you would like to speak with someone on campus about being a secondary survivor, contact RSVP at 706-542-SAFE (7233).

**Be willing to say nothing.** If you don't know what to say, that's okay. The most powerful statement a friend can make is by simply being there, not trying to fix everything or pretending it's okay. **Silence often says more than words.**

Don't assume they do/do not want to be touched. Some people can't stand a hug at this point and need space. Others might need to be held by a loved one more than anything else right now.

Don't try to solve all of their problems for them. They have had their control taken away during this experience and it is important to avoid doing that again.

**Don't assume you know how the survivor feels.** Making statements such as "it's ok" or "you're going to be fine" may serve to minimize the survivor's feelings and downplay the seriousness of the violence. Even if you have had a similar experience in the past, keep in mind that this might not be the time to bring that up.

Don't allow assumptions or myths to affect how you perceive the survivor.

### What Do I Say?

It can be hard to know what to do to help a friend or family member who is a survivor of sexual violence.

#### **What to say to a survivor:**

1. I'm sorry this happened to you.
2. I'm concerned about you.
3. It wasn't your fault.
4. Thank you for telling me.
5. There are people who can help you.
6. Can I do anything for you?

#### **What NEVER to say to a survivor:**

- It was your fault.
- You could have avoided it had you \_\_\_\_\_.
- It's been so long! Get over it!
- You wanted it. / You were asking for it.
- I don't believe you.
- It's not that big of deal; it happens to lots of people.



## Understanding Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships are based on shared values, mutual respect, honesty, equality, fairness, and open communication. No one deserves anything less than that, and no one has the right to treat someone in ways that are less than that. They may or may not involve sexual activity. If partners choose to engage in sexual activity, it must be consensual.

Sexual activity should also be free of coercion, meaning someone is not making you feel obligated or forced to do something you don't want to do. By definition, sexual coercion is "the act of using pressure, alcohol or drugs, or force to have sexual contact with someone against his or her will" and includes "persistent attempts to have sexual contact with someone who has already refused."

In a healthy relationship, you should be comfortable speaking up if something is bothering you knowing you are able to come to a compromise if there is a disagreement. There is also respect for your partner and their privacy. It is important that each person is able to function as both an individual and as part of the couple. Having boundaries and a sense of independence allows each person to be themselves within the relationship, reducing the dependence on each other.

**Mutual Respect** — Listening to one another's ideas; treating each other well; supporting and being proud of each other; understanding each other's boundaries

**Trust** — Having faith in each other's decisions; understanding and accepting each other's need to have independent activities

**Honesty** — Telling each other the truth without fear; feeling that you can truly be yourself

**Equality** — Treating each other as equals; giving and taking equally; making decisions together; compromising or recognizing the other's perspective, even if you do not fully understand it

**Fairness/Forgiveness** — Both admitting when wrong; forgiving and moving past each other's mistakes

**Good Communication** — Talking openly about your feelings, directly expressing needs and wishes; working through disagreements; listening without judgment. *(Adapted from loveisrespect.org)*

It is important to know the difference between healthy and hurting (abusive) behaviors within a dating relationship. If someone is hurting you, there is help available for you. If you are doing the hurting, STOP NOW! You have no right to hurt someone else.

#### **Hurting (Abusive) Behaviors**

Put-downs/insults

Isolation from family and friends

Controlling/authoritative decisions

Intimidation/threats

Extreme jealousy/possessiveness

Stalking behaviors

Physical/sexual abuse

#### **Loving (Healthy) Behaviors**

Respectful words/praise

Encouragement to spend time with others

Partnership/shared decisions

Kindness/safety

Respect for your wishes and feelings

Respect for your privacy and space

Respect for you and your body

**If you would like additional information about healthy relationships or any of the content in this toolkit, RSVP can work with your department/group/organization to create individualized trainings.** RSVP facilitates /co-sponsors interpersonal violence **Prevention, Education and Outreach** programs for the campus community (student groups, professors, Resident Assistants (RAs), and faculty/staff.)

Topics include Trauma-Informed Care, Interpersonal Violence 101, Healthy Relationships, Domestic Violence Escalation, Consent and more. [\*\*Request a program.\*\*](#)

RSVP also provides [\*\*UMatter Bystander Intervention Training\*\*](#) to teach how to recognize and safely intervene in potentially risky situations. [\*\*Request a UMatter program.\*\*](#)  
<https://well-being.uga.edu/program-request/>

## Reporting Options and Rights

**As a survivor of interpersonal violence and sexual assault, you have the right to file a formal report with police or to choose not to file a report.** As a UGA student survivor, you also have the right to request a Title IX investigation from the Equal Opportunity Office (EOO) if your assailant is a member of the UGA community.

**If you are a survivor of interpersonal violence and you are choosing not to report, you are not obligated to speak with a police officer or an EOO investigator unless you choose to do so.** If you do choose to make a report to either police or EOO, you have the right to a RSVP advocate or any other support person of your choosing to accompany you. **Call the RSVP hotline (706-542-7233) to speak with an advocate to learn more about the options available to you.**

### Police

**If the assault happened on UGA's campus** (including other UGA property such as the Vet School), the crime falls within the jurisdiction of the UGA Police Department and they will conduct the investigation.

**If the assault happened off campus but in Athens**, the crime falls within the jurisdiction of the Athens-Clarke County Police Department. **If the assault happened in another county or state**, we can assist you with determining which police department would be responsible for investigating. Legal reporting options and their outcomes vary. Speaking with a RSVP advocate about what this process might look like will help prepare you to make the best decision for yourself.

### Equal Opportunity Office

**If the assault was committed by another person at UGA, such as a student, staff or faculty person, you have the option of having a non-legal investigation conducted by the Equal Opportunity Office (EOO) at UGA.** This investigation is called a Title IX investigation, and is designed to determine if the assailant violated UGA's Non-Discrimination Anti-Harassment policy. To learn more about the NDAH policy, see [www.eoo.uga.edu](http://www.eoo.uga.edu).

### Protective Orders

**Even if a student survivor chooses not to report to the police, they may be eligible for a type of protective order** such as a Temporary Protective Order. Temporary Protective Orders (TPOs) are available for survivors that have had repeated behaviors occur by an individual towards them, whether it be directly or indirectly (texts, calls, social media posts, letters, gifts, etc.). A RSVP advocate can discuss these options with you and help you decide the best course of action based upon your situation.

## University, Community, and National Resources

Resource	How They Can Help	Location	Phone number/Website
<b>RSVP Advocacy and Therapy Services</b>	RSVP provides advocacy for UGA students impacted by sexual violence, dating or family violence, stalking and harassment RSVP also offers trauma therapy for survivors	On-campus at the University Health Center	24-hour crisis line (706) 542-SAFE (7233) <a href="https://healthpromotion.uga.edu/rsvp/">https://healthpromotion.uga.edu/rsvp/</a>
<b>The Cottage</b>	Serves community survivors of sexual violence with advocacy and counseling	Off-campus	24-hour crisis line (877) 363-1912 <a href="https://www.northgeorgiacottage.org/">https://www.northgeorgiacottage.org/</a>
<b>Project Safe</b>	Serves community survivors of domestic, dating or family violence	Off-campus	24-hour crisis line (706) 543-3331 <a href="https://www.project-safe.org/">https://www.project-safe.org/</a>
<b>Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)</b>	Serves UGA students through one-on-one and couples therapy	On-campus at the University Health Center	Mental Health Support (24/7) (706) 542-2273 <a href="https://caps.uga.edu/">https://caps.uga.edu/</a>
<b>ASPIRE Clinic</b>	Serves UGA campus and Athens community members with a variety of counseling options	On-campus through the College of Family and Consumer Sciences	(706) 542-4486 <a href="https://www.fcs.uga.edu/aspireclinic">https://www.fcs.uga.edu/aspireclinic</a>
<b>UGA Psychology Clinic</b>	Serves UGA campus and Athens community members with a variety of counseling options	On-campus at the UGA Psychology Department	(706) 542-1173 <a href="https://psychology.uga.edu/clinic-information">https://psychology.uga.edu/clinic-information</a>
<b>Center for Counseling and Personal Evaluation (CCPE)</b>	Serves UGA campus and Athens community members with a variety of counseling options	On-campus at 424 Aderhold Hall, through the College of Education	(706) 542-8508 <a href="https://coe.uga.edu/directory/counseling-and-personal-evaluation/">https://coe.uga.edu/directory/counseling-and-personal-evaluation/</a>

Resource	About the resource	Contact information
<b>UGA Family Justice Clinic</b>	A free legal resource through the UGA Law School to assist survivors of interpersonal violence. They can aid with protective orders and legal advice.	(706)369-6272 <a href="https://familyjustice.law.uga.edu/">https://familyjustice.law.uga.edu/</a>
<b>Disability Resource Center</b>	Students who develop psychological issues related to interpersonal violence may be eligible for academic accommodations and assistance through the Disability Resource Center.	(706)542-8719 (706)542-8778 tty drc.uga.edu
<b>Ahimsa House</b>	Up to 60 days of confidential emergency shelter for pets while survivors seek safe shelter. Provides basic and emergency vet care.	(404)452-6248 Crisis Line (404)496-4038 General Info <a href="http://www.ahimsahouse.org">www.ahimsahouse.org</a>
<b>Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program</b>	Eases the financial burden faced by victims of violent crimes by covering expenses related to medical bills, mental health counseling, loss of income, and more.	(404) 657-2222 <a href="http://crimevictimscomp.ga.gov/our-programs/victims-compensation/">http://crimevictimscomp.ga.gov/our-programs/victims-compensation/</a>
<b>Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV)</b>	The Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV) envisions a Georgia free of domestic violence. We empower survivors and the programs that serve them, we educate the public, and we advocate for responsive public policy. Our strength is in numbers, as we collaborate throughout Georgia to stop domestic violence.	1-800-334-2836 <a href="https://gcadv.org/">https://gcadv.org/</a>
<b>Love is Respect Text Hotline</b>	Love is Respect is the national resource to disrupt and prevent unhealthy relationships and intimate partner violence by empowering young people through inclusive and equitable education, support, and resources.	Text "loveis" to 22522 <a href="https://www.loveisrespect.org/">https://www.loveisrespect.org/</a>

<p><b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b></p>	<p>24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, the National Domestic Violence Hotline provides essential tools and support to help survivors of domestic violence so they can live their lives free of abuse.</p> <p>Contacts to The Hotline can expect highly-trained, expert advocates to offer free, confidential, and compassionate support, crisis intervention information, education, and referral services in over 200 languages.</p>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)  <a href="https://www.thehotline.org/">https://www.thehotline.org/</a>  Text "start" to 88788</p>
<p><b>RAINN (Rape, Abuse &amp; Incest National Network)</b></p>	<p>RAINN (Rape, Abuse &amp; Incest National Network) is the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. RAINN also carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help survivors, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.</p>	<p>1-800-656-HOPE (4673)  <a href="https://www.rainn.org/">https://www.rainn.org/</a></p>

## Glossary of terms and definitions

**Abuse:** Abuse is a pattern of behaviors used to gain or maintain power and control over an individual — physical violence is just one example of such behavior. Types of abuse include: physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, financial, and digital. Stalking also falls under the category of abuse.

**Advocacy:** Advocates are often considered first responders to survivors of interpersonal violence. An advocate provides immediate crisis intervention and support, information about options available to the survivor, assistance in navigating various systems (legal, medical, Title IX), support for securing housing and safety, and referrals to longer-term care and counseling.

**Assailant / Perpetrator:** Assailant and perpetrator are used interchangeably in this guide. These terms refer to the person who committed the violence against the survivor. Other groups may refer to this person differently, such as in an EOO investigation where the assailant is referred to as the “respondent” and in a criminal case this person is referred to as the “defendant”.

**Coercion:** Coercion is the use of an unreasonable amount of pressure to gain sexual access. Coercion is more than an effort to persuade, entice, or attract another person to have sex. When a person makes clear a decision not to participate in a particular form of sexual contact or sexual intercourse, continued pressure can be considered coercion.

**Consent:** Consent is an ongoing process of discussing boundaries and what you’re comfortable with - it is an agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity. Consent should be clearly and freely communicated. A verbal and affirmative expression of consent can help both you and your partner to understand and respect each other’s boundaries. Consent cannot be given by individuals who are underage, intoxicated or incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, or asleep or unconscious. If someone agrees to an activity under pressure of intimidation or threat, that isn’t considered consent because it was not given freely. Without consent, any sexual activity is considered sexual assault or rape.

**Counseling:** a process whereby specially trained individuals work with others individually and/or in groups to address and resolve personal and interpersonal issues by using active listening, goal setting and behavior change, and by teaching new skills and problem-solving.

**Harassment:** Harassment refers to words or behavior that threatens, intimidates, or demeans a person. Harassment is unwanted, uninvited, and unwelcome and causes nuisance, alarm, or substantial emotional distress without any legitimate purpose. It becomes sexual harassment when the behavior includes unwelcome conduct such as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or dates, remarks about an individual’s appearance, discussions, remarks or jokes of a sexual nature, and/or other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

**Hazing:** Hazing is defined as any intentional, negligent or reckless action, activity or situation that causes another pain, embarrassment, ridicule or harassment, regardless of the individual’s willingness to participate. More information about this can be found in the University of Georgia’s [Code of Conduct](#).

**Incapacitation:** Incapacitation is a state beyond drunkenness, intoxication, or consciousness where an individual is unable to give consent. Typical signs include slurred speech, unsteady gait, combativeness,

emotional volatility, vomiting, or incontinence. It may not always be obvious when someone has reached that point of incapacitation.

**Interpersonal Violence:** According to the CDC, interpersonal violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. We use the term interpersonal violence to encompass sexual violence, dating or family violence, stalking and harassment. Although it is not as widely discussed, other examples of interpersonal violence can include (but is not limited to) family, friends, acquaintances, roommates, or coworkers.

**Rape:** In Georgia, a man commits the crime of rape having sexual intercourse with a woman by force and against the woman's will. A man also commits the crime of rape by having sex with a girl under the age of ten (Ga. Code Ann. § 16-6-1.). The FBI Uniform Crime Report (UCR) revised its definition of rape and it is "penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim. Attempts or assaults to commit rape are also included in the statistics presented here; however, statutory rape and incest are excluded". This federal definition of rape is used for statistical purposes but the definition of rape varies by state and definition.

**SANE:** This term can refer to both a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, which is the specially trained nurse who conducts a forensic evidence collection exam, as well as the Sexual Assault Nurse Examination, which is the evidence collection exam itself. Usually when using this term, an advocate is referring to the exam.

**Sexual Assault / Sexual Violence:** Sexual violence encompasses all sexual acts that are committed without someone's consent. These can include unwanted sexual touching, kissing, oral penetration, anal penetration, and vaginal penetration. Also included is any sexual contact with someone under the age of 16 (legal age of consent in Georgia). Sexual assault another umbrella term for sexual violence, and these terms are used interchangeably in this guide.

**Sexual Battery:** Under Georgia law, a person commits the crime of sexual battery by making physical contact with the intimate part (genitals, buttocks, or a woman's breasts) of another person's body without the consent of the other person. (Ga. Code Ann. § 16-6-22.1.)

**Sexual coercion:** Sexual coercion is unwanted sexual activity that happens when you are pressured, tricked, threatened, or forced in a nonphysical way. Coercion can make you think you owe sex to someone. It might be from someone who has power over you, like a teacher, landlord, or a boss. No person is ever required to have sex with someone else.

**Sexual exploitation/extortion:** Sexual Exploitation refers to taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for one's own advantage or benefit, or for the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited. Sexual extortion is when someone threatens to distribute your private and sensitive material if you don't provide them images of a sexual nature, sexual favors, or money. The perpetrator may also threaten to harm your friends or relatives by using information they have obtained from your electronic devices unless you comply with their demands.



**Sodomy and Aggravated Sexual Battery:** Under Georgia's law, a person commits the crime of aggravated sodomy by having oral or anal sex with another person by force and without the other person's consent (Ga. Code Ann. § 16-6-2.). A person commits the crime of aggravated sexual battery by penetrating a person's genitals or anus with a foreign object (anything other than a penis) without the person's consent (Ga. Code Ann. § 16-6-2.22.) For example, placing a finger in a woman's vagina against her will is aggravated sexual battery.

**Stalking:** According to the National Institute of Justice, stalking is a crime of power and control. Stalking is conservatively defined as "a course of conduct directed at a specific person that involves repeated (two or more occasions) visual or physical proximity, nonconsensual communication, or verbal, written, or implied threats, or a combination thereof, that would cause a reasonable person fear." Stalking behaviors also may include persistent patterns of leaving or sending the victim unwanted items or presents that may range from seemingly romantic to bizarre; following or lying in wait for the victim; damaging or threatening to damage the victim's property; defaming the victim's character; or harassing the victim via the Internet by posting personal information or spreading rumors about the victim. Individuals between the ages of 18-24 experience the highest rates of stalking among adults.

**Survivor:** A survivor is an individual who has been impacted by interpersonal violence. While some may refer to this person as a victim, we use the word survivor because it is empowering and it indicates a person who endured a traumatic experience and survived.

**Trauma:** Trauma begins when an event or experience overwhelms normal coping mechanisms. Events are traumatic not because they are rare, but because they overwhelm our normal coping responses. An individual's normal coping responses provide a sense of control, connection, meaning, and safety.

**Trauma response:** Trauma responses are different for everyone and there is no right or wrong way to respond to sexual trauma or abuse. Some initial and ongoing reactions can include: anxiety, fear, depression, physical pain, chronic pain, flashbacks, intrusive and distressing memories of the violence, disorientation and difficulty concentrating, self-blame, guilt, and shame, "shutting down", dissociation, avoidance, or emotional numbing.

**Victim Blaming:** Victim blaming is a devaluing act where the victim of a crime, an accident, or any type of abusive maltreatment is held as wholly or partially responsible for the wrongful conduct committed against them. The only person who is responsible and should be held accountable for a sexual assault, is the person who chooses to commit sexual assault. Victim blaming occurs at a disproportionate rate in sexual assault, especially when compared to other crimes. We rarely disparage victims of other types of crime in the same way.