

Support When You Need it



Mt. Graham Safe House offers a comprehensive list of services to victims of domestic our sexual violence and stalking. All services are available to residential and community clients and their children. Mobile advocates can respond to the location of the victim safety permitting.

Crisis services are available 24 hours a day.

It is not your fault.

No means no.

A person under
the influence
cannot consent.

I believe you

Mt. Graham
Safe House

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**Mt. Graham
Safe House**

**When Someone
You Love has
been Sexually
Assaulted**



1-888-269-9104

Sexual Assault

Hearing the News

You get a call from your friend or loved one telling you they have been sexually assaulted. What do you do now? How should you react? You are in shock. You may not know what you should say or do. You probably have mixed emotions, anger, disbelief, sadness, fear. You may feel nothing at all.

It's OK! There is no right or wrong way to feel when you hear this life changing news. It is a difficult time for both you and your loved one and what happens next, your response, can make a big difference for your friend.

Sexual assault is a violent crime and it cuts deep into the victims sense of self, right to the core. It can steal the feeling of dignity, safety and be absolutely devastating to the victim.

The first and most important thing you can do for your friend?

START BY BELIEVING

Why they May not Tell

Many survivors of rape are not believed. They may be blamed or shamed for the crime that was committed against them. They may feel "guilty" or responsible somehow for the crime. Fears like this are real and if your friend is not ready to report the crime to the police, that is their choice. You can provide support and let them know they are not alone. Being well informed of their options is all the better.

Who can be a Victim

Anyone! Any sex, any gender.

Society may have the notion that only women can be sexually assaulted it simply isn't true. Men, women, transgender people, LGBTQ, anyone can be assaulted.

Who can be a Perpetrator

Anyone! Any sex, any gender.

Again popular opinion may say that all rapists are male. But anyone can be a perpetrator including women, men, transgender or LGBTQ.

If they do want to Press Charges

Within 72 hours of the assault evidence may still be on your friend's body that the police can use to prosecute the perpetrator of the assault. So for practical purposes if they want to prosecute or may want to in the future your friend should take some steps to assist in gathering and preserving the evidence.

They should not shower/bathe, brush their teeth, chew gum, eat, drink, smoke, use the restroom or change their clothing. They may bring other items such as condom used or sheets to the emergency room if they wish.

If your friend has already done these things evidence may still be there and they should not do them anymore until it is collected.

When evidence is being collected your friend may feel violated all over again. Swabs may be taken from any area there may be evidence. Clothing may be taken as evidence. Pubic hair may be combed, and flued collected. This process can take awhile but is important for successful prosecution.

Providing Support

Listen, be silent really hear what your friend is saying.

Remind them it is not their fault.

Try not to ask questions, just let them talk.

Honor their choice regarding next steps.

Offer resources.

Take care of yourself.

What not to do

Never ask the following:

What were you wearing?

Did you lead them on?

Were you drunk?

Were you flirting?

Did you fight back?

Are you lying?

Resources and Options

Your friend can seek medical care at local emergency rooms. If they do not wish police involvement they can report they have had unprotected sex and still be checked for possible STD and prevent possible pregnancy if they wish.

They can report to the police or not.

They can speak with an advocate from MGSB this is a no charge service, MGSB does not report to the police and an advocate can come to the victim at their location.

If they choose advocacy services the advocate can stay with your friend throughout the processes they may choose to participate in including ER and police visits.