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| **Judicial System**  This may be your first involvement with law enforcement or the judicial system. It is very common for people to expect what they have seen on television or movies to apply to their current circumstances. Unfortunately, these expectations are often unrealistic or a distorted snapshot of how things truly operate.  There are laws and regulations in place aimed at protecting victims. For cases involving prosecution, court advocates may be available to provide information, education, and support that will help reduce your fears and uncertainties (e.g., discussing what to expect when you go to court).  Education and information about how the judicial system works, your rights, and your role can help you navigate these processes.  **Benefits of Counseling**  Some benefits to seeking counseling:   * Coping skills and strategies can help you to continue daily activities and relationships. * Establishing a support network can help to decrease the negative physical, psychological, and emotional effects that often result from traumatic experiences. * In a confidential setting, you can discuss topics such as:   + Safety planning and options for the future.   + The event and how it made you feel.   + Legal and judicial decisions. | |  | | --- | | **Who Can Help?**  [*Agency*] Victim Services can assist you with information regarding victims’ rights, Crime Victim Compensation, case status, navigation of the criminal justice system, and referrals to the appropriate community resources or helping professionals or organizations according to your specific needs.  **Resources**  Local Resources  [*Insert state Crime Victims’ Compensation information*]  [*Insert other relevant local resources*]  National Resources  **Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE)**  1-877-894-8463  [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com)    **Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN)**  1-800-656-HOPE (4673)  [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)  **Women’s Law**  [www.womenslaw.org](http://www.womenslaw.org)    **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network**  [www.nctsn.org](https://www.nctsn.org/)    This publication was produced under [*Grant Number*] awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this draft publication are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.  [*Revision Date*] | | |  | | --- | | **Teens and**  **Sexual Assault**  **[*Agency*] Victim**  **Adult Grief and Loss**  **Adult Grief and Loss**  **Services**  **[*address*]**  **[*phone number*]**  **[*Insert Agency logo*]**  **[insert Agency logo]**  **[insert Agency logo]**  **[insert Agency logo]**  Name/ID Number:  Direct Number: | |
| **Sexual Assault**  **Sexual assault** refers to all sexual violence crimes or crimes of a sexual nature. Sexual assault can happen to people of all genders and sexual orientations.  **Rape** is defined by the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports as “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.”1 Rape can be committed by an acquaintance/non-stranger, stranger, spouse/partner, or multiple people at once.  **Age of consent** refers to the age at which a person is considered legally able to consent to sexual acts. This age can vary by state.  **Consent** is the permission given for something to happen. When discussing sexual assault, that “something” refers to a sexual act.  **Age of Consent**  **Age of Consent for Sexual Activity**  [*List and describe the ages of consent in your jurisdiction*]  **Advocacy, Counseling, & Medical Treatment**  **At *[list age]*, you can access:**  [*List state-specific services that are accessible to victims – see below for examples*]   * Advocacy and counseling for physical or sexual abuse. * Medical and psychiatric exams if abuse is suspected. * Health care, including testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections/diseases (such as HIV/AIDS) and pregnancy-related health care (excluding abortion). * Contraceptives— including emergency contraceptives (which does not cause an abortion, instead it stops a pregnancy from starting).   **16 years of age:**   * Can refuse a sexual assault forensic exam (even when parents/guardians request one) | * Can consent or refuse medical care from a physician or mental health care provider without parental/guardian knowledge (if the minor is living independently).   **\*Although you can consent to health care without parental/guardian knowledge as a minor, parents can still request medical/counseling records.\***  **18 years of age:**   * Can consent to all medical care from a physician and mental health care provider without parental/guardian knowledge or consent. * Can seek an abortion.   **What’s Next?**  If you’ve been sexually assaulted, remember that it’s okay to have fears or worries about what will happen next. It’s also okay to ask questions.  You may be asked to talk to many people after an assault. It’s important to remember that your thoughts, feelings, and choices matter.  **Some things you may want to focus on:**   * + Identify a support system.   This may be your family, friends, a counselor at school, and/or someone who is completely removed from the situation. It’s important to surround yourself with trusted people even though you may feel tempted to pretend that nothing happened.   * Address health concerns   Consider meeting with a medical professional. This may include a medical forensic exam—this exam is a place for you to ask questions about your health. It’s also a process during which evidence of the assault is collected. You may also need additional follow-up medical appointments.   * Prepare for the investigative process.   This will involve talking with an investigator or someone who is specially trained in speaking with young people. It may be difficult to talk about what happened. Someone from [*Agency*] Victim Services can help answer your questions about the investigative process and what you can expect. It may also help to talk to a counselor or therapist during this process for added support. | * Take care of yourself.   Try your best to get plenty of sleep, eat well, avoid alcohol/drug use, and participate in as much of your normal routine as possible.  **Safety Concerns**  You can apply for a protection order to seek protection from the person who harmed you.1 This application process can feel overwhelming and lengthy, so it is helpful to have someone with you if you apply for one.  [*Describe jurisdiction-specific process*]  Stay-away plans can also be put into place at school if you have safety concerns with anyone you go to class or activities with.  **What if I Am Pregnant?**  This is a natural concern after experiencing a sexual assault. If you are pregnant, it’s important to know you have choices.   * Parents/guardians are responsible for you until you turn 18. This includes decisions related to your health, where you live, and your overall well-being.2 * If you are pregnant, you have a legal right to choose to parent your baby or make an adoption plan.3 * You can also choose to terminate a pregnancy with the consent of your parent/guardian [*Make State Specific*]. If parent/guardian consent cannot be obtained at least 48 hours before the procedure, your decision to terminate a pregnancy will require a legal process called judicial bypass.4   Considering your options under these circumstances can be extremely difficult and feel overwhelming. It may be helpful to seek out additional support. [*Agency*] Victim Services can help connect you with resources that can help.  *1, 2, 3, 4* [*All agencies are encouraged to update this information based on their state statutes. Formatting of this template may need to be adjusted based upon the amount of jurisdiction-specific information included.*] |