

SaferCommunity

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HARM

Sexual harm, including sexual assault and harassment, can happen to anyone, and can happen anywhere. Sexual harm is against the law in Australia. Everyone has the right to feel safe. If you or someone you know experiences sexual harm you can seek support.

What is Sexual Harm?

Sexual harm is any behaviour of a sexual nature that makes someone feel uncomfortable, frightened, intimidated, threatened or coerced, or occurs without consent, including sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment and other sexual behaviours.

Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behaviour that occurs without the consent of the recipient. Consent means a person freely (without coercion, force, intimidation or any other means) agrees to the activity.

Examples

- Unwanted touching, hugging or kissing
- Forced viewing of pornographic content or sexual acts
- Public exposure
- Sextortion
- Incest

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that causes a person to feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Examples

- Persistent unwanted sexual advances or requests to go out
- Offensive sexual comments or jokes
- Sexually suggestive behaviour, such as leering or staring

SAFER COMMUNITY

Safer Community provides advice, support and referrals if you witness or experience unacceptable or concerning behaviour.

P: 03 9479 8988

E: safercommunity@latrobe.edu.au

W: latrobe.edu.au/safercommunity

Offices: Bundoora PE level 2, Bendigo SSC

Myths and facts about sexual assault

Myth: Only women can be sexually assaulted.

Fact: Anyone, men included, can be sexually assaulted. The offender can also be any gender, and of any sexual orientation.

Myth: Most rapists are strangers.

Fact: Most offenders are known to the victim.

Myth: It's not sexual assault if you're a couple.

Fact: Unwanted sexual activity in any relationship is assault.

Myth: If you're drunk or wearing sexy clothing, you're partly responsible.

Fact: Sexual assault survivors are never, under any circumstances, responsible for somebody choosing to assault them.



Impact of sexual harm

Sexual harm is a traumatic experience. Everyone reacts differently to sexual harm. All of the following responses are normal:

- Shock and denial
- Fear
- Silence and isolation
- Anxiety and depression
- Guilt and blame
- Low self-esteem
- Nightmares and flashbacks

What to do if you or someone you know experiences sexual harm

Immediate assistance

If you or someone you know is unsafe or needs immediate assistance, for example if you are hurt or injured, call for help as soon as you can.

- On campus: Security 9479 2222 (24/7)
- Off campus: Police & Ambulance 000

Physical evidence: you may have physical evidence on you (e.g. hair, saliva, or semen), it is important to maintain evidence where possible.

Medical attention: you should seek medical assistance to treat any injuries, and screen for STIs or pregnancy.

Report

Report your concerns or an incident of sexual assault and harassment. You will receive confidential advice and assistance about your options, as well as referrals to support services.

- On campus: Safer Community, phone, email, visit our office or report online (see Support and Referrals)
- Off campus: Victoria Police, Sexual Offence and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (SOCIT) find online at www.police.vic.gov.au

ANONYMOUS REPORTING

You can make an anonymous report to Safer Community using our online reporting form or call us from a blocked phone number. If it is possible to speak with you, we will provide advice about your safety and support options and referrals.

If we can't contact you back, our ability to respond may be limited, however we will keep a confidential record of your report.

KEY FACTS

- 1 in 5 women and 1 in 10 men are sexually assaulted in their life
- 90% of sexual assaults occur without injury
- 70% of perpetrators are known e.g. family, friend, or colleague
- 60% of sexual assaults occur in the home, car or workplace of either person
- 17% of sexual assaults are reported to Police
- Only 2% of reports are false

If you feel uncomfortable reporting, talk to a trusted friend or family member. Ask them to help you make contact or go with you to report.

Control over your report: When you report to Safer Community you have control over the action we take. However, there may be situations (when yours or others safety is at risk) where we need to act. We will discuss this with you, and we will not take any action without your knowledge.

Seek advice and support

Seek free and confidential counselling support. Sexual assault and harassment can be traumatic, so your usual coping mechanisms might be affected.

Normal and common reactions to sexual harm may feel strange or uncomfortable. Counselling support can assist you to understand and manage these impacts.

- On campus: Student Counselling
www.latrobe.edu.au/counselling
- Off campus: Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) 9635 3610 (business hours) or 1800 806 292 (after hours)

If you feel uncomfortable seeking professional support, talk to a trusted friend or family member and ask them to help you contact a support service.

SUPPORT AND REFERRALS

Immediate assistance

- **Security** 24/7 assistance on campus 9479 2222 at all campuses
- Police or Ambulance call **Triple Zero** 000

Reporting

- **Safer Community** provide confidential advice, support and referrals, call 9479 8988, email safercommunity@latrobe.edu.au or visit www.latrobe.edu.au/safercommunity
- **Victoria Police** Sexual Offence Investigation Team (SOCIT) visit www.police.vic.gov.au

Personal support

- **Student Counselling** offer free personal emotional support, visit www.latrobe.edu.au/counselling
- **La Trobe University Crisis Line** out of hours crisis support call 1300 146 307 or text 0488 884 100
- **Employee Assistance Program** for staff call 1300 687 327 or visit www.intranet.latrobe.edu.au
- **Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA)** specialist sexual assault counselling www.casa.org.au
- **1800 Respect** 24/7 phone and online counselling on 1800 737 732