



5 Things You Need to Know about Campus Sexual Assault

Recently, instances of rape, sexual assault and harassment are at the forefront of our news headlines, with survivors like Olympian Aly Raisman sharing their stories, and movements such as #MeToo gaining momentum. This has even impacted our campus community, with instances like the recent druggings on the Hill. Women today are living on a 'Rape Schedule' - going

about their daily lives assuming they may be sexually assaulted - and are changing their habits in order to try and prevent it. However, this isn't a healthy or normal way to be living. Sexual assault is defined as *'any unwelcome sexual contact, either direct or through clothing, which is committed by threat, force, or without the consent of the other person.'* In Colorado specifically, sexual assault sentences vary based on the violence of the situation and other aggravating or penalty increase factors. College aged men and women are at a higher risk than the general population to be sexually assaulted, so here are 5 things you should know:

1. What is The 'Red Zone'?

This is the period of time in which students are most vulnerable to sexual assault and rape, which is often referred to as the "Red Zone". This is typically defined as the period from when a student first steps foot on campus to Thanksgiving break. Students' unfamiliarity with the campus and lack of social support networks contribute to students' vulnerability during this period. Even after reaching the end of the "Red Zone," though, freshmen and sophomores continue to experience disproportionate rates of sexual violence; at CU, nearly 90% of sexual assaults occur during students freshman and sophomore years. Students can nevertheless experience sexual violence at any point in their college careers.

2. What Are The Statistics?

Over 1 in 4 female CU students (28%) and 1 in 18 males (6%) experience rape or sexual assault as undergraduates on campus. Twenty-one percent of LGBTQ college students have been sexually assaulted, and face increased levels of harassment compared to non-LGBTQ members. The majority of college sexual assaults occur during the fall semester, with 90% of assaults being committed by someone **the victim knows**. Yet, an estimated 54% of assaults go unreported, mostly because survivors are too scared to tell, or they do not believe that the assault was serious enough. *It is important to highlight how violence and sexual harassment do not just take place on college campuses, but can affect us all at any point in our lives. Any form of harassment or assault is serious.*

3. How Often Are False Reports Made?

False reports make up just **2 to 8 percent** of all sexual assault reports. This means that between 92 and 98 percent of the time, the person who reports sexual assault or rape is telling the **truth**. Questions of clothing and alcohol consumption should not matter. If the victim is intoxicated or unconscious, or simply states 'No', then this is **not** consent. We must therefore endeavour to change society's attitude towards survivors of sexual assault, starting by telling survivors that we *Believe Them*.

4. What Are My Rights?

Every student has equal rights and opportunities to obtain the same quality of education. These rights are reinforced through federal law, such as Title IX. Title IX mandates any educational institution receiving federal financial assistance to provide equal benefits on the basis of sex. The federal law has been used to hold schools responsible for any discrimination in all aspects of education, including sexual harassment and assault.

5. What Resources Are Available?

There are many useful resources to turn to in regards of sexual assault. Organizations are there to make you feel comfortable and at ease. It is always a good idea to know your options, even if you have never encountered sexual violence or harassment it is important to be able to support friends.

University of Colorado resources on campus:

- **University of Colorado Boulder Police Department** - Emergency: 911, Non-Emergency: 303-492-6666
- **CAPS:** Counselling and Psychiatric Services <https://www.colorado.edu/counseling/>
- **OVA:** Office of Victim Assistance <https://www.colorado.edu/ova/>
- **OIEC:** Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance <https://www.colorado.edu/oiec/>

Outside Resources:

- **RAINN:** The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network is a telephone hotline that is completely confidential. When you call this hotline, only the first six numbers of your phone number are viewed on the call. (800-656-4673) <https://www.rainn.org/>
- **MESA:** Moving to End Sexual Assault. Located in Boulder with a 24-hour hotline as well as in-person support, victim advocacy, and specialized support groups. (1-844-493-8255) <https://www.mhpcolorado.org/about/services/specialty-moving-to-end-sexual-assault/>
- **NSVRC:** National Sexual Violence Resource Center. Their services can provide you with support contacts, as well as putting you in contact with your local rape crisis centers. <https://www.nsvrc.org/>
- **SARA:** Sexual Assault Response Advocates. They have a hotline number. This is a center for rape crisis and a child advocacy center. (970-867-2121) <http://sarainc.org/programsservices/>
- **SAVA:** Sexual Assault Victim Advocate Center. Located in Fort Collins Colorado. Their goal is to provide crisis intervention to survivors and offer counseling to those affected by sexual (assault. <http://savacenter.org/>

With the #MeToo movement and other campaigns making significant progress in mainstream society, sexual assault and harassment is finally getting the attention it needs. We believe that change is coming. We Believe You.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please email studentsagainstsexualassault18@gmail.com.

*Data specific to University of Colorado Boulder comes from the 2015 Sexual Misconduct Survey carried out by CU's Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance.