

What is CCASA?

Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse

(CCASA) is the primary sexual harassment, sexual abuse and sexual assault crisis, counselling and education service provider for Calgary and the surrounding areas. Our services are available to everyone including people of all colour, race, ability, sexual orientation, religion, education, socio-economic status, or gender.

Our Vision

Healthy communities free of sexual violence, including sexual abuse, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Our Mission

To lead in the provision of specialized sexual violence services and educate communities to shift attitudes and responses to sexual violence.

CCASA offers free and confidential services, including:

- Counselling (Individual and Group)
- CCASA Support and Information Line
- Sexual Assault Response Team (24-Hour Hospital Accompaniment)
- Public Education and Training
- Police and Court Support (PACES)

Arrangements for interpreters available upon request.

CCASA Support & Information Line
9am-9pm – 7 days a week
403-237-5888

Alberta's One Line for Sexual Violence
(Phone/Text) 1-866-403-8000
TTY Line 403-508-7888
Chat www.calgarycasa.com

9am-9pm – 7 days a week

For more information on our programs and services:

Email | info@calgarycasa.com
Business | 403-237-6905

Suite 700, 910 7th Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta T2P 3N8

Thank you to our funders:



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WHAT TO DO

What to do when someone you know has been sexually assaulted



CCASA recognizes that the trauma from sexual violence can be extremely impacting and can affect the person who experienced the sexual violence, their family, friends and support persons.

If someone has been sexually abused or sexually assaulted, they may experience:

- Problems sleeping and eating
- Difficulty feeling safe with others
- Physical symptoms (injuries, nausea, headaches)
- Flashbacks or memories of the sexual assault
- Recurring thoughts (i.e. "what if?" scenarios)
- Anxiety, fears and confusion

If someone has been sexually abused or sexually assaulted, they may feel:

- Shame & helplessness
- Shock
- Guilt & confusion
- Emotionally numb
- Responsible
- Angry

All of these reactions are commonly experienced by individuals who have been impacted by sexual violence.

CCASA provides support and information that can help reduce the isolation that individuals may experience following the sexual violence that was committed against them.

How you can help someone who has been sexually abused or sexually assaulted:

Believe Them

Believe what they tell you and make sure they know what happened is not their fault. Recognize that the person who was sexually assaulted is not to blame. Only the offender(s) should be held responsible for the crime of sexual violence they committed when they chose to hurt another person.

Be Supportive

Sexual assault can be devastating for the person who was sexually assaulted and their families. Respect an individual's physical and emotional boundaries and acknowledge their fears. Time may be required to build up a healthy sense of safety and trust again. Do not pressure them to make decisions, and do not make decisions for them. Support what they decide to do after the assault.

Be Understanding

Understand that if there is a lack of tears or anger this does not mean that they do not feel any emotional trauma. Initial shock is normal and natural and many emotions may take time to surface. Also understand that it is more important to talk about how they are feeling than the details of the assault. Do not try to find a reason for what happened to them. Remember, offenders know what they are doing is wrong and they are making a choice to commit a crime.

Be Encouraging

Offer to help the person who was sexually assaulted figure out their options and connect them to whatever services they request. Avoid pressuring them into doing anything they are not ready to do, even if it is what you think is best for them.

- A natural reaction in response to a crime of sexual assault is anger. If you are experiencing angry feelings, it is important for you to find healthy ways to vent and recognize when to seek support services for yourself. It is also important that you do not direct your anger towards the individual who was sexually assaulted, as the crime committed against them was done by an offender who made the choice to hurt them.
- Sadness over the trauma is also common. However, excessive grieving in front of the person who was sexually assaulted will make them feel responsible for you. Get support for yourself as well.
- Understanding what a person who was sexually assaulted may be feeling does not mean you have to take responsibility for what they may be going through. Do not feel pressure to 'fix' things for them. It is important for you to cope with your feelings around the assault as much as it is important for them to cope with theirs.
- Initially, the person who was sexually assaulted may not want to talk to you or anyone about what they are going through. Do not force care onto them. Be available when they are ready to reach out to you and support them when they choose to access helping resources.
- Just as the person who was sexually assaulted is not responsible for the assault, neither are you. Feelings of sadness, anger, confusion and despair can be intense and emotionally draining. Stay positive and know you too will heal in time.
- Educate yourself about sexual abuse and sexual assault. Visit the CCASA website at calgarycasa.com or call our 24-hour Support and Information Line at 403-237-5888 for more information.

Some facts about sexual assault:

- Sexual assault is a criminal offence.
- Sexual assault is a crime of power and control in which sex is used as the weapon. Sexual violence violates an individual's body, and their sense of safety and control over aspects of their life.
- Most sexual assaults are committed by an offender

who knows and is in contact with that person (Juristat Service Bulletin, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 1994).

- The crime of sexual violence has no boundaries. Any person regardless of age, appearance, race, profession, gender, income, sobriety etc. can experience this crime.