Understanding Sexual Assault/Abuse Definitions and Perpetrators

INTERVENTION

DEFINING SEXUAL ASSAULT or ABUSE

SEXUAL ASSAULT is the term used when an individual over the age of 18 experiences unwanted or forced sexual touching or activity.

SEXUAL ABUSE is used when the victim is a child under the age of 18. Sexual abuse is sometimes also used when referring to adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are victimized.

Examples of sexual assault or abuse include:

- Unwanted touching of any part of the body
- Forced kissing, touching, or other sexual acts
- Removing clothes without asking
- Forcing an individual to look at pornography
- An offender exposing themselves to an individual

If someone touches or forces someone else to participate in a sexual activity they do not want, it is sexual assault or sexual abuse.

PERPETRATORS of SEXUAL ASSAULT or ABUSE

Sexual assault **doesn't always involve violence.** The perpetrator may use force, manipulation, bribes, threats, pressure, or tricks.

Perpetrators of sexual assault are often people who have a **personal relationship with the victim**, such as a husband, wife, partner, family member, provider, or caregiver.

Sometimes strangers sexually assault others, but this is not as common.

Be Safe Ask. Listen. Respect.

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