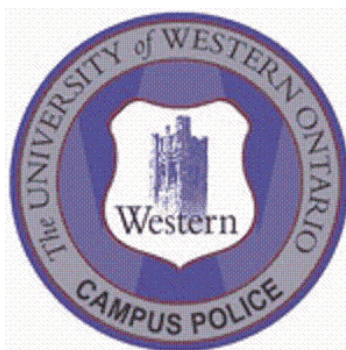


DATING SAFETY



DATING VIOLENCE

What is dating violence?

Dating violence refers to the abuse and/or mistreatment that occurs to an individual in a “dating relationship”. The abuse or mistreatment can involve physical, psychological or unwanted sexual advances. These types of violent activities can be on going and occur over a long period of time, such as physical abuse or it can be a one-time occurrence at the beginning of the relationship, such as a sexual assault or “date rape”.¹

Although dating violence may be experienced by individuals of all ages, research has been focused on young people, including teenagers, college and university students. This research has shown out of 7,800 undergraduate college students across Canada, 28% of females reported to have been a victim of sexual assault or “date rape” in the past 12 months, and 11% of males had admitted that they sexually assaulted a female partner in the same time period¹. Also, out of the students surveyed, an astounding 45% of females reported that they have been sexually abused since leaving high school, and 20% of males reported that they have experienced one incident of sexual assault during the same time¹. Although these numbers are high, experts believe the actual number of victims is much higher, due to victims not coming forward and reporting the assaults. When victims fail to come forward to report the assaults, they are at risk of becoming victims again, and leave the individual who committed the assault a chance to victimize someone else.

Types of Abuses

Physical Abuse – Is the use of force, whether or not it includes a weapon or any degree of injury is suffered. Examples of physical abuse...

- Restraining
- Punching
- Kicking
- Pushing or Shaking
- Throwing of an object
- Chocking
- Hair pulling
- Burning or Scolding
- Biting¹



Sexual Abuse – Is any type of unwanted sexual advances. Including sexual coercion, sexual harassment and sexual assault. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual behavior, actions or words. Examples of sexual abuse...

- Sexual comments or gestures to cause embarrassment
- Pressure to engage in sexual activity, by taunting, making fun of or belittling.
- Lying or threatening to spread lies about someone to get them to engage in sex.
- Exploiting or taking advantage of someone who is intoxicated or use of a “Date Rape” drug.
- Unwanted kissing, touching, fondling, oral sex or sexual intercourse.
- Not stopping any sexual activity when asked.
- Forcing someone to engage in any sexual activity.¹

Psychological Abuse – Includes any use of words or gestures to control, intimidate or isolate someone¹. Examples of psychological abuse...

- Being cruel or mean
- Constantly criticizing
- Stalking or harassing after the relationship is over
- Threatening to hurt someone they know or love
- Swearing, name calling and spreading rumors¹

Reasons assaults go unreported

Although statistics show an extremely high number of assaults occur, experts believe that the numbers are not completely accurate. The reason for this is that a high number of victims fail to report the assault. Reasons for this may be...

- Not recognizing the abuse
- Embarrassment
- Shame
- Denial
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of not being believed
- Believe abuse was small
- Feel it was their fault
- They don't want to get the person into trouble¹



Signs of Abuse

Signs from an abuser in a relationship...

- Low self-esteem
- Mood swings
- Constantly frustrated
- Short temper
- Possessive and controlling
- Extremely jealous¹

Signs that someone might be being abused...

- Low self-esteem
- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Nervousness
- Unexplained physical marks (cuts, bruises)¹

Personal traits of an abuser may be...

- Excessive use of alcohol
- Drug use
- Too serious
- Controlling
- Constantly puts down others
- Follows and watches partner
- Demands to know other persons whereabouts
- Obsessive phone calls to partner
- Refuses to take “no” for any answer
- Uses guilt and blame
- Accusations of dishonesty
- Brags about bullying
- Continuing to engage other in dangerous activities¹

Personal traits of someone being abused may be...

- Experiences a drop in grades
- Stops attending classes
- Experiences memory problems
- Difficulty sleeping
- No interest in family or friend activities
- Stops participating in things they enjoy¹



Date Rape Drugs

“While I was gone to the washroom, he said he would watch my drink. I trusted him, I have seen him around campus a lot, and he seemed nice. For some reason that night, after only one drink I felt weird, and really tired...I don't even remember leaving the bar. When I woke up, I was in his bed...he told me I wanted to do it.”

Drugs and alcohol are used to not only lower a persons inhibitions, but to take total control over that person. Whether you are out at a bar, or at someone's house for a small get together, remember you can become a victim. When your back is turned, all it takes is for someone to place a small amount of a “date rape drug” in your drink to get you in the position that they want. The most common “Date Rape” drugs are...

- *Rohypnol* – Rohypnol is a tranquilizer, similar to Valium. When Rohypnol is given, the victim will experience memory loss, weakness, their muscles will become relaxed, resulting in unconsciousness. Rohypnol works within a half of an hour after dosage is ingested.²
- *GHB or Liquid Ecstasy* - GHB is referred to as a “love drug”. GHB and Liquid Ecstasy are popular at raves and concerts, they give a sense of tranquility, enhances sensuality and a loss of inhibitions. They are long lasting and work in a short period of time.²
- *Ketamine* – Ketamine is an animal tranquilizer, it leaves the user with hallucinations, dissociation and memory loss. It is also long lasting.²

What to do if you suspect you have been drugged and sexually assaulted

- Move to a safe place
- Contact someone you trust immediately or the POLICE
- Ask them to help you seek medical attention
- If possible, keep a sample of what you ate and drank for evidence, also in the case of sexual assault, refrain from bathing or showering until a doctor has looked at you. Doing so could remove evidence.²



Seven steps to help prevent sexual assaults

1. *Trust your intuitions.* If you sense something is wrong or the person is dangerous, get out of the situation as soon as possible. Safety is more important than anything.
2. *Make sure that someone else knows where you are at all times.* Call your roommate when you are out and let them know where you are.
3. *Never leave a drink unattended or accept a drink from a stranger.* The potential for a “Date Rape” drug being introduced is too risky.
4. *Know your sexual limitations and state them early on.* Let your date know that you are not interested in any sexual involvement, so when “no” is told, it will not be a surprise. Remember consent is given in the moment, so when the moment changes, so does the consent.
5. *Don't feel pressured to have sex.* No amount of gifts are a reason to feel you have to give in to sexual advances.
6. *Be assertive.* Take a self-defense class; learn to protect yourself, physically and mentally.
7. *The first few dates should be in a public place.* Don't be afraid to suggest meeting in a busy place and parting from a busy place.²

Advice for guys

- *If you are not sure how your date feels about sex, ask her.* You don't want to put either of you in an awkward position later on.
- *If the response you get is not clear, don't go any further.* If she is too shy to answer truthfully, don't pressure her.
- *Be aware of your body language and behavior.* You might be intimidating her and not even realizing it.
- *Keep in mind that drugs and alcohol can cloud your judgment.* Remember when you are drinking things might not be how they seem. Also, keep in mind if she is drinking, she might be willing to do something that she normally would not. That is why discussing how she feels early on can help.
- *Challenge other.* When someone makes a sexist or rude joke, acknowledge how inappropriate it is.³

RESOURCES THAT HELP

University of Western Ontario
Campus Community Police Service
Stevenson-Lawson Building
Room 57
(519) 661-3300

London Police Service
601 Dundas Street
(519) 661-5670

UWO Student Health Services
University Community Center
Room 11
(519) 661-3030

Changing Ways
Counseling for abusive males
388 Dundas Street
(519) 438-9869

Women's Community House
101 Wellington Road
(519) 642-3000

Sexual Assault Center of London
319 Dundas Street, suite 121
(519) 438-2272

London Abusive Women's Center
217 York Street, suite 107
(519) 432-2204

Regional Sexual Assault Center
St. Joseph's Health Center
268 Grosvenor Street
(519) 646-6000, ext.64224

¹ Department of Justice Canada, <http://canada.justice.gc.ca>

² Canadian Health, www.canadian-health-network.ca

³ Ontario Women's Directorate, www.citizenship.gov.on.ca

