



CONTACT THE  
FAMILY GUIDANCE  
CENTER AT  
828-322-1400

#17 Hwy 70 SE  
HICKORY, NC 28602  
FGCSERVICES.COM



# Spotlight On Domestic Violence

*First Step Newsletter  
A Program of  
The Family Guidance Center*

THE MISSION OF FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER'S FIRST STEP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE NEEDED SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TO INCREASE THE COMMUNITY'S AWARENESS ABOUT THE PROBLEM.

## NO MEANS NO

### APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

#### SEXUAL ASSAULT DEFINED

Sexual assault is a term that applies to a broad range of forced and unwanted sexual activity. It is unwanted sexual contact or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the victim. It can be 1) kissing without the victim's consent, 2) fondling or unwanted sexual touching, 3) being forced to watch porn, 4) forcing a victim to perform sexual acts and 5) rape.

**Sexual assault is not about sex, it's about the perpetrator's intent on having power and control over the victim.** In addition to the above, other types of sexual assault are sexual battery, child sexual abuse, incest, and same sex assault.

#### Britnee At LR



Our Sexual Assault Director, Britnee Vargeson, was at Lenoir-Rhyne University, during the week of April 3rd, participating in the university's Sexual Assault Awareness Week. Britnee handed out information on sexual assault and on our agency's services to faculty and students.

**Every 98 seconds,**  
an American is sexually assaulted.



National Sexual Assault Hotline | 800.656.HOPE | online.rainn.org  
Please visit rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence for full citation.<sup>1</sup>

Family Guidance Center's Sexual Assault services include 24-hour crisis assistance, crisis companion at the hospital for rape victims, counseling, court advocacy, and personal advocacy. Anyone wanting more information about our services or in need of help, call Britnee at **828-322-1400** or the **crisis line at 828-228-1787.**

**"SILENCE DOES NOT  
EQUAL CONSENT"**



# SEXUAL ASSAULT STATISTICS

- ~ 82% of all juvenile victims are female. 90% of adult rape victims are female.
- ~ Ages 12-34 are the highest risk years for rape and sexual assault.
- ~ Females ages 16-19 are 4 times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault.
- ~ 1 in 5 women will be sexually assaulted while in college.
- ~ 42% of college women who are raped tell no one about the assault.
- ~ 1 in every 4 girls and 1 in every 6 boys will be sexually assaulted before their 18th birthday.
- ~ Sexual assault and domestic violence are the most unreported crimes in the U.S.

<https://cwitmi.org/get-involved/events/sexual-assault-awareness-month-saam/>

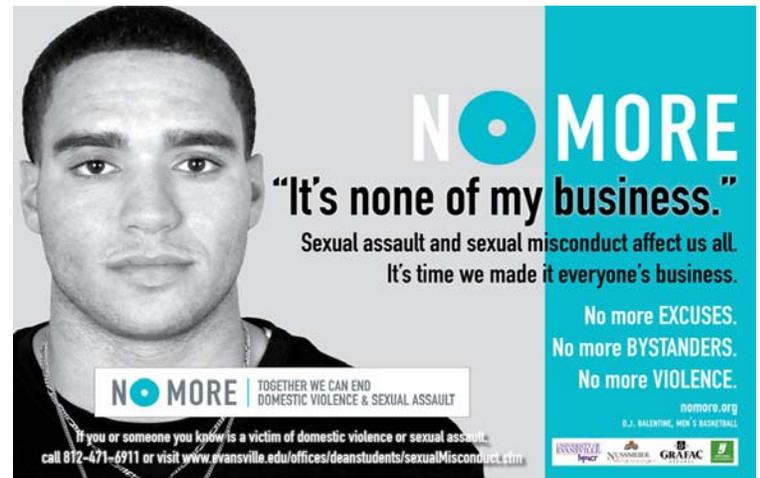


## MALES CAN HELP PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Males can play an important role in the solution to ending sexual violence. Here are some ways you can help:

- ~ Be a role model by always showing respect to women. If you're a father, teach your sons through your behavior and words how to respect girls and women.
- ~ Don't blame rape victims for the violence perpetrated against them.
- ~ Let your male friends know that telling sexual jokes is not acceptable.

- ~ Speak out against sexual violence.
- ~ Support organizations working to end sexual violence by volunteering your time or donating your money.



## SAFETY TIPS THAT WILL HELP PROTECT YOU

- ~ Awareness and assertive behavior may be your best defense against becoming an "easy target."
- ~ Hold your head up; walk confidently, directly and at a steady pace.
- ~ If you feel you are in danger of being attacked try to escape the situation by running away from it if you can.
- ~ Try in any way you can to attract attention to yourself. Screaming "Call 911" or "Fire" is a good way to accomplish this.
- ~ If you are being followed, head for a well lit area where you think there will be other people who may be able to help you.
- ~ Stay alert and aware. Know where the exits are if you are in a building. Always turn around and look at whoever may be behind you.
- ~ If you walk or jog for exercise, try to vary your route and time on the street. To be predictable is risky.

Continue on page 3

**Family Guidance Centers Sexual Assault Services**  
**Phone: (828)322-1400**  
**Crisis Line: (828)228-1787**

- ~ Take a self-defense course.
- ~ Trust your “gut instincts.” If a person, place, or situation makes you uneasy, leave or change it immediately.



[https://studenthealth.ucsf.edu/sexual\\_assault](https://studenthealth.ucsf.edu/sexual_assault)

### IN YOUR CAR

- ~ Always make sure you lock your car doors, whether or not you are in the car. Always check the floor and rear seats before getting into your car.
- ~ When returning to your car, make sure your keys are in your hand, ready for use in unlocking the door and turning on the ignition. They can also be used as a weapon, should that become necessary.
- ~ If you suspect that you are being followed while driving, keep on going—do not stop and pull over until you get to some place that is well lit and where there are other people to assist you. If possible, drive to the nearest police station to let them know you are being followed.
- ~ If your car should break down, raise the hood and remain in the car with the doors locked until the police arrive. If you have a cell phone, call someone for help or call 911. If someone should stop and offer to assist you, roll down the window just enough to tell them they can call the police for you.

### AT HOME

- ~ Have good locks (dead bolts are best) installed on all doors and be sure to use them. Make sure all windows are locked and well secured.
- ~ Be sure you know whom you are opening the door to. If a sales or repair person is legitimate, they will not mind your asking to see identification and confirming their identity with the company they represent.
- ~ If a stranger comes to your door requesting assistance (e.g. to make a phone call, car trouble, etc.) offer to call the necessary people for him/her. Do not make yourself vulnerable by opening your door to a stranger, especially if you live by yourself or are at home alone.
- ~ For women who live by themselves in a house or apartment, never advertise the fact by listing your full name in the phone book or on a mailbox. Use instead your first two initials, or even add another name.
- ~ Be cautious about revealing any personal information over the telephone and/or the Internet.
- ~ Draw your curtains or blinds shut at night so people on the outside cannot determine who is in the residence.
- ~ Do not hide a spare key in obvious places such as under the mat, in a potted plant, in a fake rock or on the doorsill, etc.



### THE PURPLE RIBBON

Prom season is here and Mother's Day is right around the corner. Shop the Purple Ribbon...you never know what treasures you'll find.



### GREAT MATCH

What a great picture! This shopper at the Purple Ribbon was all decked out with her purple hair.