

SEXUAL ASSAULT  
& THE DISABLED WOMAN



DISABLED?  
SEXUALLY ASSAULTED?  
NEED HELP?

This brochure was produced by:  
***The DisAbled Women's Network Toronto***

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## **1 IN 4 DISABLED**

## **WOMEN HAVE BEEN ASSAULTED**

This is a painful secret. Rarely do disabled women report assault.

## **WHY DON'T WE TELL SOMEONE?**

- \* we are afraid we will be blamed for sexual assault.
- \* we are afraid no one will believe us.
- \* we are afraid that if family and friends know we have been sexually assaulted, they will take away our freedom. We may be pushed back into an institution. People may try to protect us by limiting our activities.
- \* we don't know who to turn to for help. We don't know if we can get in to the sexual assault clinics. Women's crisis lines do not have telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDDs). There is almost no information on sexual assault in braille or on tape. Many disabled women do not know services for victims of violence exist. We feel afraid, violated and alone.

## **YOU ARE NOT TO BLAME**

Women used to be seen as property. They belonged to their fathers or their husbands. Some men still think this way. They think disabled women cannot be wives, mothers or workers. They see us as either sexless or sexually

loose. They think we are easy prey.

They think deaf women cannot tell on them. They think blind women can not identify them. They think women who use wheelchairs or canes cannot get away. They think developmentally disabled women don't know what's going on. They assault us because it makes them feel powerful. They assault us because they think they can get away with it. They assault us because we are women.

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT IS A CRIME**

Sexual assault is any form of sexual activity with a women without her consent. It a women says "no", she means "no"!

## **ANY WOMEN CAN BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED**

Sexual assault robs us of control of our lives. It takes away our safety. It may make our disabilities worse. Sexual; assault hurts all women.

We need support. We need to talk. We need to be heard. We need to be believed.

***NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO FORCE SEX ON US***

There are also *Sexual Assault Care Centres* in Mississauga and Durham Region and throughout the Province of Ontario.

You may wish to report your assault to the police.

## **THE METROPOLITAN TORONTO POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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The police in Toronto have two telephone numbers with telecommunications devices for the deaf.

The non-emergency number is **922-1333**

### **THE POLICE EMERGENCY NUMBER IS 911**

After three rings your call will automatically be patched into the T.T.Y.

They have 18 American Sign Language users on staff and training to help a hearing impaired person as well as people with other disabilities. Someone will always be available to help you anytime of the day or night, seven days a week.

The new headquarters downtown is wheelchair accessible. So is 31 Division. As the others stations are renovated, they will be made as accessible as possible.

# **REMEMBER YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

## **HOW TO PREVENT SEXUAL ASSAULT**

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- \* know that **ANY WOMEN** can be sexually assaulted.
- \* our attacker is usually someone we know. He is often a neighbor, friend or family member. He can be a co-worker, a date, an attendant, or anyone.
- \* take a **SELF DEFENSE** course. Disabled women have fought back successfully.
- \* **FIND OUT MORE** about sexual assault and why it happens.
- \* join **DAWN TORONTO**. Get support from other disabled women.
- \* ask the **GOVERNMENT** for services for disabled women who have been assaulted. Tell them we need barrier free women's services.
- \* **HELP SERVICES** for victims of violence. Give money if you can. Give time. They need your help.
- \* **PROTEST**. Speak out. Do not sit still when someone says something untrue or jokes about sexual assault. Join a women's group.

**JOIN WITH OTHERS TO STOP  
SEXUAL ASSAULT NOW**

# **WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED?**

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Tell someone you trust.

**CALL THE  
TORONTO RAPE  
CRISIS CENTRE**

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**597-8808**

You can call them any time day or night. They are open seven days a week. They will talk to you right away. They can go with you to the hospital, police and court. They will give you information. They will tell you how to get other help.

Their first floor is wheelchair accessible, but their wash-room is not. American Sign Language Counselling (A.S.L.) is available on request. Information is available on audio tape. they have access to an RFB reading machine. Staff are trained in helping disabled women.

**CALL  
THE BARBRA SCHLIFER  
COMMEMORATIVE  
CLINIC**

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**964-3855**

It is open from 9 to 5, Monday to Friday. It is also open on Monday and Thursday evenings until 9 p.m. They offer counselling, information and referrals. They can give you legal advice. They have a steep ramp, but they will assist someone in a wheelchair up it. Their washroom cannot be used by someone in a wheelchair. ASL counselling is available on request.

**GET MEDICAL HELP**

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You are important. Your health is important. Even if you do not want to pay charges, see a doctor. Ask for pregnancy and VD testing.

***Sexual Assault Care Centres (S.A.C.C.)***

- Women's College Hospital..... 323-6040
- Scarborough Grace Hospital ..... 495-2555
- Mississauga Hospital ..... 848-7493
- Whitby General Hospital..... 1-800-263-2701
- Local ..... 668-6831 or 668-3050

**IF YOU LIVE  
DOWNTON CALL  
THE SEXUAL ASSAULT  
CARE CENTRE**

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**323-6040**

It is at the Women's College Hospital Emergency Department. Ask for the Sexual Assault Care Centre. It is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The doctors, nurses and counsellors are especially trained to help you. They have crisis counselling. They give you information. They will collect evidence if you choose to report the assault to the police. The S.A.C.C. has follow-up services.

The S.A.C.C. is wheelchair accessible. The washroom is also wheelchair accessible. ASL interpreting is available upon request. The staff have experience in dealing with disabled victims of sexual assault.

**IF YOU LIVE IN  
THE NORTH OR EAST  
OF TORONTO CALL THE  
SEXUAL ASSAULT  
CARE CENTRE  
AT SCARBOROUGH  
GRACE HOSPITAL**

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**495-2555**



# ***SEXUAL ASSAULT EMERGENCY NUMBERS***

## **The Toronto**

**Rape Crisis Centre .....597-8808**

## **The Barbra Schlifer**

**Commemorative Clinic .....964-3855**

## **The Sexual Assault**

## **Care Centres**

**Downtown .....323-6040**

**North and East.....495-2555**

**Mississauga Hospital .....848-7493**

## **If you live in Durham Region**

**Whitby General Hospital 668-6831**

**Oshawa/Whitby ..... 668-3050**

**or Toll Free .....1-800-263-2701**

