



**bow valley
harmony
project**

sexual violence
prevention & response

**Harmony Project – Sexual Violence
Prevention and Response**

YWCA Banff
102 Spay Ave, Box 520
Banff, AB T1L 1A6
403-760-3200
yps@ywcabanff.ca
www.harmonyproject.ca

This project made possible by
the Government of Alberta



Information for Parents

- If you suspect that your child has been the victim of sexual abuse, it's important that you believe them, and that you talk to them in a non-judgemental way. Although there are many misconceptions in society, children rarely fabricate sexual abuse.
- Report the abuse to local police, and explain to your child that they may be asked some questions.
- Seek help on supporting your child from the Harmony Project.

Resources

Bow Valley Harmony Project

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response
403-760-3200
www.harmonyproject.ca
Emotional support, information, referrals,
safe space shelter, system navigation

Alberta's ONE LINE for Sexual Violence

1-866-403-8000 text or voice
www.aasas.ca for online chat
24 hour support line for victims
and those supporting them

Bow Valley Addiction & Mental Health

Intake for Banff & Canmore area offices:
403-678-4696

Intake for Lake Louise: 403-522-2184

You can also ask your physician to make
a referral for you

Bow Valley Victim Services

403-760-0197

Support, information, referrals
Hospital - Banff Mineral Springs

305 Lynx Street

403-762-2222

Hospital - Canmore General

1100 Hospital Place

403-678-5536

RCMP - Banff 403-762-2226

RCMP - Canmore 403-678-5516

RCMP - Kananaskis 403-591-7708

RCMP - Lake Louise 403-522-3812

Walk-in Counselling

Banff Mineral Springs Hospital / Canmore
General Hospital

2pm-9pm daily (no appointment necessary)

Counselling, information, referrals

**Calgary Communities Against
Sexual Abuse**

1-877-237-5888 / 403-237-5888

Crisis intervention, counselling,
advocacy, education

Calgary Sexual Assault Response Team

403-955-6030

Sheldon Chumir Centre

1213 4th Street SW

Forensic evidence collection, 3rd option,
medical care, referrals & support



**bow valley
harmony
project**



I Was Sexually Assaulted, Now What?

How Can I Help: Support for Friends and Family

The Harmony Project brings community
service providers together to help put an
end to sexualized assault and harassment



Sexual Assault It's a Serious Issue



What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual Assault is any unwanted sexual act done by one person to another, or sexual activity without one person's consent. Sexual assault can often be confusing for survivors, particularly if they have gaps in memory or if the perpetrator is someone they knew or loved.

Was It Sexual Assault?

If you checked off any of the below statements, it was sexual assault:

- I was passed out.
- I was impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.
- I was under 14 and they were an adult.
- They used threats or force.
- They used lies and/or false promises to pressure me into sexual activity.
- They were in a position of power over me (Boss, Coach, Teacher, Minister, Police Officer).
- I wanted to stop and they continued.
- They didn't ask me to try a new sexual activity.
- I didn't feel safe and/or comfortable.
- I didn't say an enthusiastic yes, or express that I was in agreement.

Statistics¹

- Just under one in two girls (44%) and one in four boys (24%) under the age of 16 in Alberta have experienced child sexual abuse.
- Forty-five (45%)² percent of adult Albertans have experienced some type of sexual abuse in their lifetime. That's almost one in every two.
- Sexual assault is the only violent crime in Canada that is not declining.



I Was Sexually Assaulted. Now What?

If you have experienced sexual assault, it's important to understand these key facts:

- **This was not your fault.** Sexual assault is 100% the fault of the perpetrator.
- **You are not alone.** Sadly, many people have experienced sexual assault.
- **You are not to blame.** There is no excuse for sexualized violence.
- You deserve support and have the right to specialized resources to meet your unique needs.
- You have choices. When it comes to what services to access, your medical care and whether or not to contact the RCMP, **the decision is yours** and you have the right to make an informed choice.
- Even if the assault happened a long time ago, if you are struggling to cope, resources are available.

The Harmony Project is here to help survivors and people that support them by providing emotional advocacy and assistance navigating legal, medical and therapeutic services. Our services are free, confidential, and available to everyone in the Bow Valley area.

For more information, the Survivor Guide can be accessed at:

<http://ywcabanff.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/V5-Survivors-Guide.pdf>

¹https://aasas-media-library.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/AASAS/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Prevalence-of-Sexual-Assault-Childhood-Sexual-Abuse-Summary-of-Key-Findings_FINAL.pdf

What Can I Do?

If someone discloses sexual assault to you, the most important thing you can do to support them is to sit back and listen.

Do:

- Say "I believe you" and "It wasn't your fault".
- Validate their feelings. There is no right or wrong way to feel when someone has experienced trauma.
- Tell them they have your support and that you will be there for them in whatever way they need.
- Encourage them to make their own decisions about how they want to proceed.
- Provide them with options and information as needed.

Don't:

- Ask questions about what they did or didn't do ("Were you drinking?", "Did you try to fight back?", "Why did you wait so long to tell?"). This can be interpreted as victim blaming and can cause more harm.
- Make them re-tell their story or share details they aren't ready to share.
- Give advice.
- Get angry. This takes the focus away from the victim, and they may start to feel guilty that they have upset you.

Be sure to also take care of yourself. After someone has shared their experience with you, you might be feeling sad/angry/overwhelmed and may need to reach out and get some support yourself.

²https://aasas-media-library.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/AASAS/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Prevalence-of-Sexual-Assault-Childhood-Sexual-Abuse-Summary-of-Key-Findings_FINAL.pdf p.6