# The CARE Center

**All services are free, confidential, and available to people of all ages & genders.**

## Counseling

Trauma-focused Individual therapy & support groups.

## Advocacy & Response

24/7 support line, medical advocacy during forensic exams, assistance with police reports & court proceedings.

## Education

Youth & adult sexual assault and consent education, awareness & professional trainings

The Sexual Trauma & Abuse CARE Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.

This agency, along with the Office of the Attorney General, is interested in improving services available to victims in Kansas. If you have any suggestions or complaints about services provided to you and wish to share them with the office of the Attorney General, please call 1-800-828-9745 or complete the survey forms available at ag.ks.gov-/docs/forms/20120215victim-service-suggestion-form.pdf?sfvrsn=2.

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# About Us

The Sexual Trauma & Abuse CARE Center's mission is to promote a culture of consent while providing 24/7 support to everyone affected by sexual trauma and abuse in Douglas, Franklin, and Jefferson Counties.

# Contact

www.stacarecenter.org
Phone/TTY: 785-843-8985

**Lawrence office:**
330 Maine Street Lawrence, KS 66044

**Ottawa & Oskaloosa offices:**
Call 785 843 8985 to speak with an Advocate.

**fb.com/STAcarecenter**

instagram.com/STAcarecenter

**youtube.com/@STACARE**

The Sexual Trauma & Abuse CARE CENTER

Counseling · Advocacy & Response · Education

# Youth Survivors

SURVIVOR SERIES

# WHAT IS CONSENT?

Consent is where you feel safe and comfortable to agree and say YES without fear or pressure. If you aren't being listened to or feel scared, that is NOT consent. Consent is ongoing (not just a one-time question) and something that is REQUIRED for all sexual and romantic relationships.

## What is sexual trauma & abuse?

Sexual trauma & abuse is any sexual activity that is **without consent.** This can be a one-time event or something that goes on for years. It can happen to children and teens. Adults and youth can be perpetrators. When any adult who engages in sexual activity with someone under the age of 18, it is sexual abuse. Sexual trauma & abuse can be unwanted touching, looking, showing, or any unwanted sexual activity. It can also happen when someone sends you unwanted nude pictures or shares your nude pictures without your permission.

**sexual trauma & abuse is NEVER the victim's fault!**

## Reactions & Emotions

There isn't one way that people feel after experiencing sexual trauma or abuse. Every emotion is valid and real. Here are some examples of emotions or reactions that a victim might have:

- Anxiety, fear, depression
- Physical health symptoms
- Flashbacks, intrusive, and distressing memories of the violence
- Disorientation and difficulty concentrating
- Self-blame, guilt, and shame
- "Shutting down", avoidance, or emotional numbing

**Coping responses:** Everyone responds differently to trauma. Survivors may use a variety of coping mechanisms including: alcohol/drug use, social isolation, anger and aggressive behavior toward others, avoidance, cutting, disordered eating, high-risk sexual behaviors, etc.

**It's okay for a survivor to have happy experiences!** Everyone reacts differently and it's okay for survivors of trauma to still experience joy and happiness. This might be seen as avoidance by others, but every emotion the survivor experiences is real and valid.

## You might feel...

- Really scared, sad, or confused because someone you know and trust hurt you.
- Unheard or not believed when you talk to adults, especially if the person who abused you has a lot of authority.
- Unheard or not believed when you talk to your friends, especially if the person who abused you is "cool" or well-liked.
- Bullied after talking about your experience if you are not believed by your peers.
- Forced to continue to go to school with, be taught or coached by, or live with the person who abused you while trying to get the support you need after an assault.
- Punished by your parents, the police or courts, or school authorities after talking about your assault if you were in circumstances that were "breaking the rules" when someone assaulted you.
- Unheard, not disbelieved, and discredited because of your age.
- Unable to access therapy, medical care, or support without your legal guardian's assistance or permission.
- Afraid to disclose abuse to a safe adult because they will make a child abuse report that could result in you being removed from your home and placed in foster care.
- Not in control of your personal information and how it is used and not able to make decisions for yourself about how to proceed with seeking support.

**The CARE Center can help!**