



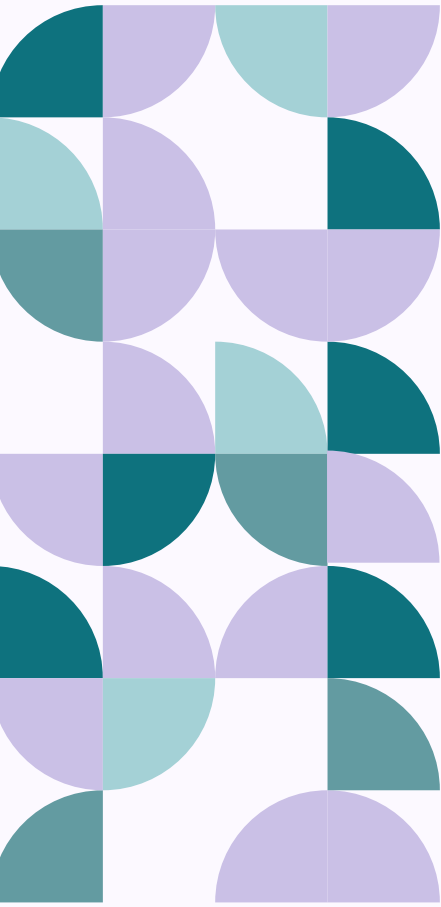
**SOUTH EAST
SEXUAL ASSAULT
CENTRE
NEW BRUNSWICK**

SURVIVOR'S GUIDE:

AFTER SEXUAL ASSAULT

**SEEKING MEDICAL ATTENTION AND COMMON
QUESTIONS**





A note and advisory

You may identify with the word "survivor", "victim", both, or neither.

The criminal justice system may refer to you as "victim", "complainant", or "witness", even though you may not identify with those terms. This is the language used by the court and does not mean you or your reaction to the incident is being judged.

In this guide, we will use the term "**survivor**". However, we know that not everyone who has experienced sexual violence will identify this way.

Trigger warning

There may be terms or information covered in this document that some may find triggering. If you are in need of immediate support, please call our 24/7 crisis line: [1-844-853-0811](tel:1-844-853-0811)

About this document...

SESAC's "Survivor's Guide: After Sexual Assault" has adapted this resource from similar guides provided by Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB) and the Journey Project in Newfoundland

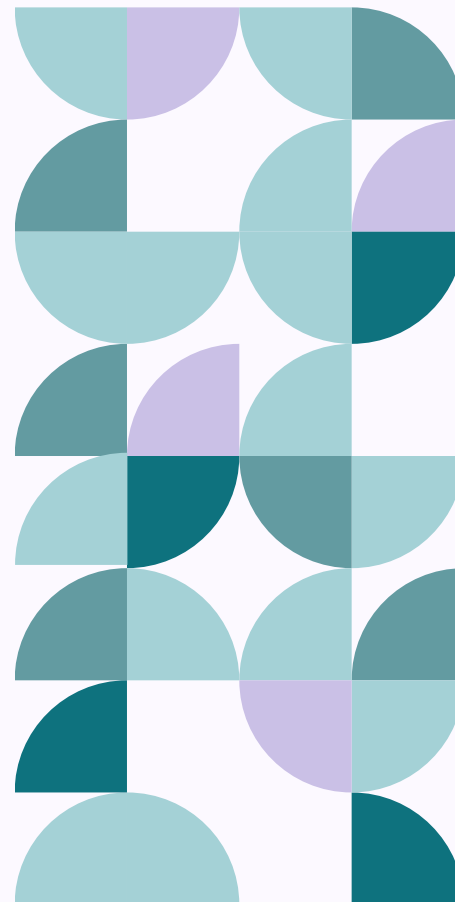




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1. ABOUT US

Here at the South East Sexual Assault Centre (SESAC), our mission is to support anyone impacted by sexual violence in a trauma-informed approach, as well as educate members of the community on gender-based violence and sexual violence prevention - by doing so, we hope to develop societal changes within South East New Brunswick to end sexual violence.

We operate within an anti-oppression, feminist-based framework to support survivors of all genders, and recognize that sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence.



2. SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence is any sexual act used against a person to abuse, harm or manipulate them. It can include but is not limited to...

Sexual assault, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse, sexism, forced marriage, denial of right to use contraception, denial of reproductive rights, forced abortion, forced prostitution or human trafficking

Rape and sexual assault are serious crimes in which **someone is forced to take part in sexual acts they do not consent to.**

Sexual assault is a broad term which applies to any form of sexual violence, ranging from unwanted touching or kissing to being forced to perform sexual acts

Sexual assault can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or age.



2. SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no right or wrong reactions to sexual assault, and everyone has different fear responses according to the situation. Here are a few examples:

Fight

When you feel in danger and believe you can overpower the threat, you are in fight mode. This would look like **physically fighting, pushing, struggling and fighting verbally** (for ex: saying no).

Flight


This happens when you feel like you can defeat the danger by running away. This would look like **putting distance between you and the attacker** by running or backing away.

Freeze

Going tense, still, and silent. Some people freeze towards danger to avoid fights or further harm. Freezing is not giving consent, and is a common reaction to sexual assault

Fawn

Fawning is when you try to **escape harm** (or more harm) by **pleasing or appeasing** the aggressor. Some survivor's describe this as "letting go" or "submitting", or "going along with it". This is not the same as giving consent.



3. COMMON FEELINGS

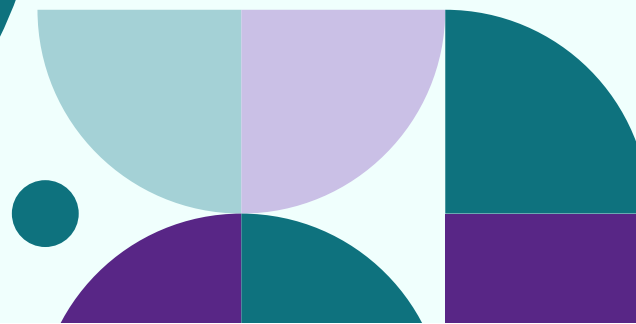
There is no "right" way to feel after a sexual assault.

Sexual assault is a traumatic experience that can impact your life at home, work, and/or school, as well as your relationships with friends, family, and coworkers.

It is important to remind yourself there is a wide range of emotions and feelings you may experience and however you are feeling is valid.

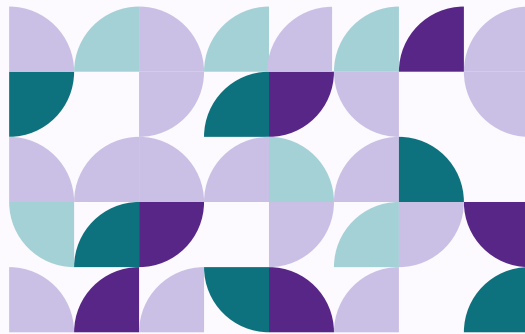
Common feelings may include anger, confusion, fear, guilt, anger, or hopelessness. You might feel calm or overwhelmed. You might feel confused or alert. You might feel numb. You might experience all these things or none of these things. It is in no way an indicator of the degree of harm you experienced.

It is common for people who have been sexually assaulted to feel as though it was their fault, or they did something to contribute to their assault. **Sexual assault is never the victim's fault.** It does not matter who you were with, what you were doing, or where you were. Absolutely nothing you did caused the assault.



4. WHEN A RESPONSE ISN'T HELPFUL

The support of friends, family, or significant others is very important during this time, but their reaction to your experience may not be what you anticipate or would like it to be.



People in your life will react in different ways; some may express blame, others may give you their full support. Others may not know how to react, or how to support you. If you feel ready, allow those who offer their support to help you through this period. The decision to talk about your experience is a personal choice.

You do not have to share your experience with anyone until you feel ready.





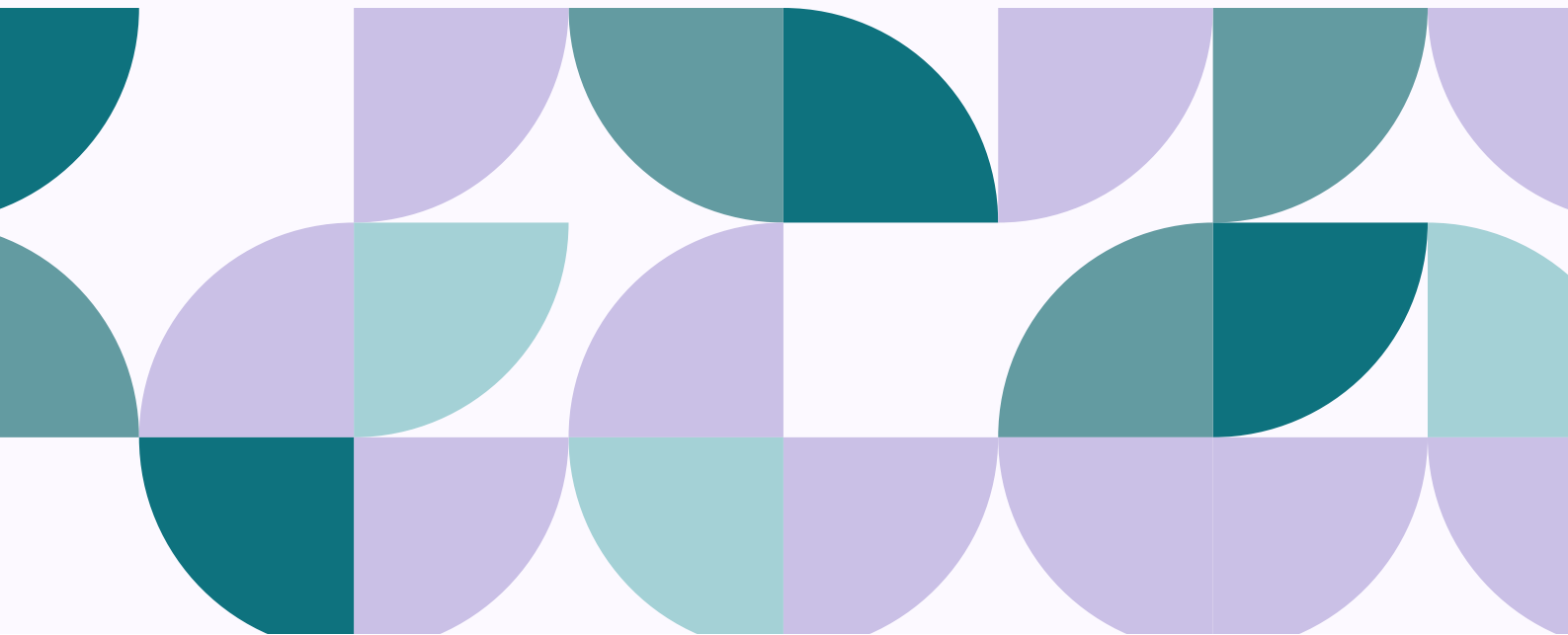
4. WHEN A RESPONSE ISN'T HELPFUL (CONT.)

If you decide you want to tell someone about the assault, how they respond can impact your healing and experience. We know that many survivors experience what is called 'secondary wounding'.

Secondary wounding is any response to a disclosure that blames, shames, or in any way harms the survivor.

This response might make you feel like what happened was your fault or something you should be ashamed of – it's not.

You deserve to be believed, to be listened to, and to be supported, no matter what





5. MEDICAL ATTENTION



Regardless of whether you are injured, it is still important to seek medical attention. You may need to consider your risk for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy. It is important that you go to the hospital, clinic, or your family doctor after a sexual assault. Additionally, physical injuries may be internal or not visible immediately after an assault.

Within the Greater Moncton region, the Moncton City Hospital is the only hospital which has the **Forensic Nurse Examiner** program (formerly **SANE**, now **FNE**). The Forensic Nurse Examiner is a registered nurse who is specifically trained in performing comprehensive, objective assessments on patients who have been sexually assaulted.

A volunteer from SESAC can accompany you to the FNE program at the Moncton City Hospital. You do not need to go through this process alone.

The Moncton City Hospital

**135 MacBeath Ave.,
Moncton, New Brunswick,
E1C 6Z8**

506-857-5111






GETTING A FORENSIC EVIDENCE KIT AT THE HOSPITAL (WHAT THE PROCESS LOOKS LIKE)

1. When you go to the hospital, go to the emergency department. You don't have to explain the reason for your visit, just ask to see the FNE (SANE) nurse

2. You are **NOT** required to report the assault to the police, and no police officer is present during the forensic examination*

NOTE: The FNE (SANE) program is for **ALL genders** who are victims of sexual violence and domestic violence.

*If you are under the age of 16, hospital staff will be required to report the sexual assault to the police





GETTING A FORENSIC EVIDENCE KIT AT THE HOSPITAL (WHAT THE PROCESS LOOKS LIKE)



3.

With your consent, the FNE (SANE) nurse will:

- ask you questions about the assault
- perform a physical examination to check for injuries
- conduct screening tests to check for sexually-transmitted or blood-borne diseases
- offer to collect samples for forensic purposes. These samples may be submitted to the police OR kept for up to six months if you don't want to report the assault immediately

PLEASE NOTE:

4. If certain parts of the examination make you uncomfortable, **you can always say no, or change your mind at any time.**

The nurse will respect your decision/choices.



6. FOR LOVED ONES SUPPORTING A SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVOR



People who have been sexually assaulted need the support of their families and friends. Survivors may feel ashamed, embarrassed, depressed, and frightened. They may or may not want to talk about what happened. Be ready to listen when they are ready to talk. Let them know you care about them and do not blame them for what happened. No one wants or deserves to be sexually assaulted. They may feel guilty, but what happened is not their fault.



HOW TO HELP

- One of the most important things you can do for someone who has been sexually assaulted is to listen to their story without judgment or doubt. Believe them.
- It is very important that you let them know that they are not to blame for their assault. Nothing they said or did caused the assault. Sexual assault is not about sex. It is one person feeling powerful by taking away another person's control.
- Know that there is no "right" way to react to a sexual assault. They might be depressed, embarrassed, fearful, or angry. They might seem to feel nothing at all. Let them know what they are feeling is okay.
- Provide support and encouragement for their decisions. Try to avoid making and voicing your opinions, or forcing them into any one decision.
- Respect their privacy. It is difficult to watch a friend go through trauma.



6. FOR LOVED ONES SUPPORTING A SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVOR (CONT.)

SUPPORTIVE RESPONSES

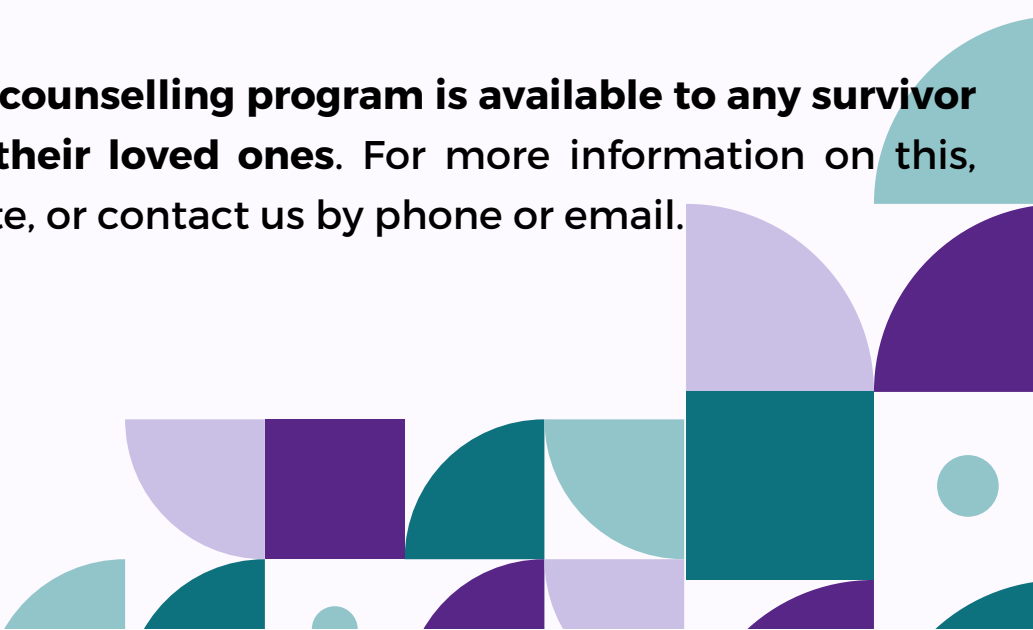
How you respond may have a great impact on the person you are supporting. They have trusted you with their experience and story; it is a privilege to provide care and empathy. Take a deep breath, remain calm, and know that this person has trusted you for a reason.

Provide support and encouragement for their decisions. Try to avoid making and voicing your opinions, or forcing them into any one decision. Respect that they are trying to regain some control over their life by making their own choices and decisions. They will share their story when and with whom they choose.

It is difficult to watch a friend go through trauma. Know your limits and take care of yourself. SESAC's Crisis Line is available if you need support: 844-853-0811.

Make sure you have your own support, counselling, and resources so that you can be present for the survivor in your life.

Our short and long term **counselling program is available to any survivor of sexual violence and their loved ones.** For more information on this, please refer to our website, or contact us by phone or email.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES (IN SOUTH-EAST NEW BRUNSWICK)

**Beauséjour Family Crisis Resource Centre
(Shédiac)**

506 533-9100

Boréal Child and Youth Expertise Center

(Dieppe location):

(506) 383-8300

South East Sexual Assault Centre (Moncton)

24-hour support line

1-844 853-0811

South East Sexual Assault Centre (Moncton)

(506) 857-8028 | sesacnb.com

Social Development

1-833-733-7835

Sexual Violence New Brunswick

Phone, text, and chat support.

Support Line: (506) 454-0437 | www.svnb.ca

VICTIM SERVICES

Moncton: (506) 856-2875

Elsipogtog : (506) 523-4747

Campus Sexual Violence Resources

· Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick:
Counselling services

· Mount Allison University: <https://mta.reesecure.com>
<https://mta.ca/current-students/health-and-wellness/sexualized-violence-services>

· New Brunswick Community College:
counsellors@nbcc.ca

· Université de Moncton (Moncton): 506-858-4912

COMMUNITY RESOURCES (IN SOUTH-EAST NEW BRUNSWICK)

Domestic Violence Outreach (DVO) workers ensure those living in or leaving abusive relationships have access to someone who can respond to their crisis and support them. DVO workers facilitate the development of community-based sexual assault crisis and prevention services.

· Moncton: (506) 855-7222

Also in Moncton: Crossroads for Women

For their outreach workers:

outreach@crossroadsforwomen.ca

For more information:

<https://crossroadsforwomen.ca/en/programs-services/family-violence-crisis-centre>

· Shediac: (506) 533-9100

· Sussex: (506) 433-6579

Indigenous Domestic Violence Outreach

- Bouctouche (Elsipogtog, L'nui Menikuk, Tjipogtotjg): Alanna.peters@gnb.ca
- Tobique First Nation (Neqotkuk & Wotstak): (506) 273-5557
- Fredericton Region (Sitansisk, Bilijk, Welamukotuk) : (506) 452-2760
- Miramichi (Esgenoôpetitj, Natoaganeg, Metepenagiag): (506) 626-1399

OUR CONTACTS AT SESAC



1-844 853-0811 (Crisis Line)



**(506) 295-0151
(SESAC manager)**



www.sesacnb.com



sesac.casse@crossroadsforwomen.ca

