

Sexual Coercion and Sexual Assault

The Prevalence of Sexual Coercion

Researchers have started to take a good look into the where, when and how of sexual coercion. They discovered that sexual coercion occurs leaps and bounds more frequently with college students than any other cohort because of the college lifestyle. Fun as it may be at times, the college lifestyle provides the perfect setting for sexual coercion to happen.

Researchers found that both men and women are perpetrators and victims of sexual coercion. Approximately 70% of college students surveyed reported they have been sexually coerced and 33% of college students surveyed admitted to having used sexually coercive behaviors against their partners. Of the college students who have been sexually coerced, roughly 70% stated they knew their perpetrators, further clarifying the perpetrators were either a boyfriend/girlfriend, a friend or an acquaintance. This indicates the vast majority of those who experienced victimization of sexual coercion knew their perpetrator.

What is Sexual Coercion?

Sexual coercion is being persuaded to have sex when you don't want to. It may apply to a specific act or to initiating or continuing a sexual relationship. An individual may give in to coercion for any number of reasons and then may feel guilt and regret.

Recognizing Sexual Coercion:

Is your partner pressuring you to have sex because.....

- Sex is the way to prove love.
- You had sex in the past, so you can't say no now.
- All your friends are having sex.
- Your partner threatens to leave you or threatens violence.
- Guilt trips

How would you answer the following questions?

- Do you have unprotected sex because of your partner's demands?
- Have you had a sexual experience that left you frightened?
- Are you being sexually pressured from your date, partner or friend?
- Are you having doubts or regrets over your partner's sexual demands?
- Are there times that you feel that you can't say no to have sex?
- Are you in a sexual relationship that makes you feel powerless?

Avoiding unwanted sex:

- Recognizing the signs of sexual coercion is the first step.
- Trust your instincts and feelings.
- Do you feel uncomfortable with the situation or circumstances?
- Say no firmly and leave.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs that may harm judgment or make your partner more aggressive.
- Set your boundaries and communicate clearly.
- Seek help

Learn ways to respond to sexual pressure. You could say:

- “I really like you. I’m just not ready to have sex.”
- “If you really care about me, you’ll respect my decision.”
- “I said no. I don’t owe you an explanation.”

What is Sexual Violence?

Any sexual contact or activity with an intimate partner that makes a person feel uncomfortable, with the purpose of controlling through fear, threats, coercion, manipulation or violence.

What is Sexual Battery?

Florida Statute 794.011 defines sexual battery as oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object committed without your consent.

SEX WITHOUT CONSENT IS A CRIME covered under Florida Statute 794.011 and can be reported to law enforcement.

What is Consent?

Consent means intelligent, knowing, and voluntary consent and does not include coerced submission. The law says that consent does not mean your failure to offer physical resistance to the offender. If you are under 16 years of age, consent cannot be used as a defense to a sexual crime. Further, a 16 or 17 year-old cannot legally consent to sexual activity with a person in a position of familial or custodial authority or with a person 24 years of age or older.

SEX WITHOUT CONSENT IS A VIOLATION OF SJR STATE COLLEGE POLICY. If the accused is a student, the matter can be reported to Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary review and possible disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the College. St. Johns River State College will provide an orderly disciplinary process to insure the following objectives:

- Provide a prompt, fair, and impartial investigation and resolution.
- Will be conducted by officials who receive annual training on issues related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking and how to conduct an investigation and hearing process that protects the safety of victims and promotes accountability.
- The accuser and the accused are entitled to the same opportunity to have others present during an institutional disciplinary proceeding including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by an advisor of their choice.
- Both the accuser and accused shall be simultaneously informed, in writing, of:
 1. The outcome of the institutional disciplinary proceeding.
 2. The institution’s procedures for the accused and the victim to appeal the results.
 3. Any change in the results that occur prior to the time the results become final.
 4. When the results become final.
- Information about how the institution will protect the confidentiality of victims.
- Written notification of students about existing counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, and other services available for victim’s on-campus and in the community.
- Written notification of victims about options for, and available assistance in, changing academic, living, transportation, and working situations, if requested by the victim and such accommodations are reasonable available, regardless of whether the victim chooses to report the crime to campus police or local law enforcement.

- *A student or employee who reports to the institution that they have been a victim of one of the aforementioned crimes shall be provided with a written explanation of the student or employee's rights and options.*

Bystander Intervention. *If you see a crime in progress, notify Campus Safety and Security and call 911 as soon as possible. If it is not safe to personally intervene, continue to describe the incident to the 911 operator and describe exactly what you are witnessing and the location of the crime. The 911 operator will ask you questions regarding description of the suspect; if you see any weapon; information regarding the victim and possible injuries. If it is safe to do so, yell in a loud voice that the police have been called and they are responding. You may also call for help in a loud voice to let the perpetrator know that someone is observing what is happening. Be careful not to put yourself in harm's way. Approach the victim if safe to do so and provide aid and assistance until law enforcement or medical authorities arrive. Provide all information you know about the crime to the responding officer(s).*

Duty to Investigate. *SJR State College has a duty to immediately investigate a complaint of sexual harassment, sexual coercion and sexual assault even if the complainant asks that it not do so. If the complainant requests anonymity, the complainant will be protected from retaliation; however anonymity may limit the school's ability to respond. The complainant will be assured that the investigation will be discreet and only disclosed on a "need to know" basis. In deciding how to proceed, the College will weigh the complainant's anonymity request against the alleged perpetrator's potential danger to other students. In addition, determine whether interim protective actions are necessary, such as issuing a "no contact" directive or separating a complainant and respondent. The College will attempt to minimize any burden on complainants. The complainant will be provided with information regarding his/her options regarding the investigation including the choice to report to law enforcement and available medical and mental health treatment options.*

Evidence Preservation and Medical Care:

- *If you are the victim of a sexual assault, find a safe environment, anywhere away from the attacker.*
- *Ask a trusted friend or family member to stay with you for moral support.*
- *Report the attack to police by calling 911 and/or notifying College Campus Safety and Security if you are on campus.*
- *Don't bathe or brush your teeth.*
- *Don't change clothes.*
- *Write down all the details you can recall about the attack & the attacker.*
- *Ask the hospital to conduct a rape kit exam to preserve forensic evidence.*
- *If you suspect you were drugged, ask that a urine sample be collected. The sample will need to be analyzed later on by a forensic lab.*
- *A medical professional will assist with evidence collection, treatment of injuries and can prescribe medications to protect you from certain sexually transmitted infections and recommend follow-up care.*
- *A counselor on the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) can help you understand the process.*
- ***If you know that you will never report, still get medical attention. Even with no physical injuries, it is important to determine the risks of STDs and pregnancy. Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline for free, confidential counseling, 24 hours a day: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673).***

How Do I Get an Order of Protection?

- Contact your local law enforcement victim advocate. Putnam County Sheriff's Office – 386-329-0801 (Palatka), St. Johns County Sheriff's Offices – 904-824-8304 (St. Augustine), Clay County Sheriff's Office – 904-264-6512 (Orange Park)
- Contact your local State Attorney's Office victim advocate. Clay County – 904-284-6319, Putnam County – 386-329-0259, St. Johns County – 904-823-2300
- Contact your local Clerk of Court. Clay County – 904-269-6363, Putnam County – 386-326-7640, St. Johns County – 904-819-3600

How Do I Get Assistance While on Campus:

- Contact the Department of Campus Safety and Security 24/7

Director of Campus Safety James Griffith
(386) 312-4064 - Office

Palatka Campus
Officer on Duty: (386) 937-2052
Office: (386) 312-4095

Orange Park Campus
Officer on Duty: (904) 626-5885
Administration: (904) 276-6760

St. Augustine Campus
Officer on Duty: (904) 626-5956
Office: (904) 808-7495
Administration: (904) 808-7400

Thrasher-Horne Center for the Arts
Officer on Duty: (904) 626-5885

Help is available whether you choose to report a sexual crime or not. Please contact:

- Florida Department of Health Violence Intervention and Prevention Program 1-888-956-RAPE (7273)
- Stewart Marchman Behavioral Health Care – 386-329-3780 (Palatka) and 904-209-6200 (St. Augustine)
- Clay Behavioral Health Center – 904-291-5561 (Orange Park)
- Local Law Enforcement Victim Advocate – Putnam Sheriff's Office – 386-329-801 (Palatka), St. Johns County Sheriff's Office – 904-824-8304 (St. Augustine), Clay County Sheriff's Office – 904-264-6512 (Orange Park)
- National Sexual Assault Hotline – 1-800-656-HOPE(4673).
- Contact your local State Attorney's Office. Clay County – 904-284-6319, Putnam County – 386-329-0259, St. Johns County – 904-823-2300
- Contact your local Clerk of Court. Clay County – 904-269-6363, Putnam County – 386-326-7640, St. Johns County – 904-819-3600