

# SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE



**Sexual Violence is a broad term used to encompass unwanted or unwelcome conduct of a sexualized or sexual nature and is sometimes referred to as sexual misconduct.**

**It includes any act targeting an individual's sexuality, whether physical or psychological, that is committed, threatened, or attempted against an individual without the individual's consent.**

## WHERE TO START?

**Realize:** What happened to you was not your fault; you deserve to be believed and understood.

**Tell someone you trust:** Consider sharing your experience with a friend, co-worker, counsellor, coach, or someone you can confide in.

**Seek medical care if needed:** If an assault has just happened, it's essential to seek medical attention, even if there are no apparent injuries. We can assist and support you with that process.

**Document the incident:** First-hand written notes, prepared as soon as possible after the event, are considered good evidence by courts, human rights tribunals, labour boards, and employers.

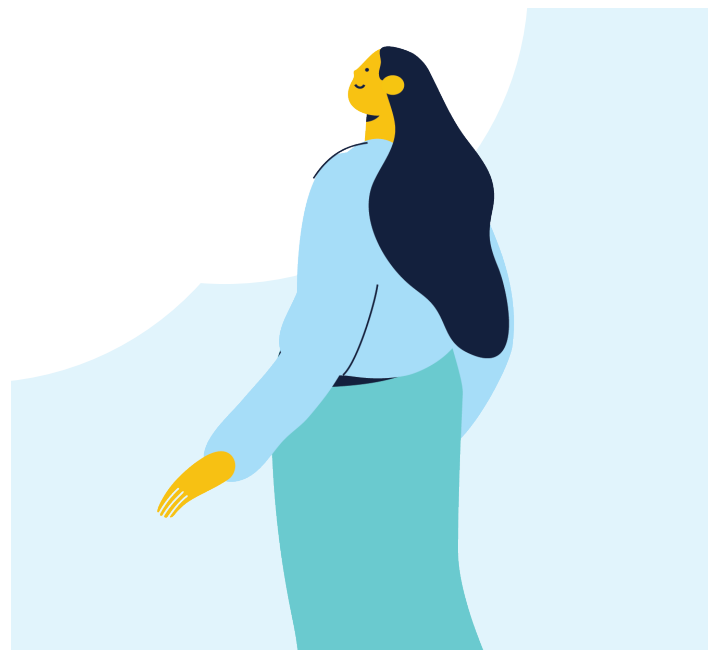
**Connect with support:** Contact Camosun's Office of Student Support. Student Support Managers are here to listen and will help you access resources and make an informed decision about what you'd like to do next.

**Camosun's free and confidential counselling services are also available to current students.**

## GETTING MEDICAL ATTENTION

You can contact the **Victoria Sexual Assault Clinic 24/7 via the Vancouver Island Crisis Line at 1-888-494-3888**, where you can arrange to meet with a support worker and a specially trained forensic nurse examiner.

**In an emergency, you can also go to a hospital emergency department**



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## HOW CAMOSUN CAN HELP

Regardless of when or where the sexual violence occurred, you can access support at Camosun. Every person who experiences sexual violence will choose to access support and heal differently. A Student Support Manager in the Office of Student Support will provide information and support you on whichever path you take.

### With your consent, we can help you with:

- Safety planning
- Referrals to medical and community support services Accessing academic considerations
- Understanding college policy, process and disclosure vs reporting options
- Navigating systems and resources within the college and the community

## HEALING FROM TRAUMA

Sexual assault/violence can impact a person on many levels: psychological, physical, social, emotional, academic, and economic. It is normal to experience a wide range of feelings, which may include shock, fear, disbelief, confusion, outrage, sadness, despair, and anger. Any or all of these feelings are valid and natural responses to a traumatic experience and there is no right or wrong way to feel, react, or behave.

### Seek emotional support

Speak with a counsellor or therapist, call or text a support line, or seek support from a friend or trusted colleague. You don't need to carry this burden alone.

### Practice self-care

If you can make time for self-care, it will help your healing process. Remember to nurture yourself in ways that make sense to you, but choose activities that are healthy and safe.

### Allow your voice to be heard

If and when you are ready, speaking out about sexual violence can be empowering for survivors. Look for opportunities to share your story, or confide in trusted friends or professional helpers. Anything you choose to say can be powerful and healing.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Camosun is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of everyone involved in a complaint of sexual violence. Confidentiality is essential for the safety and comfort required for someone to disclose and seek support.

In rare cases, in accordance with the Sexual Violence Policy, applicable laws and privacy legislation, the college may be required to breach confidentiality. The Office of Student Support will be transparent if confidentiality would need to be breached.

## SUPPORT FOR RESPONDENTS

In order to ensure fair process, the college also provides support and referrals for respondents of a sexual violence complaint. We recognize it is difficult to accept being accused of harming someone and to assume responsibility for one's actions. Contact the Office of Student Support to connect with a Student Support Manager to discuss processes and options for support for respondents.

