

Survivors Handbook

**for those who have experienced
a sexual assault**

FITCHBURG STATE COLLEGE

If you've just been sexually assaulted...

- Get yourself to a safe place.
- Contact someone who can help and support you:
 - A friend
 - Campus Police (x3111)
 - Counseling Services (x3152)
 - Health Services (x3344)
 - Your RA or Building Director
 - The Rape Crisis Center of Central Massachusetts (1-800-870-5905)
- Seek medical attention right away.
- If at all possible, don't shower, change your clothes, or douche immediately. You may destroy important evidence that may be helpful if you choose to pursue legal action later.
- Remind yourself as needed that this assault was not your fault.

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Introduction and Intent

This Handbook is intended for adult Survivors of sexual assault, as well as friends and others who may be in a position to support Survivors. It was compiled in the Fall of 2002 by the Fitchburg State College Office of Counseling Services, in conjunction with the College's Campus Police, Health Services, and Office of Campus Living.

The Handbook was prepared for the purpose of providing important information regarding medical, legal, and psychological concerns that a Survivor may have in the aftermath of a sexual assault. It is not intended to replace professional counseling or legal services or advocacy, and Survivors are encouraged to avail themselves of such resources available at Fitchburg State College and in the community.

What is a Sexual Assault?

Under Massachusetts Law (M.G.L. Chapter 265, Section 22), “rape” is defined as “having sexual intercourse or unnatural sexual intercourse with a person and compelling such person to submit by force and against their will, or compelling such person to submit by threat of bodily injury.” Other acts that are sexual in nature (e.g., unwanted touching, coerced oral sex) but not typically considered “intercourse” may also fall within the legal definition of rape, or be covered in other laws concerning sexual assault. Rape is a felony in Massachusetts.

It is similarly a felony in Massachusetts to drug another person with the intent of enabling one to engage in sexual intercourse with them (M.G.L., Chapter 272, Section 3).

“Date Rape” or “Acquaintance Rape” is Rape. The key factor in determining a sexual assault is “consent.” Sex with a lover or a friend that is without consent is still considered a sexual assault.

FSC Policy Against Sexual Assault

Fitchburg State College prohibits any member of the College community, male or female, from sexually assaulting another employee, student or other person having dealings with the institution.

The College community defines sexual assault (including, but not limited to rape), as any kind of sexual physical contact that involves force or any form of coercion or intimidation. Also prohibited is sexual contact with a person who is unable to consent.

Sexual physical contact includes the intentional touching of another person on the area of the body generally recognized as a private part of the body, or touching any part of another person's body with a private part of one's own body. An unwelcome touch may be considered sexual physical contact no matter how slight it is.

A person who is unable to consent includes, but is not limited to, any person under age 16; anyone who is physically helpless, or anyone who is mentally

incapacitated. A physically helpless person is considered to be one who is unconscious, or for any other reason unable to communicate unwillingness to engage in any act. A mentally incapacitated person may be one who is under the influence of alcohol or a drug, or who is mentally incapable of understanding the implications and consequences of any act.

Although any conduct violation committed by the victim at the time of the assault is subject to review by the Vice President for Student Affairs, the primary focus of any disciplinary action will be placed on the sexual assault violation.

Use of alcohol or any other drug to render another person mentally or physically incapacitated as a precursor to or part of a sexual assault, as previously defined, is prohibited.

The College urges victims to come forward with a report of any incident. An array of police, medical, psychological, administrative and disciplinary services are in place and immediately available to students reporting a sexual assault. FSC is committed to supporting students' exercise of informed choice among these services and insuring anonymity within the confines of legal requirements to report a sexual assault.

Off-campus support and judicial services may also play important roles and FSC provides support services to students who choose to seek criminal or civil prosecution as well as disciplinary action under FSC's Student Discipline System.

What Are Your Rights?

Many survivors of violent crimes, and especially survivors of sexual assault, experience an emotional shock. At this time, it is important to know that “victims” can become “survivors,” and part of this process is making every attempt to take control of one’s life again, and being certain that one receives care, information, and an understanding of the rights to which they are entitled*. Exercising these rights is, in many ways, part of the process of “taking charge” of your life again---

- You have the RIGHT to pursue criminal proceedings.
- You have the RIGHT to pursue disciplinary action via the FSC judicial system.
- You have the RIGHT to confidential counseling services.
- You have the RIGHT to receive support and information regarding the various choices available to you.
- You have the RIGHT to request a change of housing if you feel that you are unsafe in your current residence hall room.

- You have the RIGHT to academic support from faculty and administrators.
- You have the RIGHT to assistance in rescheduling your academic commitments, when possible. The Vice President of Student Affairs can assist in this process.
- You have the RIGHT to not be harassed by the perpetrator or the perpetrator's friends.
- You have the RIGHT to confidential medical treatment.
- You have the RIGHT to gentleness and sensitivity during your medical evaluation.
- You have the RIGHT to refuse the collection of medical evidence, even if you have requested tests and/or treatment for sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancy.
- You have the RIGHT to privacy during the collection of any medical evidence.
- You have the RIGHT to request that a friend or advocate accompany you in the examination room.
- You have the RIGHT to have any medical procedure explained to you in sufficient detail so as to make an informed choice.
- You have the RIGHT to stop a medical examination at any time.

- You have the RIGHT to copies of your medical reports.
- You have the RIGHT to attend all court proceedings which are open to the public.
- You have the RIGHT to any court records that are public.
- You have the RIGHT to have your own attorney present during court proceedings.
- You have the RIGHT to file civil lawsuit against the perpetrator.
- You have the RIGHT to have an advocate with you at police, judicial, or court proceedings.
- You have the RIGHT to your own emotional response.

And...finally...

- You have the RIGHT to survive, which means that you have the right to request everything that you need in making the important transition from “victim” to “survivor.”

*It should be noted that many of these “rights” are consistent with Massachusetts State Law and Fitchburg State College policy at the time of this publication. Incidents that occur outside of College jurisdiction may not specifically afford Survivors all of these rights, and one is encouraged to seek guidance from legal counsel or a College administrative authority regarding individual situations.

Why Should You Seek Medical Attention?

There are four important reasons why you should seek medical attention following a sexual assault:

- To determine if you have been injured in any way. Often, a survivor is in a state of shock following an assault. You may not immediately be aware of any injuries.
- To take the first step towards regaining control of your life.
- To ease any fears you may have about sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, or injuries by being tested and discussing prevention and treatment options.
- To collect medical evidence for possible criminal prosecution. You do not need to make the decision to report an assault to the police at the time that evidence is collected, however it is important that this evidence be collected as soon as possible. Evidence must be collected within five days of the assault.

You are encouraged to go to the Emergency Room at Leominster Hospital. Campus Police are able to assist you with transportation.

What Will the Medical Exam Be Like?

You will be asked to provide some basic information, including your name, address, and why you are there. It is important that you say that you have been “sexually assaulted,” in order to insure that you receive the most appropriate treatment.

If you have any questions, ASK. You have the right to have information explained to you in a way that you can understand.

You have the right to be accompanied through each medical procedure by a victim’s advocate, a friend, or a relative. You also have the right to choose privacy.

You will be given consent forms for taking medical evidence. Even if you do not want to report the

assault to law enforcement at this time, it is a good idea to let the medical staff collect all possible evidence. The hospital will send the evidence to the police and it will be held in the State Crime Lab until you decide whether or not you want to press charges, or for six months.

After all of the paperwork is completed, you will be asked to undress. The clothing that you wore at the time of the assault will be kept as evidence. As part of the collection of evidence, you will be asked to sit on a piece of paper and use a small plastic comb to comb your pubic hair. The examiner will collect evidence from the pubic hairs that fall onto the paper and they will be kept as evidence.

You will then receive a general physical exam, including your blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and medical history. The medical exam occurs before the evidence collection. This is done to ensure that any pre-existing medical problem is appropriately treated. You will also be given an internal pelvic exam, during which time the medical staff will check for internal and external injuries.

You may feel embarrassed during these procedures. It's all right to feel uncomfortable.

As part of the exam, you may receive an antibiotic to prevent sexually transmitted disease. It may be in the form of an injection or pill. You will be offered HIV testing and medication to prevent HIV. You will also be asked to give a urine sample for a pregnancy test. You will be offered options for pregnancy prevention. If these options are not offered, ask about them. The “morning after pill” is also available at FSC Health Services.

If you were under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of the attack, you may feel your ability to resist the attack was impaired. You can ask the medical staff to take a blood test for traces of alcohol or drugs. You may want to use the test results at a later time if you report the assault and your case goes to court.

The Decision to Report an Incident to Campus Police

The sexual assault survivor makes the decision on whether or not to report the incident to Campus Police. Should he or she decide to report the incident to the Police, there are various “types” of reports which may be made:

- An informal notification of the incident which will NOT initiate a criminal investigation.
- A criminal complaint that will be investigated and may be prosecuted in criminal court.

Every survivor is encouraged to report the assault to Campus Police, regardless of his or her present intention to prosecute, so that if an individual later decides to prosecute, all possible evidence and relevant information is preserved. The decision whether or not to prosecute does not need to be made immediately, as charges can be filed up to 6 years following the assault, however, the earlier a decision to prosecute is reached the better, as this will assist in the actual prosecution of the case. The victim agrees to “prosecute” by agreeing to act as the

primary witness to the assault. The District Attorney's Office handles the actual prosecution of the case.

The decision to report the incident, and/or press charges is not an easy or painless process. Some survivors find that "reliving" the incident in the reporting process brings about fear, anxiety, guilt, or embarrassment. However, many sexual assault survivors find that reporting the incident to Police and following through with a criminal or civil case against the perpetrator is helpful in their own healing process. Having an advocate (e.g., a counselor or trusted friend) during the decision-making process often proves helpful, as well.

Advantages to Filing a Criminal Complaint

- If you report the incident and a perpetrator is convicted, you may be in effect protecting others from falling victim to this same rapist. Also, coming forward to report an incident may substantiate another survivor's report.
- You will receive assistance throughout the process from the victim witness program and the College.
- You are exercising your rights as a survivor.
- By making the decisions and choices necessary to proceed with a criminal case, you are taking steps to regain the control in your life that this incident took away.

Disadvantages to Filing A Criminal Complaint

- Many survivors find it difficult to repeat their story additional times to law enforcement personnel and/or in court.
- The criminal justice system often involves delays and postponements. Because of the seriousness of the charges involved, great care and time is devoted to each case. The time between an initial investigation and its resolution in court can range from months to over a year.

Campus Police may investigate the incident for the purpose of prosecution (if the Survivor so desires). Campus Police Officers are specially trained and certified to conduct sexual assault investigations. The confidentiality of the survivor is always respected. Physical evidence, such as bedding or clothing, is turned over to Campus Police and the victim is cautioned not to shower prior to a physical examination, which is most commonly conducted at Leominster Hospital. Evidence of

the assault will be obtained and documented during the physical examination by the hospital staff.

Regardless of where an assault may have occurred, Campus Police will assist the survivor with referrals to proper community law enforcement and support agencies, and remain a resource to the individual as needed.

If the case is adjudicated via an FSC administrative judicial hearing, both victim and accused have similar rights, as outlined in the Student Handbook. The accused may be temporarily suspended from the College or removed from a residence hall pending a hearing if the situation merits. The sanctions from the hearing process could result in the accused being dismissed or suspended. The outcome of the hearing is made available to the victim and the accused.

The Vice President of Student Affairs is available to assist the victim with academic scheduling concerns when appropriate. The Office of Campus Living will assist with temporary or long-term housing needs.

The Fitchburg State College Discipline System

Students who have been sexually assaulted by other FSC students are encouraged to file complaints with the Student Discipline System. Students should contact the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, to confidentially discuss options for filing a complaint through the Student Discipline System.

Complete information about the Student Discipline System can be found in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Process

The Discipline System is initiated when any member of the FSC community submits a written complaint to the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, within 30 class days of discovery of the alleged violation. Depending on the circumstances, the victim does not have to be the person who submits the complaint; sometimes, Campus Police will submit the complaint on the victim's behalf.

Upon receiving a complaint, the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee, may:

- 1) Dismiss the complaint (for lack of jurisdiction, for insufficient facts, or for any like reason);
- 2) Temporarily suspend the accused student from the College or from the residence halls immediately pending a hearing in no more than five class days only when there are sufficient facts to show that the student's continued presence on campus endangers the physical safety or well-being of others or him/herself, or disrupts the educational process of the College.
- 3) Schedule an administrative hearing.

Administrative hearings will be conducted by the Vice President of Student Affairs, or designee(s), appointed by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

Complaint Procedures

Once a complaint is deemed valid, the Vice President of Student Affairs will, within 10 class days, notify the accused student of:

- 1) The alleged violation and shall transmit to the accused a copy of the complaint;
- 2) The name of the person(s) filing the complaint;
- 3) The time, place, and type of hearing;
- 4) The names of all the witnesses who will be appearing against the accused;
- 5) The fact that failure to appear for the hearing will result in the hearing being conducted in the absence of the accused;
- 6) The fact that the accused may provide the names of witnesses who will be appearing on his/her behalf;
- 7) The fact that the accused may request additional information about the Discipline System.

In cases involving alleged sexual assault, the accused student will be charged with the following item(s) from the Student Code of Conduct:

3.02 Sexual assault, sexual harassment of another person or threats of injury or harm of a sexual nature to another person.

And/or, when applicable:

2.02 Conduct, regardless of where it occurs, that is in violation of federal, state and/or local law or College policies that brings into question one's suitability as a member of the College community.

3.01 Physical assault, harassment of another person or threats of injury or harm to oneself or another person or any action, which may subject oneself, or another person to physical or mental injury.

3.02A Use of alcohol or any other drug to render another person mentally or physically incapacitated as a precursor to or part of a sexual assault, as defined in the Student Handbook Campus Policies section, is prohibited.

Hearings

Because of the special nature of sexual assault cases, the victim can request special arrangements that will create a more comfortable environment and enable both the victim and accused student to fully participate in the hearing. Such arrangements may include the use of physical 'dividers' or 'partitions', as well as the use of a telephone conference call.

The Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act mandate that the victim be entitled to the same opportunities to have others present during the hearing. This means that the victim can have an advocate present during her/his testimony.

Selected Guidelines of the FSC Student Discipline System

- 1) An administrative hearing will be conducted as soon as possible, but no sooner than two class days or more than seven class days, after the charged student has been notified.
- 2) Hearings are not open to the public.

- 3) Hearings will be tape-recorded.
- 4) Once an accused student has been found responsible for a violation, the past disciplinary history of the accused may be considered in determining a sanction.
- 5) Only evidence introduced at the administrative or Conduct Board hearings will be considered in determining a charged student's responsibility. General "rules of evidence" do not need to be followed.
- 6) Hearings may be recessed at any time provided they are reconvened within 5 class days.

Rights of All Parties

Persons filing a complaint will be entitled to:

- 1) Notice of the time and place of the hearing and opportunity to testify;
- 2) Be advised by an advocate who is a full-time faculty or professional staff member of Fitchburg State College. Advocates are not permitted to address the administrative hearing

officer or conduct board and may not participate directly in any disciplinary hearing;

- 3) An opportunity to appeal a decision, based on procedural error;
- 4) Notice of the results consistent with applicable law.

Alleged victims will be entitled to:

- 1) Notice of the time and place of the disciplinary conference or administrative or conduct board hearing and the opportunity to testify;
- 2) Submit a victim impact statement to explain the emotional, physical, financial, educational and/or other impact(s) the incident has had on the alleged victim's life. This statement may be read into the disciplinary hearing record;
- 3) Have the same opportunity to have others present during campus disciplinary proceedings as the accused;
- 4) Be advised by an advocate who is a full-time faculty or professional staff member of

Fitchburg State College. Advocates are not permitted to address the administrative hearing officer or conduct board and may not participate directly in any disciplinary hearing;

- 5) Be informed of the outcome of any campus disciplinary proceeding;
- 6) Opportunity to appeal the decision based on a procedural error;
- 7) The option of notifying municipal and/or campus law enforcement of a sexual assault;
- 8) Confidential on-campus counseling;
- 9) Request reasonable changes in his/her academic and living arrangements.

Students accused of violating the College Sexual Assault Policy will be entitled to:

- 1) Notice of charges, a copy of the complaint, names of those bringing charges, names of witnesses, a hearing and consideration of appeal;

- 2) Opportunity to present his/her case, question the complainant or witnesses, present witness on his/her behalf, be assisted by an advocate from the FSC community;
- 3) Be advised by an attorney where there are criminal charges that have arisen or may reasonably be expected to arise;
- 4) Be informed in writing within 3 class days of a decision.
- 5) The right to appeal a decision (see below).

Sanctions

If an accused student is found responsible, a wide range of sanctions may be imposed, ranging from a warning, to probation, to loss of residence, to suspension or dismissal from the College.

Appeals

Accused students may appeal the results of an Administrative Hearing to the Conduct Board. Students may appeal the results of a Conduct

Board hearing to the appropriate appeals board (e.g., Undergraduate Judicial Appeals Board, Graduate Student Appeals Board).

Students receiving sanctions of suspension or dismissal will receive an automatic appeal to the President of the College. Appeals will be considered based on the following criteria:

- 1) Procedural error;
- 2) Finding is not supported by the evidence;
- 3) The sanction is excessive or inappropriate

Records

Disciplinary records are maintained in the Office of the Director of Judicial Affairs until one year after the accused student graduates. The records are not considered to be part of a student's permanent record maintained by the College. In cases of suspension or dismissal, a copy of the disciplinary letter is sent to the Registrar. All records, as well as access to those records, are governed by Federal and State laws as may be applicable.

Common Reactions To Violence and Trauma

Below are listed some reactions that sexual assault survivors often report experiencing. It is important to note that these reactions are a **NORMAL** response to an **ABNORMAL** event. Many of these reactions typically begin to subside over a few weeks, as a survivor begins the process of healing and resuming control over his or her life.

Physical Symptoms

- Appetite disturbance / eating problems
- Sleep disturbance / insomnia
- Fatigue or lethargy
- Trouble breathing
- Nausea
- Sweating, chills, muscular tension

Cognitive Symptoms

- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty remembering things
- Trouble making decisions
- “Intrusive thoughts” like flashbacks
- Thoughts “racing”

Behavioral Symptoms

- Withdrawing from friends, family
- Silence
- Substance use or abuse
- Dangerous behaviors that could harm yourself or other people
- Noticeable changes in how you “usually act”
- Withdrawing from significant other

Emotional Symptoms

- Nervousness or anxiety
- Fear
- Grief
- Sadness or depression
- Hopelessness or helplessness

- Anger
- Guilt
- Vulnerability
- Feeling “overwhelmed”

“I’m scared all the time...”

Fear is a completely normal (and understandable) feeling in the aftermath of a sexual assault. You may have concerns about your ongoing safety, about the perpetrator, about your health, and about the options available to you. All of this is normal, and you can take steps to address these fears (read on...)

“I feel out of control...”

This is another normal and understandable reaction to an event which has powerfully (but temporarily) taken control away from you. You may feel like your behavior, your feelings, and your life is out of control. You may have reactions to people and places that are new and disturbing. These feelings, too, can be addressed...

“I’m angry...”

It is completely normal and understandable to be angry in the aftermath of a sexual assault. You may find yourself angry at other people who take careless chances believing that an assault will “never happen to them.” You may be frustrated by the perception that other people are treating you differently. You may be angry that your life experience is dramatically altered. And you may feel angry at the individual who assaulted you; feelings of “revenge” are not uncommon. Angry feelings do subside, and it’s important to keep in mind, always, that this attack was not your fault. There is no gain in feeling responsible for the attack. Also, while thoughts of revenge or retaliation are a normal experience, acting on these thoughts is dangerous and illegal, and will likely end up hurting you (more than healing you). Many survivors who struggle with anger do find relief in civil or criminal prosecution, or College judicial action.

“I’m ashamed. What will people think?”

There are stereotypes and beliefs out there regarding sexual assault. You may be hesitant to talk about your thoughts and feelings with people close to you for fear of embarrassment, rejection, or condemnation. This concern is normal, and perfectly fine to experience, but keep in mind that people who love you and care about you will (in most cases) very much want to help you. Some survivors find that writing down their thoughts and feelings before sharing them with other people is a useful activity. Others find that having a “mediated” discussion with friends, significant others, and family (i.e., a counseling session with all parties involved) is a useful way to approach the process of sharing their story.

“I’m tired; I’m depressed; nothing seems to matter anymore.”

Depression and apathy are common reactions following a sexual assault. Some survivors find they have no energy for even the most common of daily tasks; others find that activities that are typically enjoyable have lost their appeal. Still

other survivors experience physical symptoms, such as nausea, muscle tension, and anxiety. Symptoms such as these are typical of depression, and should be addressed with a caring professional. When taken seriously, and dealt with appropriately, most survivors find that these symptoms are a temporary part of the healing process.

“Will anyone else understand what I’m going through?”

Healing following an assault is often helped by developing a “network” of supportive individuals. It is true that not everybody finds family and friends supportive in the aftermath of an assault (and this is OK), however there are a number of ways to find and build a network of support. Many survivors seek out hotlines, group counseling, or the services of a women’s center. All of these resources are likely to be staffed by people who really do understand...

Taking Care of Yourself

Sexual assault is a trauma that can cause feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that may be very different from what you are used to experiencing. Some survivors report that after the assault, their emotions go up and down, from one extreme to another. Other survivors report feelings of shock and “numbness.” Any of these experiences can be considered normal in light of what you have experienced, and it is important to keep in mind that any of these reactions are OK, and usually a way for your body and mind to cope with the assault experience.

While each person reacts to traumatic experiences differently, there are some general guidelines that will help to see you through this particularly difficult time in your life:

- Don't be afraid to seek help. The aftermath of an assault is an extremely confusing time, and it usually is helpful to sit with somebody (a counselor, etc.) to sort out thoughts, feelings, and options.

- Be compassionate with yourself; give yourself time to heal.
- Speak with the Campus Police Department regarding steps you may take to feel more safe and secure on campus.
- Try to regain as much control over your life as you possibly can, even over seemingly small areas. Use outside resources. Try to make as many of your own decisions as possible. Trust your feelings and “intuition.”
- Take steps to feel safe again. You may want to ask others to spend more time with you (particularly at night, when traveling, etc.). You may want to make your physical environment feel more safe.
- Consider taking a Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) course. These are routinely offered by the FSC Campus Police Department.
- If you have concerns about your ability to resume a normal, satisfying sexual life again, speak to your partner about your limits and concerns. You may feel more comfortable with gentle physical affection. Let your partner know what level of intimacy feels right for you.

- If you find it helps, keep a “diary” or some written record of your feelings, thoughts, fears, and accomplishments as you work through your recovery.
- Try to spend time and talk with people whom you have found to be dependable in the past. Seek out those people in your life who can be good listeners, and who have demonstrated that they can be nonjudgmental.
- Take care of your body. If you can, incorporate healthy exercise into your routine. Eat balanced, nutritious meals. Get the sleep you need each night. Take “relaxation breaks” as needed during the day and evening. Consult a medical professional with any specific physical/medical concerns you may have.

Taking Care of a Survivor

It is normal to feel upset, angry, or confused when someone that you care about has been sexually assaulted. At a time when you will most want to help the survivor through their crisis, you may be struggling with your own thoughts and feelings.

It is not unusual to be confused about sexual assault and perhaps even wonder if the survivor might have been able to prevent it. You may find it difficult to listen to the survivor talk about the experience, and may hope that not talking about it will “make it go away” faster. You may feel the desire to make decisions for the survivor, or you may feel overprotective. You may seek a quick resolution to the crisis, and feel frustrated that it continues to affect the survivor for weeks, months, or years after the incident occurred.

Again, these thoughts and feelings are understandable and not unusual for family, friends, and intimate partners of sexual assault survivors to experience. Most of all, these important people in a survivor’s life seek to help the survivor heal

and resume a “normal” life. The following are some ideas to keep in mind as you do your best to be of help to a survivor:

- Create an environment of trust and openness where he or she can talk about the assault.
- Believe the survivor when they report the assault to you.
- Listen, as compassionately and nonjudgmentally as you can, to what the survivor says.
- Reinforce to the survivor that the assault was not his or her fault.
- Don't overreact. Most of the time, a survivor is not asking for your help to “right the wrong,” but rather for you to listen and be supportive.
- Avoid taking away control from a survivor; don't “take charge” and assume control over his or her life.
- Recognize that wanting to talk about the assault is normal, and recognize that not wanting to talk about the assault is normal, also. Give the survivor space to decide his or her own course.

- Understand that the survivor may not be as physically intimate as before, and may indeed not want to be touched for awhile. Allow him or her to set their own pace with regard to intimacy and sexuality.
- Refer the survivor to people and resources that can help, including Counseling Services and the Rape Crisis Center.
- Help to educate other people who are of significance to the survivor.
- Be patient, and be understanding.
- Accept the survivor's choice of "solutions" to the assault; even if you disagree with what he or she is doing, accept and support his or her decision. It is more important that the survivor make decisions and have them respected than it is for you to impose what you think is the "right" course of action.
- Recognize the importance of your own needs and concerns. Professionals are available to assist you, as well, with support and information to help to get you through this difficult time. By helping yourself, you'll be helping the survivor.

Resources

On Campus

Campus Police	Russell Towers (978) 665-3111
Counseling Services	Hammond Center (Room 325) (978) 665-3152
Health Services Office	Anthony Building (978) 665-3344
Student Affairs Office	Sanders Building (978) 665-3130
Judicial Affairs Office	Aubuchon Hall (978) 665-3768

Off Campus

- Rape Crisis Center of Central Massachusetts
270 Nichols Road, Fitchburg, MA 01420
24-hour Hotline: 1-800-870-5905 (English)
1-800-223-5001 (Spanish)
1-800-688-4889 (TTY Relay Svc)
Office: (978) 343-5683
- HealthAlliance Hospital (Leominster Campus)
60 Hospital Road, Leominster, MA 01453
Emergency Room: (978) 466-2451
- Fitchburg Police Department
(978) 345-9648 (General Information)
(978) 345-9658 (Sexual Assault Reporting Line)
- Massachusetts State Police
Leominster: (978) 537-2188
- ProHealth (Offers HIV and pregnancy testing)
701 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420
(978) 345-6272

Sources

Fitchburg State College Campus Police Department

Fitchburg State College Office of Campus Living

Fitchburg State College Office of Counseling
Services

Fitchburg State College Office of Health Services

Fitchburg State College Office of Judicial Affairs

Fitchburg State College Office of Student Affairs

Fitchburg State College Policies and Procedures
Manual, January 2002

Fitchburg State College Student Handbook, 2001-02

Survivors' Handbook, Fitchburg State College Office
of Counseling Services, 1995

The General Laws of Massachusetts;
<http://www.state.ma.us/legis/laws/mgl/>