

Module 3: Realities of Sexual Assault

Time Required

45 minutes

Purpose

This module examines the realities of sexual assault, allowing participants to deepen their understanding of the problem.

Lessons

- Incidence and Prevalence of Sexual Assault (20 minutes).
- Myths and Facts about Rape (25 minutes).

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to

- Correctly answer at least two questions about the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault in the United States.
- Identify at least one factor contributing to the underreporting of rape.
- List at least two myths and two facts about rape.

Equipment and Materials

- Laptop PC (with PowerPoint), LCD projector and screen (or blank wall space for projection), and PowerPoint presentation.
- Participant's materials.
- Flip chart and easel.
- Multicolored, thick markers (dark colors only) for use with flip chart.
- Masking tape.
- Index cards (two per participant).
- Quiz (one per participant) (see Preparation below).

Preparation

- On a sheet of flip chart paper, write “Myths and Facts about Rape” across the top in large letters. Underneath, draw a line down the center, forming two columns. At the top of the left column, write “Myths.” At the top of the right column, write “Facts.” Tape this sheet of paper to the wall, with the writing facing the wall. When you begin the activity described on page III-6 of the trainer’s materials, turn the paper around so the writing is visible. Tear off short pieces of masking tape (two per participant) and attach them lightly to the wall by the paper; the participants will use the tape to attach their cards to the appropriate column, as described in the activity.
- Make copies of the quiz, which is provided on the last page of this module, for each participant. A trainer’s copy also is available, with answers provided.

Incidence and Prevalence of Sexual Assault [20 minutes]

Show visuals 1 and 2. Review the module's purpose and objectives.



Explain that you are going to lead the participants in an activity about the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault.

Show visual 3.



Friendly Competition

The participants will work in groups in a friendly competition as you proceed through a series of questions and answers. Divide participants into groups of four to five. Ask for a volunteer to act as scorekeeper.



Ask participants to refrain from looking at their materials during this exercise. Each of the questions below appears on a PowerPoint slide, with the correct answer to the question on the next slide. Show each slide and pose a question to each group in turn. Allow participants to take a few moments to discuss the question and formulate an answer, explaining that the questions often relate to very specific information and that guesses are okay. After an answer is provided, proceed to the next slide, which contains the correct answer. Keep posing questions to the groups until all questions are answered. The group that answers the most questions correctly is declared the winner.

Show visual 4.



Q: How many women report to law enforcement being forcibly raped in the United States in a given year?

Allow groups to respond, then **show visual 5.**



A: According to the Federal Bureau of Investigations's (FBI's) 2004 Uniform Crime Reports, 94,635 women reported to law enforcement being raped in the United States in 2004.



Show visual 6.

Q: For every woman who is raped and reports her rape to law enforcement, what is the estimate of the number who are raped and *do not* report their rapes to law enforcement?

Allow groups to respond, then **show visual 7.**

A: An additional four to fifteen (Hanson and Gidycz, 1993; Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewski, 1987).



Show visual 8.

Q: When a victim knows her assailant, is she more or less likely to report the rape to the police?

Allow groups to respond, then **show visual 9.**

A: Less likely. As Koss and colleagues (1988), Ledray (1994), and others point out, this is often a function of several factors. The victim of a date rape is more likely not to label the forced sex as “rape,” but instead to blame herself for trusting the assailant or placing herself in a vulnerable position with him. Additionally, she is more likely to fear that her friends and family will blame her, especially when alcohol was involved. Drugs and alcohol also are more likely to be involved in acquaintance or date rapes than stranger rapes. In a sample of 489 rape victims, 70 percent of the women who were raped by a stranger reported telling someone about the rape, compared with only 40 percent of the women raped by someone they knew (Koss et al., 1988).



Show visual 10.

Q: What is the number one reason victims give for not wanting to report rape?

Allow groups to respond, then **show visual 11.**

A: According to a study by Dr. Linda Ledray, a leading expert on sexual assault, fear of the assailant, who in 76 percent of the cases left with the parting words, “If you tell anyone . . . (or report to the police), I’ll come back and kill you . . . rape you again . . . rape your child” (Ledray, 1996).



Show visual 12.

Q: Under what circumstances can law enforcement determine a rape case to be “unfounded”?

Allow groups to respond, then **show visual 13.**

A: Cases are classified as “unfounded” for a variety of reasons, including an inability to locate the victim, the victim’s decision not to follow through with prosecution, apparent inconsistencies in the victim’s account of the rape, an inability to identify an assailant, and a variety of other factors that can impede or prevent completion of an investigation (Aiken, 1993). Unfortunately, not every investigator or prosecutor is able to distinguish between a victim’s “changing her story” and the legitimate recall of additional data or different aspects of the same story. When a person recants, it can be difficult to discern whether the original rape charge was indeed false or whether the victim has recanted out of fear of reprisals from the assailant.

Victims who do report can be devastated to find that their case was determined to be unfounded. For obvious reasons, they feel discounted. It is essential to help them understand that their case may be determined to be unfounded simply because of a lack of legal evidence, not because law enforcement does not believe they were raped.

Show visual 14.

Q: When is a rape case generally considered “cleared” by law enforcement?

Allow groups to respond, then **show visual 15.**

A: A rape case can be considered cleared if a suspect is arrested, if the police identify a suspect but decide not to arrest, or if the assault is determined to be unfounded.

Show visual 16.

Q: What percentage of rape cases are cleared?

Allow groups to respond, then **show visual 17.**

A: According to the 2004 Uniform Crime Reports, approximately half. Nonmetropolitan counties communities



cleared 45.8 percent, suburban communities cleared 44.3 percent, and the Nation's cities cleared 40.1 percent.

After all the questions are answered, tell participants that you included questions about unfounded cases, clearance rates, and reporting to highlight the fact that each of these factors affects the accuracy of the numbers, and that the number of women who experience rape is generally accepted to be higher than the numbers reflect.



Show visual 18.

Guided Note Taking

Have participants turn to page III-2 in their materials and take 10 minutes to write down the correct answers to each of the questions you discussed. Tell them you will be distributing a quiz, which they will answer and submit anonymously, at the end of this module. Be explicit about the fact that the quiz will not be graded and is not a form a censure; it is simply a tool to help you determine if the participants are learning the material. Let participants know that the answers to most questions, along with more information about incidence and prevalence of sexual assault, can be found on pages III-3 through III-7 of their materials. (The answers to some questions are based on information provided previously in the training.)



Myths and Facts About Rape [25 minutes]

Tell the participants the group is now going to discuss myths and facts about rape.



Show visual 19.

Myth or Fact Activity

Tape the prepared paper chart entitled “Myths and Facts about Rape” to the wall. Distribute two index cards to each participant. Ask participants to take 2–3 minutes to write either a myth or a fact about rape on each index card. When they finish, they should tape their index cards on either the “Myth” side of the chart or the “Fact” side. The cards are anonymous, so participants should not worry if they are unsure of the statements they write on their cards.



When the participants have placed all of their cards on the chart, review the myths and facts by reading each one aloud. It is possible that some of the cards under the “Fact” side might actually be myths, and vice versa. After you read each card, ask participants to determine if the card is in the right place. If not, provide accurate information about the statement and move the card to the other column. If the following statements are not mentioned, review them with the participants. Read the myths aloud and ask participants to state the facts. Provide hints and information as needed. When you have reviewed the myths and facts, refer participants to pages III-8 and III-9 of their materials, which include a list of the myths and facts discussed below, as well as space for notes about additional myths and facts that may have been supplied by the participants.

Show visual 20.

Myth: Rape is most often perpetrated by a stranger.

Fact: A woman is statistically more likely to be raped by someone she knows.



Show visual 21.

Myth: If there was no penetration by a penis, then there was no rape.

Fact: Legal definitions of rape vary by state. For the purposes of this training, rape is defined as penetration with a penis, fingers and/or foreign objects or unwanted touching of sexual body parts without penetration.



Show visual 22.

Myth: Women cannot be raped by their husbands or partners.

Fact: Women are raped by their husbands or partners. Rape is often used as a tool to control, especially if the husband batters his wife or feels entitled to sexual intercourse despite his wife's wants or needs. However, spousal rape may be treated differently than other forms of rape, depending on the laws of each jurisdiction. For example, one jurisdiction may have a shorter reporting period than others or a special stipulation that weapons or force must have been used to commit the rape.





Show visual 23.

Myth: Prostitutes cannot be raped.

Fact: Prostitutes can be and often are raped by “johns,” the customers who solicit sex from them, and by “pimps,” the men who often are in charge of the prostitute’s income. Often pimps control women by supplying drugs or through physical threats or force.



Show visual 24.

Myth: Strangers represent the greatest threat to children.

Fact: In 90 percent of the rapes of children younger than age 12, the child knew the offender (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1997). Often, a perpetrator will spend time “grooming” the child and his or her family by doing favors and providing assistance emotionally and physically. This is done to win the family’s trust, which makes it harder for them to believe the child and decreases suspicion of the perpetrator.



Show visual 25.

Myth: Only young women are raped.

Fact: Elderly women can be and are raped. Because of such myths, elderly women often do not come forward when they are sexually assaulted. There is a high level of shame and fear that they have lost the ability to care for themselves. In addition, the perpetrator could be someone who comes into her home to provide care for the woman, and she may be afraid for her life or that her care will be taken away.



Show visual 26.

Myth: Rape cannot happen in same-gender relationships.

Fact: Rape can occur in same-gender relationships as well as in heterosexual relationships.

Show visual 27.

Myth: Men cannot be raped.

Fact: Although men are less likely to report because of societal pressures, men can be and are raped by other men and by women.



Show visual 28.

Myth: If a woman drinks with a man, goes home with him, or wears skimpy clothing, it is her fault if she is raped.

Fact: It is never her fault. No one asks or deserves to be raped. Rape is a violent attack and a crime in which the perpetrator controls the victim.



Show visual 29. Ask for questions about anything discussed in this module.



Show visual 30.



Quiz

Allow participants 5 minutes to use their manuals to review the information in this module. Distribute the quiz, a copy of which is found on the next page. (A trainer's copy, with answers included, is on p. III-11.) Remind participants that the quizzes are anonymous and will help you determine if there are areas that need to be reviewed. Do not allow participants to refer to their manuals when taking the quiz. Allow no more than 5 minutes for the participants to answer the questions. Collect the quizzes and put them aside. Plan to review participants' answers during the lunch break. If most of the participants were unable to correctly answer at least two questions about the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault in the United States and were unable to identify at least one factor contributing to underreporting of rape, briefly review any areas of confusion after lunch.



Module 3 Quiz

1. Any nonconsensual contact between two or more people involving the sexual organs of one person or more, regardless of gender or marital status, with or without penetration, and with or without resulting physical injury defines what for the purpose of this training?
2. Though estimates can be established, the actual rate of sexual assault remains unknown. Name two factors that contribute to this.
3. True or False: Victims of non-stranger rapes are less likely to report the assault than victims of stranger rape.
4. People often assume that “unfounded” rapes are the same as false reports. This is not the case. Name two circumstances that can result in a rape being considered “unfounded.”
5. According to a study conducted by Dr. Linda Ledray, a national expert on sexual assault, what is the number-one reason survivors give for not wanting to report?
6. List one fact about rape that you found to be striking.

Module 3 Quiz

****Trainer's Copy. Answers provided in [brackets].****

1. Any nonconsensual contact between two or more people involving the sexual organs of one person or more, regardless of sex or marital status, with or without penetration, and with or without resulting physical injury defines *what* for the purpose of this training?

[Rape or sexual assault]

2. Though estimates can be established, the *actual* rate of sexual assault remains unknown. Name two factors that contribute to this.

[Reluctance of survivors to report the sexual assault; cases being classified as "unfounded"]

3. True or False: Victims of non-stranger rapes are less likely to report the assault than victims of stranger rape.

[True]

4. People often assume that "unfounded" rapes are the same as false reports. This is not the case. Name two circumstances that can result in a rape being considered "unfounded."

[Inability to locate the survivor, *or* the survivor chooses not to follow through with prosecution, *or* the survivor is so fearful of the assailant that she/he recants]

5. According to a study conducted by Dr. Linda Ledray, a national expert on sexual assault, what is the number-one reason survivors give for not wanting to report?

[Fear of assailant]

6. List one fact about rape that you found to be striking.

*Draft Prepared by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Training and Technical Assistance Center.
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Module 3 References

- Aiken, M. 1993. "False Allegation: A Concept in the Context of Rape." *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing* 31: 15–20.
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Module 3: Realities of Sexual Assault

Purpose

This module examines the realities of sexual assault, allowing you to deepen your understanding of the problem.

Module 3 Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to

- Correctly answer at least two questions about the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault in the United States.
- Identify at least one factor contributing to underreporting of rape.
- List at least two myths and two facts about rape.

Friendly Competition Activity

 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

Q: How many women report to law enforcement being forcibly raped in the United States in a given year?

Module 3 4



 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

Q: How many women report to law enforcement being forcibly raped in the United States in a given year?

- 94,635 women reported being raped in 2004, according to the FBI's 2004 Uniform Crime Reports.

Module 3 5



 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

Q: For every woman who is raped and reports her rape to law enforcement, what is the estimate of the number who are raped and do not report their rapes to law enforcement?

Module 3 6



 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

Q: For every woman who is raped and reports her rape to law enforcement, what is the estimate of the number who are raped and do not report their rapes to law enforcement?

- An additional 4 to 15.

 **TTAC**

Module 3 7

 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

Q: When a victim knows her assailant, is she more or less likely to report the rape to police?

 **TTAC**

Module 3 8

 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

Q: When a victim knows her assailant, is she more or less likely to report the rape to the police?

- Less likely due to self-blame and fear that her friends and family will blame her; and less likely if drugs and alcohol are involved.

 **TTAC**

Module 3 9

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U.S. Department of Justice

Q: What is the number one reason victims give for not wanting to report?

Module 3 10



 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

Q: What is the number one reason victims give for not wanting to report?

- Fear of the assailant, who may threaten, "If you tell anyone (or report to the police), I'll come back and kill you . . . rape you again . . . rape your child," according to a study by Dr. Linda Ledray, a leading expert on sexual assault (Ledray 1996).

Module 3 11



 **OVC**
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U.S. Department of Justice

Q: Under what circumstances can law enforcement determine that a rape case is "unfounded"?

Module 3 12



Q: Under what circumstances can law enforcement determine that a rape case is "unfounded"?

- For a variety of reasons, including an inability to locate the victim, a victim's decision not to prosecute, apparent inconsistencies in the victim's account, an inability to identify an assailant, and a lack of evidence.

Q: When is a rape case generally considered "cleared" by law enforcement?

Q: When is a rape case generally considered "cleared" by law enforcement?

- If a suspect is arrested, if the police identify a suspect but decide not to arrest, or if the assault is "unfounded."

 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs

Q: What percentage of rape cases was cleared in 2004?

 **TTAC**

Module 3 16

 **OVC**
Office of Justice Programs

Q: What percentage of rape cases was cleared in 2004?

- Approximately half, according to the FBI's 2004 Uniform Crime Reports. In 2004, nonmetropolitan counties cleared 45.8 percent, suburban communities cleared 44.3 percent, and the Nation's cities cleared 40.1 percent.

 **TTAC**

Module 3 17

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Guided Notetaking Activity

Participant's materials,
pages III-2 through III-3

 **TTAC**

Module 3 18

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Myth or Fact Activity

Participant's materials,
pages III-8 through III-9

 **TTAC**

Module 3 19

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Office of Justice Programs

Myth: Rape is most often perpetrated by a stranger.

Fact:
A woman is statistically more likely to be raped by someone she knows.

 **TTAC**

Module 3 20

 **OVC**
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Myth: If there was no penetration by a penis, then there was no rape.

Fact:
Legal definitions of rape vary by state. For this training, rape = penetration with a penis, fingers, and/or foreign objects or unwanted touching of sexual body parts without penetration.

 **TTAC**

Module 3 21

Myth: Women cannot be raped by their husbands/partners.

Fact:

Women are raped by their husbands or partners.

Myth: Prostitutes cannot be raped.

Fact:

Prostitutes can be and often are raped by "johns" and by "pimps."

Myth: Strangers represent the greatest threat to children.

Fact:

In 90 percent of the rapes of children younger than age 12, the child knew the offender.

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Myth: Rape only happens to young women.

Fact:
Elderly women can be and are raped.

 **TRAC**

Module 3 25

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Myth: Rape cannot happen in same-gender relationships.

Fact:
Rape can occur in same-gender relationships as well as in heterosexual relationships.

 **TRAC**

Module 3 26

 **OVC**
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Myth: Men cannot be raped.

Fact:
Although men are less likely to report, men can be and are raped by other men and by women.

 **TRAC**

Module 3 27

 **OVC**
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Myth: If a woman drinks with a man, goes home with him, or wears skimpy clothing, it is her fault if she is raped.

Fact:
It is never her fault. No one asks or deserves to be raped. Rape is a violent attack and a crime in which the perpetrator controls the victim.

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Module 3 28

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Module 3

Questions or comments?

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Module 3 29

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Activity: Quiz

Handout

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Module 3 30
