



**Cleveland  
Rape Crisis  
Center**

***The Elephant in the Room:  
Identifying Youth Victimization and Responding  
Effectively to Abuse***

**Arnetta Matthews (she/her)**

Director, Education & Outreach  
[arnettam@clevelandrcc.org](mailto:arnettam@clevelandrcc.org)

# Content Warning



# Objectives

**Discuss the Elements of Sexual Violence**



**Explore the Facts about Sexual Violence and Marginalized Communities**



**Understand Trauma & Supporting Survivors Using the BLAB-IT Approach**

# COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

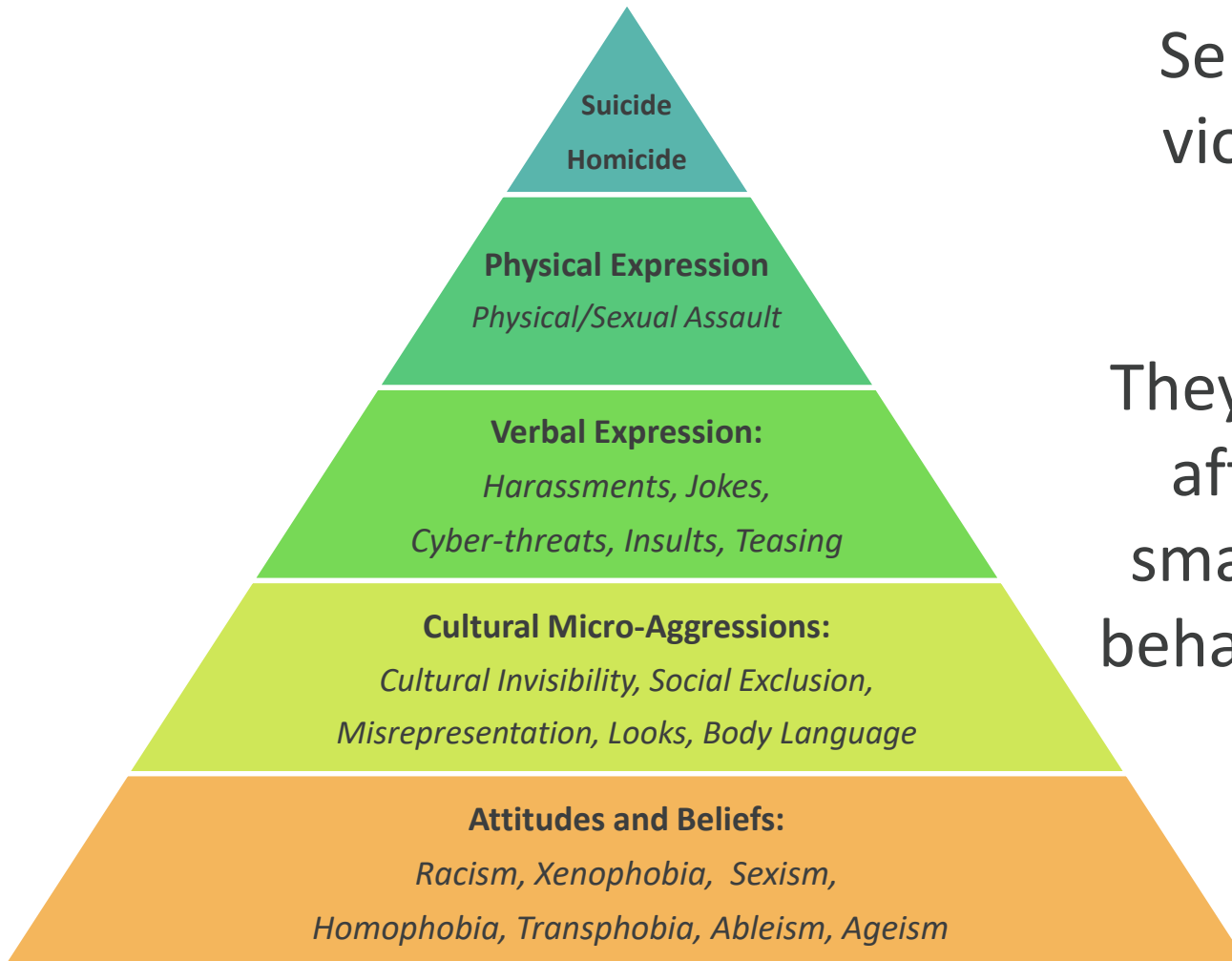
## **Respect Yourself**

Be inquisitive, learn and gain understanding

## **Respect Others**

Build a respectful, inclusive, and safe  
environment

# Pyramid of Violence



Serious forms of violence are not random.

They typically occur after a series of smaller, unhealthy behaviors over time.



**How often do you think someone  
is sexually assaulted?**

# The Scope of the Issue

In the United States, every **68 seconds** someone experiences sexual assault.



# National Sexual Assault Statistics

- Every **9** minutes, CPS responds to a claim of sexual abuse
- **1** in **4** girls and **1** in **6** boys will be sexually assaulted before the age of 18
- **93%** of child sexual abuse victims know their perpetrator
- **1** in **5** children are solicited sexually while on the internet
- **60%** of child sexual abuse victims never disclose
- **95%** of child sexual abuse is preventable through education and awareness



# What is Sexual Violence?



## Sexual Violence

Any sexual contact or behavior  
that happens without your consent  
and/or with someone who has authority over you

Sexual  
Harassment

Stalking

Sexual  
Abuse,  
Assault,  
or Rape

Sexting

Cyber  
Harassment

Degrading  
Sexual  
Imagery

Trafficking

Voyeurism

Sexual  
Battery

Indecent  
Exposure

# What is **Sextortion?**

# Sextortion

Sextortion is a form of blackmail. It involves threatening to publish sexual information, photos or videos about someone. This may be to extort money or to force the victim to do something against their will.



# Sextortion Victim's Story



# What is **Grooming?**

# Grooming

Grooming is a word to describe people trying to befriend someone to take advantage of them for sexual purposes.

Grooming behaviors include:

- Special attention or gifts & promises of gifts
- Asking someone to keep your relationship a secret
- Excessive flattery or telling a child they are mature for their age
- Isolation from friends and family
- Making physical or sexual advances.

# Age of Consent:





# Warning Signs

- Becoming withdrawn or very clingy
- Sudden mood swings: rage, fear, anger, or withdrawal
- Personality changes or suddenly seeming insecure
- Fear of certain people or places
- Changes in eating habits
- Becoming secretive
- Having unexplained gifts such as toys, money, mobile phone, expensive clothes
- Using new words for private body parts
- Abnormal interest in sex or knowledge of sexual matters inappropriate for the child's age
- Suddenly having nightmares or other sleeping problems
- Sexual activities with toys or other children, such as simulating sex with dolls or asking other children/siblings to behave sexually

# The Truth About Rape & Sexual Abuse

# Fact.

Over **80%** of rapes are committed by someone with whom the victim is acquainted.

# Fact.

Most sexual assaults occur **at or near** the victim's home.

# Where Does Sexual Assault Happen?

## BREAKDOWN OF LOCATIONS WHERE SEXUAL ASSAULT OCCURS



**55%**  
at or near the  
victim's home



**15%**  
in an open  
public place.



**12%**  
at or near a  
relative's home



**10%**  
in an enclosed but  
public area, such as a  
parking lot or garage



**8%**  
on school  
property

**RAINN**

National Sexual Assault Hotline | 800.656.HOPE | [online.rainn.org](https://online.rainn.org)

Please visit [rainn.org/statistics/scope-problem](https://rainn.org/statistics/scope-problem) for full citation.<sup>7</sup>

# Fact.

Rape is a violent crime of  
**power, control, access,**  
**opportunity and vulnerability.**

# Key Factors in Choosing A Victim

**Power**

**Control**

**Accessibility**

**Opportunity**

**Victim's Vulnerability**

# Risk Factors for Sexual Violence

## Individual

- Alcohol and substance use
- Delinquency
- Aggressive behaviors and acceptance of violent behaviors
- Adherence to traditional gender role norms

## Relationship

- Family history of conflict and violence
- Childhood history of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- Emotionally unsupportive family environment
- Involvement in a violent or abusive intimate relationship



# Risk Factors for Sexual Violence

## Community

- Poverty
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Lack of institutional support from police and judicial system
- General tolerance of sexual violence within the community
- Weak community sanctions against sexual violence perpetrators

## Societal

- Societal norms that support male superiority and sexual entitlement
- Societal norms that maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness
- Weak laws and policies related to sexual violence and gender equity
- High levels of crime and other forms of violence

# Fact.

A victim may experience a ***trauma response*** in which they are unable to resist or struggle.

# TRAUMA RESPONSE



## FIGHT

Aggressively confronting the threat.



## FLIGHT

Run away or hide from the threat.

*Trauma overwhelms our systems, disrupts our ability to connect to safety, and places us in survival mode.*



## FREEZE

Numb or unable to move or act against the threat.



## FAWN

Appease or comply with the threat to avoid conflict.

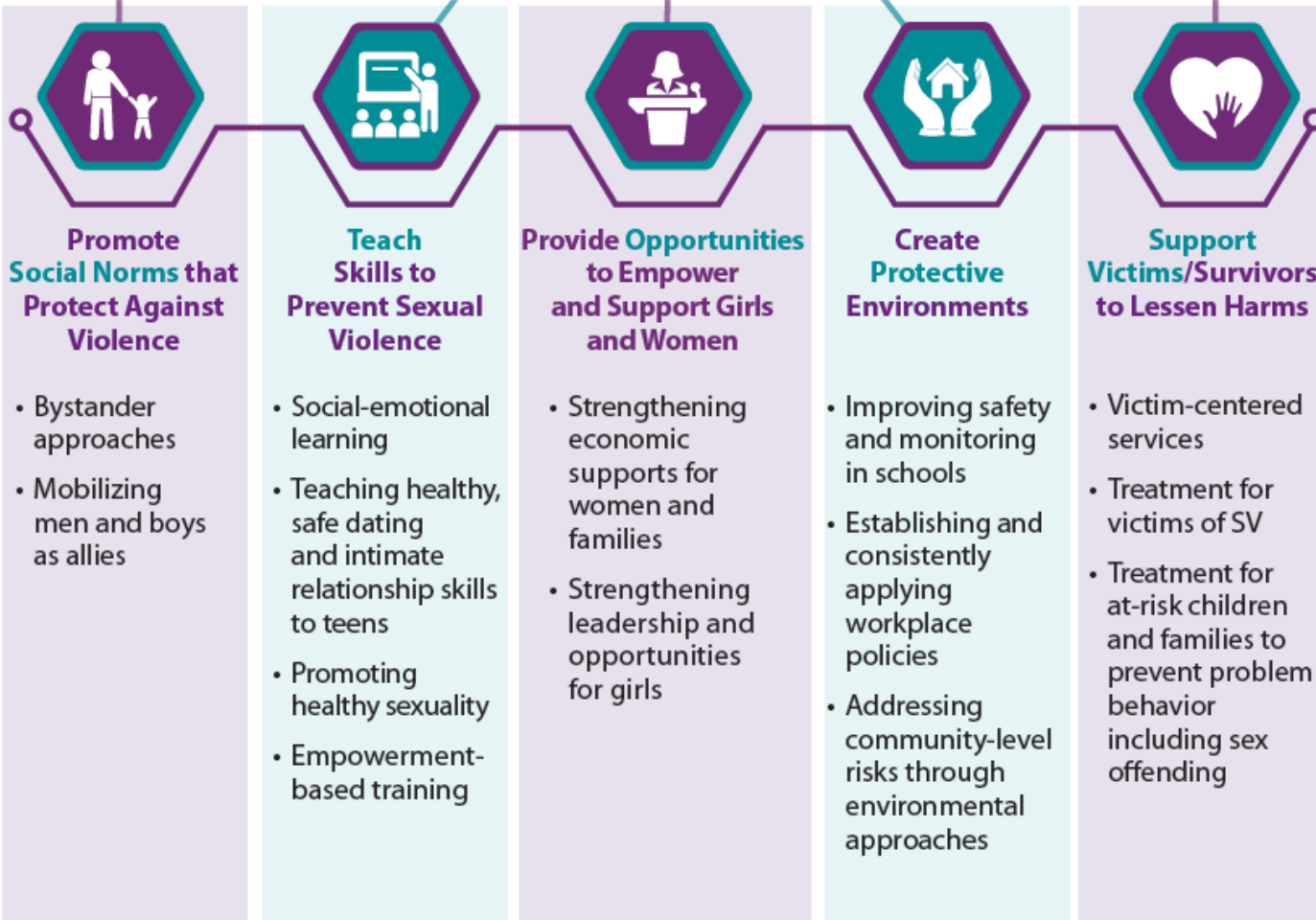
# Fact.

**Perpetrators can use alcohol  
and/or drugs to commit  
sexual assault.**

# Fact.

**We all can play a part in preventing sexual violence.**

# STOP SV



# Sexual Violence & Marginalized Groups

# African American Survivors

- For every African American/Black woman that reports her rape, at least **15** African American/Black women do not report theirs.
- Approximately **1 in 5** Black women in the U.S. experienced rape at some point in their lives.
- **22.6%** of Black men experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime.



# Hispanic/Latino Survivors

- Approximately 7.9% of Latinas will be raped by a spouse, boyfriend or ex-boyfriend during their lifetime.
- Married Hispanics/Latinas are less likely than other women to immediately define their experiences of forced sex as rape.



# LGBTQIA+ Survivors

- 40 percent of gay men and 47 percent of bisexual men have experienced sexual violence other than rape, compared to 21 percent of heterosexual men
- The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey found that 47% of transgender people are sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime.
- Nearly half (48 percent) of bisexual women who are rape survivors experienced their first rape between ages 11 and 17.



# Male Survivors

- Males who have been sexually assaulted are less likely to disclose than females
- The biggest reason for not reporting male sexual assault: fear of being perceived as homosexual or “man enough”
- Male childhood sexual abuse is common, underreported, under-recognized and under-treated

# Deaf/Hard of Hearing

- 50% of the Deaf community has been sexually abused as children
- Only 5% of Deaf rape survivors report their assaults
- Privacy and anonymity within the community
- Reliance on interpreters and misrepresentation
- Linguistic barriers and lack of knowledge and resources

<https://www.nsvrc.org/blogs/saam/helping-deaf-survivors>

# Individuals with Disabilities

- Women and girls with disabilities are more at risk for violence
- More than **80%** of women with disabilities have been sexually assaulted.
  - *50% of those women have been assaulted more than ten times*
- Between **97 - 99%** of abusers are known and trusted by survivors
  - *Family members (32%)*
  - *Caretakers, home health aides and living facility attendants (44%)*
- Abusers see people with disabilities as “ideal victims” because they are less likely to report, and less likely to be believed

TIME FOR  
A BREAK



**What are some reasons why a child experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, sexual violence or teen/dating violence would not reach out to an adult for help?**



# Barriers to Disclosure

- Lack of education/awareness/resources
- Shame/ Embarrassment/ Guilt
- Fear/ Retaliation/Threat
- Nobody will believe them
- Re-Traumatization
- Victim blaming
- Relationship to the perpetrator
- Cultural Cohesion
- Normalization
- Distrust of police/criminal justice system
- Oppressive factors
- Lack of diversity in programs, services & systems



# Victim Blaming

- “What did you expect being dressed like that?!”
- “Why would they be out that late?”
- “They were drunk! What did they expect to happen?!”
- “Why were you alone?”
- “Why didn’t you come forward sooner?!”
- “They just want to make a name for themselves...”





**What are some examples you've seen or heard that promote/normalize victim blaming?**

# An Underreported Crime

**OUT OF EVERY 1000 RAPES,  
994 PERPETRATORS WILL WALK FREE**

**310** are reported to police<sup>i</sup>



**57** reports lead to arrest<sup>ii</sup>



**11** cases get referred to prosecutors<sup>ii</sup>



**7** cases will lead to a felony conviction<sup>iii</sup>



**6** rapists will be incarcerated<sup>iii</sup>



**RAINN**

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Please visit [rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system](https://rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system) for full citation.<sup>1</sup>

# Supporting Youth Survivors: **BLAB-IT**





# Common Trauma Responses in Children

## FIGHT

Yelling, Screaming,  
Using Mean Words

Hitting, Kicking, Biting,  
Throwing, Punching

Blaming, Deflecting  
Responsibility, Defensive

Demanding,  
Controlling

"Oppositional",  
"Defiant", "Noncompliant"

Moving Towards What  
Feels Threatening

Irritable, Angry,  
Furious, Offended  
Aggressive

## FLIGHT

Wanting to Escape,  
Running Away

Unfocused, Hard  
to Pay Attention

Fidgeting, Restlessness,  
Hyperactive

Preoccupied, Busy with  
Everything But the Thing

Procrastinating, Avoidant,  
Ignores the Situation

Moving Away From What  
Feel Threatening

Anxious, Panicked  
Scared, Worried,  
Overwhelmed

## FREEZE

Shutting Down,  
Mind Goes Blank

Urge to Hide,  
Isolates Self

Verbally Unresponsive,  
Says, "I don't know" a lot

Difficulty with  
Completing Tasks

Zoned Out,  
Daydreaming

Unable to Move,  
Feeling Stuck

Depressed, Numb,  
Bored/Apathetic,  
Helpless



## **DISCUSSION**

**What emotions do you think  
might come up for you following a  
student disclosure?**



# BLAB-IT



**This can be a  
difficult topic to  
talk about.**

**Take a few deep  
breaths and  
check in with  
yourself before  
you begin.**

**1**

**BREATHE**

**Allow the survivor to  
take the lead**

**Be judgement-free**

**Be mindful of your  
tone and posture**

**You are a safe person  
for the survivor**

**2**

**LISTEN**

# BLAB IT: Listen

- Listen first, action second: Before jumping into next steps such as mandated reporting and the involvement of guardians, take the time to listen to the survivor
- Remember: it is not your job to investigate, or to gather all of the details of what happened.



**Let them know  
that you're  
listening**

**Be calm and  
patient**

**Wait for your  
turn to talk**

**3**

**AFFIRM**

## Sensitive First Response: Examples

Here are some support services and resources you could try.

*Take as much time and space as you need.*

Recovery is possible.

**You are a survivor.**

**I'm here for you.**

*You're not alone in this.*

**I believe you.**

*It's OK to feel that way.*

*You have nothing to be ashamed of.*

*Let's make sure you are safe now.*

**aware**

**It's critical that  
you believe the  
survivor.**

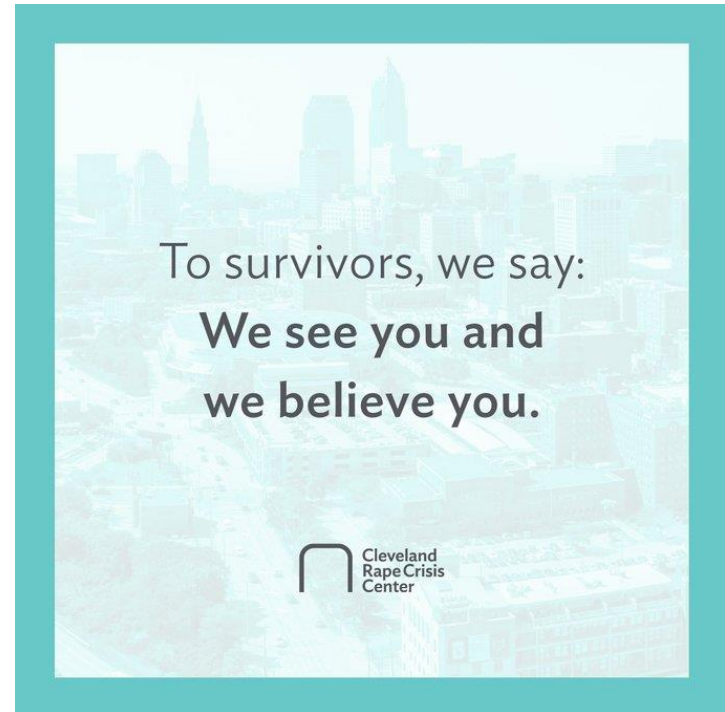
**They're trusting  
you with this  
information,  
and that's a big  
responsibility.**

**4**

**BELIEVE**

# BLAB IT: Believe

- Say it every time: **“I believe you”**.
- Default to *always* believing survivors..
- Don't ask questions that insinuate judgment, blame, or disbelief.
  - “Are you sure...?”
  - “Why didn't you...?”





**Empower the survivor with information, resources, support and the encouragement for them to make informed decisions in their journey for healing.**



# BLAB IT: Inform

- Your role is to provide the survivor with information on their options so that they can make an informed decision.
- If what was shared triggers a mandated report, you *will* need to involve the survivor's parent or guardian. However, you can empower the survivor with options for how to do this.



# BLAB IT: Inform

- Providing the option to tell their parents themselves, or to tell them together with you present.
- Offering to do a role-play together practicing telling their parent.
- Provide a safe space to talk through their concerns with telling their parents and validating their feelings.
- Offering for you to inform their guardian independently.



**Sharing  
information about  
the trauma-  
informed support  
services that we  
offer at the  
Cleveland Rape  
Crisis Center.**



# *Meeting the Moment*



# CRCC Services

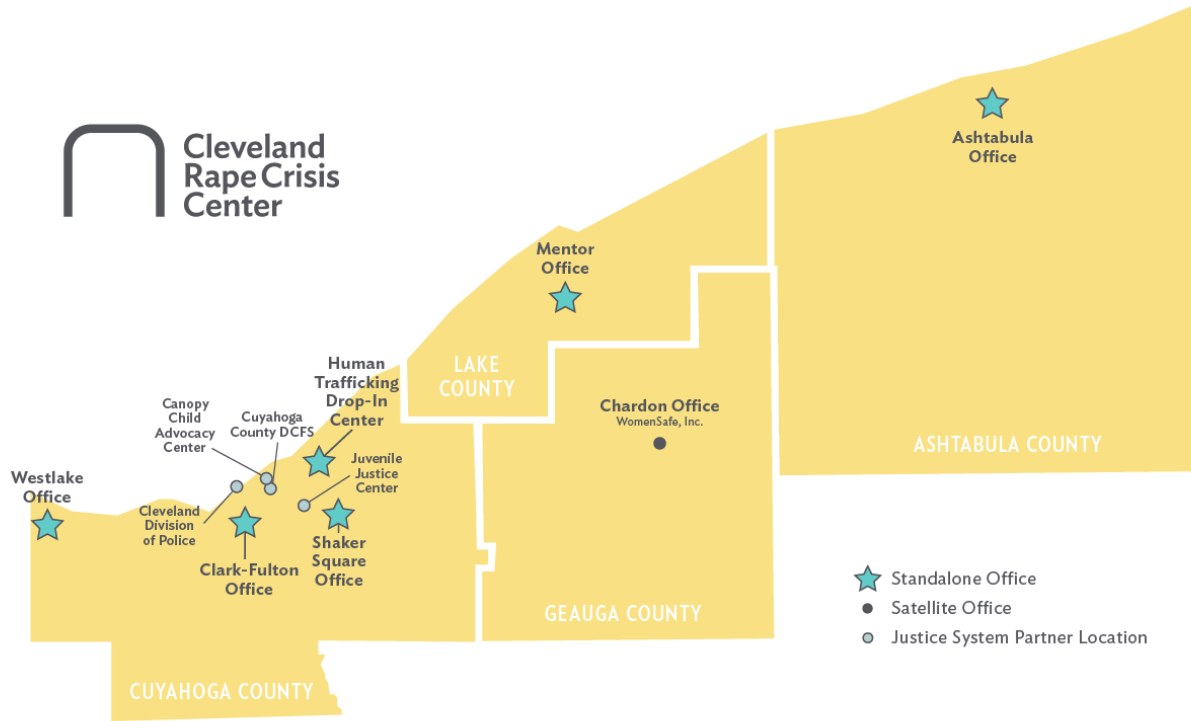
# Our Mission

To support survivors of rape and sexual abuse, promote healing and prevention, and advocate for social change.

# Our Vision

The elimination of sexual violence.

# Our Locations





# CRCC Services



All services are provided at no cost to the survivor



“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”

*- Coretta Scott King*



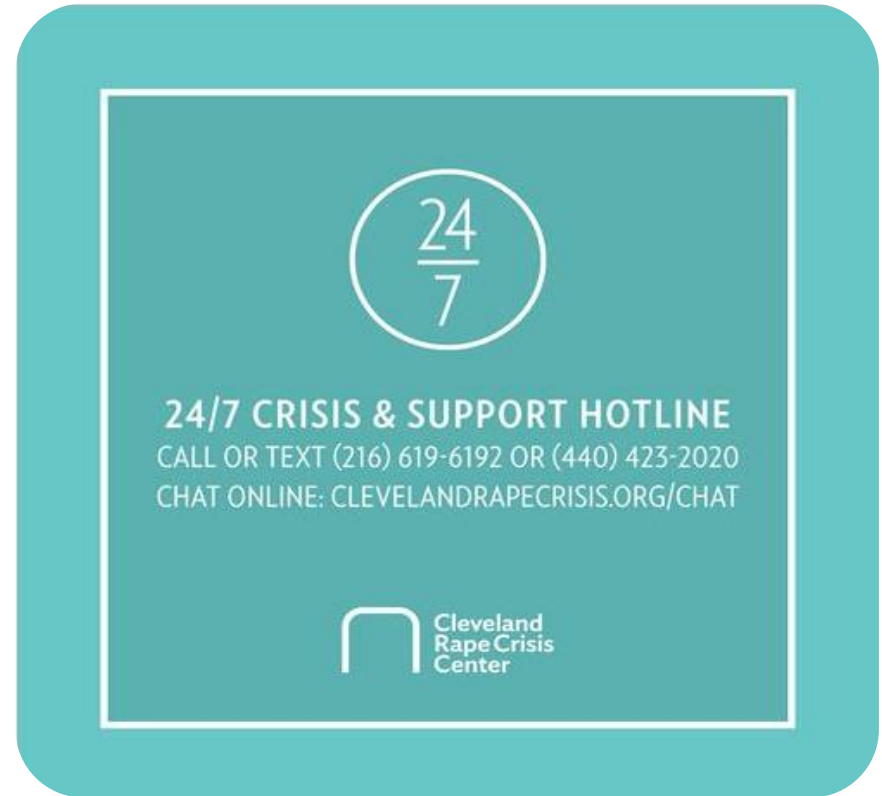
# 24-Hour Services

## Call/Text

(216) 619-6192 or  
(440) 423-2020

## Chat

[clevelandrapecrisis.org/chat](https://clevelandrapecrisis.org/chat)



# Connect with Us!

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center

24-Hour Hotline:



**Call/Text:**

**(216) 619-6192**



**Chat:**

**[clevelandrapecrisis.org/chat](https://clevelandrapecrisis.org/chat)**



**Instagram**

**@clevelandrcc.org**

WE BELIEVE YOU.

