

# Sexual Harm & Violence Myths

**MYTH** She “asked for it”

**FACT**

- ▲ Being drunk or “out of it” does not invite sexual harm and violence
- ▲ Clothes do not invite sexual abuse or violence
- ▲ Being in a relationship does not invite sexual abuse or violence
- ▲ Not fighting back does not invite sexual abuse or violence
- ▲ Nothing invites sexual harm or violence

**MYTH** Sexual harm and violence is only committed by strangers

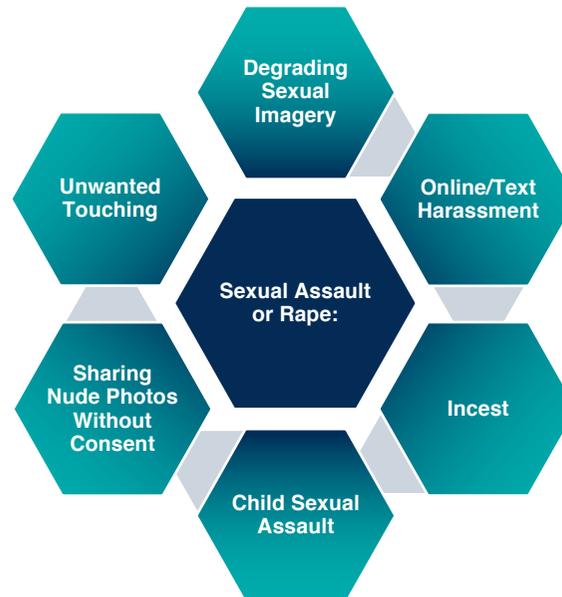
**FACT**

- ▲ Most sexual harm and violence incidences are committed by someone who is known to the victim and can include, family, friends, partners and work mates.

# What is Sexual Harm & Violence?

Sexual harm comes in many different forms. We define sexual harm & violence as any behaviour of a sexual nature that makes someone feel uncomfortable, frightened, intimidated or threatened.

Sexual harm and violence can include any of the following but is not limited to:



 The responsibility for harm always lies with the offender

# Effects of Sexual Harm & Violence

Some of the effects of sexual harm & violence can be really confusing and scary. You may feel like you are going crazy. It is normal to have this reaction to a traumatic event.

Things we can experience in the short-term are:

- ▲ Shame, self-blame
- ▲ Numbness
- ▲ Angry
- ▲ Confusion
- ▲ Irritability
- ▲ Anxiety and depression
- ▲ Sleeplessness
- ▲ Hypervigilance
- ▲ Intrusive memories
- ▲ Self-doubt and minimising the assault.

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## Talking About It



Because of the secrecy, shame and stigma often associated with sexual harm and violence, we may find it difficult to talk about and may not know how to tell people or even how to describe what has happened to us.

Our Crisis Team specialises in sexual harm support. Talking with a crisis worker who understands these feelings can help you work through some of your concerns.

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## Getting Help



If you, or someone you know has been sexually harmed, we provide professional, non-judgmental crisis support.



Waikato | Bay of Plenty Support

Phone: 07 577 0512

Freephone 24/7: 0800 227 233

[www.tautokomai.co.nz](http://www.tautokomai.co.nz)



24/7 | Confidential | Free  
Sexual Harm Helpline

SAFE TO TALK  
0800 044 334

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## Understanding Sexual Harm and Violence

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