

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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One Month In Maine

A Snapshot of Sexual Violence in Maine

November 1st — November 30th, 2008



Every family. Every neighborhood. Every community.



Produced by the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault

THE MANY VOICES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

One in five adult Maine residents, and 30% of Maine women have been the victim of rape or attempted rape during their lifetime.

Everyone in Maine is impacted by sexual violence. And everyone shares its burden.

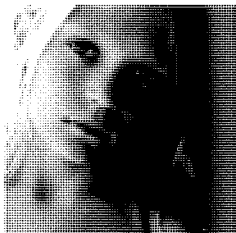
In one month in Maine, hundreds of citizens are affected by sexual violence, and turn to Maine's sexual assault support programs for help. This is a snapshot of that month: it illustrates the work that happens across our state every day in an effort to support victims and survivors of sexual assault. Some may be adult survivors seeking support for childhood sexual abuse. Some are building safety plans following an assault. Some are pursuing justice in our legal system. Some are calling in crisis, and may need guidance and a hand to hold during a medical forensic examination. All are turning to their local sexual support program to receive the support they need to find healing and rebuild their lives.

Unfortunately, the information included here is just a snapshot- it is not the complete picture of sexual violence in Maine or even of all the work being done by sexual assault support programs. Though there are many places to turn to for assistance- a health care provider, a crisis center, a school, a law enforcement agency- not every crime is reported, and no source in Maine compiles all information from every sector. Sexual violence continues to be one of the most underreported crimes in our state, our nation, and the world. Many victims choose not to report the crime against them. Feelings of fear, guilt, anxiety, or shame may keep survivors from raising their voices about this issue. Until all survivors are treated with the dignity, respect, and compassion they deserve, we will not know the full picture of sexual assault in Maine.

Everyone has the power to make a difference.

Because we all share the impact of sexual violence, we all have a stake in ending it. We can each speak up against the epidemic of violence affecting our families, neighbors, and communities. But first, we must know its face. Sexual violence has many different effects: this snapshot is one resource to understand sexual violence from the perspective of those who live it every day.

In one month in Maine, staff and volunteers across the state are working to help survivors of sexual violence heal, rebuild, and thrive. This is their story, and the story of those they work to support.



Saturday, November 1

An advocate received a hotline call from a young woman in an abusive relationship who is concerned for her safety and that of a child. The advocate discussed safety planning and referred caller to local domestic violence project.

An advocate accompanied a young woman to the hospital following a sexual assault to provide emotional support while the woman received medical care and a forensic exam. The advocate also provided support and guidance to the boyfriend of the victim/survivor.

Sunday, November 2

An advocate spoke with a woman on the hotline about concerns that one of her children is currently being sexually abused. The advocate made a report to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

An education coordinator provided information about the resources at the sexual assault support program, including opportunities to volunteer at a community event for youth.

Monday, November 3

An advocate accompanied a 12-year old victim/survivor and her mother to the courthouse for a Protection from Abuse hearing.

A young woman in high school came into the center with her mother for support. She was raped by an acquaintance exactly a year ago.

An advocate talked with a middle school guidance counselor about two middle school girls who were sexually abused by the same man.

An advocate attended district court for a Protection from Abuse hearing for a victim/survivor who was sexually assaulted by her ex-boyfriend while she held their daughter to her chest. The Protection from Abuse order was granted.

An advocate responded to email inquiry about services and confirmed that the program provides all of its services to all genders.

A local newspaper reported that a registered sex offender was arrested for violating conditions of release stemming from his employment at a therapeutic riding center which serves children.

A 58-year old child sexual abuse survivor with significant physical and mental health challenges called because she was feeling suicidal. The advocate developed a crisis intervention plan and discussed available resources.

An accused male perpetrator appeared in a local court to request that the school district be required to allow him to attend sporting events that his daughter is involved in. The judge informed the man that it is up to the school to decide if he should be permitted and restated that his bail conditions stated that he was to have no unsupervised contact with children under 16 years old.

A school-based educator provided the Child Lures prevention program to two 3rd grade classes at a local elementary school.

A woman spoke with a staff person to obtain educational material for her husband to help him identify indicators of sexual predators as his daughter had been sexually abused.

Tuesday, November 4

An advocate provided support to the mother of a 4-year old victim/survivor after being informed that the criminal case was declined.

A meeting was held at a local police department with the detective, sergeant, and deputy chief to discuss training, Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) services, and opportunities.

An advocate answered questions about the age of consent for a high school student.

An advocate met with a 17-year old who disclosed that her father made her take pictures of him and her mother having sex.

An educator provided three high school class presentations to a total of 75 students on the media and how it impacts our perceptions of gender and sexuality.

An advocate accompanied two victims to speak at Grand Jury, and then provided follow up support to the victims.

An advocate co-facilitated a TREM (Trauma Recovery Empowerment Model) support group for four female sexual assault survivors.

A community educator co-presented an adult education course for at risk youth with a local domestic violence educator.

An advocate received a hotline call from a victim/survivor who has called before. The caller is struggling with childhood sexual abuse issues and is currently in a mental health institution where he is not feeling that his voice is being heard.

A school-based educator presented "Three Kinds of Touches" to three kindergarten classes at a local elementary school.

Wednesday, November 5

A client called to discuss the process of reporting a stalking crime to police.

An advocate helped a high school student complete the Victims' Compensation Fund application to help the student receive counseling for sexual abuse experienced as a child.

A local newspaper reported that a man accused of unlawful sexual contact against a minor in August is being held in the jail Mental Health Stabilization Unit pending another court hearing.

A staff member called and spoke with a survivor of stranger assault. The survivor is unable to come into the office for meetings; so instead, the staff advocate calls the survivor on a weekly basis to provide support, referrals, and coping skills.

An advocate talked with Assistant District Attorney about cases that are waiting to go to Grand Jury.

A 27-year old woman came into the center to talk about her abuse experiences as a child. She is just beginning to recall specific information and needs support through the process.

An educator provided presentations to two groups of high school seniors about alcohol and sexual assault.

A staff member provided outreach during a local soup kitchen's community lunch.

Thursday, November 6

A 60-year old female called the hotline for support after her house was recently broken into and she was raped.

A sex offender's ex-wife called to inquire as to why her ex-husband was acquitted at a bench trial.

The father of two 5-year old twins called for support and information. His children disclosed being touched by their mother's boyfriend during visitation with their mom.

The SART Outreach Coordinator met with a 74-year old survivor who is working through issues stemming from a sexual assault she experienced at 7 years of age by a farm hand.

A 29-year old woman came to the center to meet with an advocate because she was raped 15 years ago and contracted HPV which ended up causing extreme gynecological problems, ultimately resulting in infertility. She also revealed a prior sexual assault and three different instances of child sexual abuse.

An advocate helped facilitate a weekly women's group at the local homeless teen shelter.

A staff member met with a 17-year old male victim/survivor of sexual violence who is currently at an inpatient drug treatment program.

An advocate provided support to a 14-year old male whose younger sister was sexually abused over the summer.

A staff member met with the principal of a local junior high to talk about how the school is keeping their students safe as one of the students had recently sexually touched several other children.

Friday, November 7

An advocate met with a school nurse about a student who disclosed sexual abuse.

An advocate received a call to set up interviews using the Children's Advocacy Center.

81 outreach letters were sent out to area nursing homes, assisted living facilities and other service providers for the elderly and people with disabilities.

An advocate accompanied a victim/survivor to a public health clinic to receive follow-up HIV testing.

An advocate made phone calls and wrote letters to merchants requesting donations of sweat suits for victims to wear home from hospital emergency departments.

Saturday, November 8

A clinician from a local hospital called the hotline looking for resources to support a male victim/survivor who disclosed a male/male sexual assault.

Sunday, November 9

An advocate received a call from the hospital to support a 17-year old survivor of acquaintance rape. The advocate provided information and support for the survivor and her mother. A police report was made and forensic evidence was collected.

An advocate provided emotional support to a hotline caller who is a middle-aged woman currently being sexually harassed on the job. The advocate also offered a definition of sexual harassment and encouraged the caller to notify her employer's human resource department.

Monday, November 10

An advocate provided a victim with accompaniment to the police department and the district court to file a temporary Protection from Abuse order.

An educator provided a presentation to a group of 30 high school freshman students with basic information on sexual assault including what to do if you or a friend is sexually assaulted.

An educator provided a presentation to a group of 20 high school seniors about the prevention of drug facilitated sexual assault.

An advocate received a call from an incest survivor who is now the grandmother of two grandchildren that are sexual abuse survivors. Her first grandchild was 17-months old at the time of abuse and was brutally violated anally by a screwdriver, and the second grandchild was one-year old at the time and violated the same way. The children were both abused by their babysitter's boyfriend. The grandmother was looking for support and information.

School-based educators facilitated a focus group comprised of 7th & 8th grade students to help create an effective cyber bullying education program for middle school students.

A staff member convened a meeting of the Interfaith and Interdisciplinary Task Force to End Violence.

Tuesday, November 11

An advocate received a hotline call from a victim/survivor with a history of multiple assaults who was having a hard time sleeping and did not want to continue living. The advocate helped develop a safety plan with her.

An advocate had email contact with a client who was assaulted in Maine over the summer but is in New Hampshire at school struggling with the investigation as she is so far away.

A staff member attended a local "Call to Men" meeting which works to organize men in efforts to ending violence against women.

Wednesday, November 12

An advocate provided support to a victim/survivor in prison who recently reported sexual assault while incarcerated.

An advocate provided support and advocacy to a victim who came into a center to talk about the nightmares she has been having relating to her sexual assault.

An educator facilitated a training with a group of 40 high school freshman students on healthy relationships.

An advocate, along with other members of the local SART, presented training to 35 law enforcement officers on the recently released statewide first responders' guidelines for sexual assault investigations.

A man stopped by a sexual assault support center to ask about resources for his neighbors who he feels are being abusive. He is aware of verbal and physical abuse but not sure about sexual abuse at this time. A staff person provided the sexual assault crisis and support line number and a list of available local resources, including the local domestic violence project.

A staff member presented on drugs used to facilitate sexual assault at the program's monthly advocate meeting to advance the hotline advocates' knowledge on this topic.

An advocate provided support to a victim experiencing fear and anxiety due to her perpetrator moving back into the area.

Thursday, November 13

An advocate received a call from a former client who inquired about a known perpetrator who has grandchildren staying with him. The advocate provided information on the Sex Offender Registry and DHHS.

Two educators met with the school nurse from a local high school to establish weekly drop-in hours at the school-based health center.

An advocate provided a 3-hour presentation for graduate counseling/psychology students about sexual assault and its effects.

An advocate was paged at 3:00am to go to the hospital to be with a woman who was sexually assaulted by her soon to be ex-husband.

Friday, November 14

A school-based educator presented to an assembly about internet safety to 105 middle school students and 20 school staff.

A staff member presented sexual violence awareness training to 12 professionals who work with people with disabilities and the elderly.

An advocate spoke to the daughter of a mother who is being sexually assaulted by another resident of her nursing home. The advocate offered support and referrals.

An advocate received a phone call about an elementary school student who disclosed that his grandfather had been arrested for sexual abuse.

An advocate met with the director of the tech center regarding a concern about a student who wrote a very descriptive essay about abuse in one of her classes.

A newspaper reported that the state dismissed charges of rape, assault and terrorizing against a Border Protection Officer due to lack of evidence.

An advocate met with a couple looking for information on how to best protect their third grade daughter from possible sexual abuse. In the past, their child had been sexually touched by a cousin one year older than herself.

Saturday, November 15

An advocate provided guidance to a hotline caller that is a friend of a rape survivor who was voicing suicidal thoughts. The advocate provided the friend with support and the suicide hotline number.

A young woman called the hotline to inquire about who would have to find out if she reported her sexual assault. She is concerned that staff on her campus would find out and that there would be problems for her.

Sunday, November 16

An advocate accompanied a 22-year old victim/survivor to the hospital after she was sexually assaulted by strangers.

Monday, November 17

An advocate received a call from a survivor who had obtained a Protection Order against the perpetrator and has had a hard time getting him served with the papers. She was not sure if he was in the state or not.



An advocate attended the Elder Abuse Task Force meeting and discussed sexual violence with seniors, law enforcement, and community professionals.

An advocate met with a student at a local high school who had concerns about potential violence in her dating relationship.

An advocate provided support to a victim who has come forward after eight years to report a sexual assault that happened when she was 14 years old and now wants to protect the community against the perpetrator who is hanging out with young girls again.

An advocate met with a girl who was sexually abused by her step grandfather.

Tuesday, November 18

An advocate received a call from a concerned parent who is in the middle of going through family court with the father of three of her children who has sexually abused her fourth child.

A school-based educator provided a presentation on sexual harassment to two groups of seventh grade students at the middle school. Fifty students and three teachers participated.

A staff member met with a female who had been sexually assaulted by a staff member of her high school when she was a student there; she now wants to press charges.

A man called the hotline concerned that his son may have been violated and wanted to know what services were available to them.

An advocate provided support to a victim through the hotline regarding a facility in Maine that can help with co-occurring problems related to her past sexual abuse and alcoholism.

Wednesday, November 19

An advocate received a call from a detective requesting accompaniment to an interview with a girl who had been reported to be told to take inappropriate pictures of an adult. The girl was under the age of 18.

An advocate received a call from a detective who has been meeting with a girl who was sexually assaulted by two/three men that were unknown to her.

An advocate received a hotline call from a woman who feared she was being stalked. The advocate provided safety planning for the caller.

An advocate met with a student at a local high school to discuss her experience of sexual abuse as a young child.

A newspaper reported that federal cuts have delayed rape kit analysis at the state's crime lab. Maine's lab has 53 sexual assault DNA samples waiting to be assigned to a chemist, the oldest dating to December 2007.

A staff member met with a mother concerned for her six-year old son who was sexually abused by his father.

A man that had been sexually abused as a child called the hotline looking for support around current issues he has resulting from the abuse.

Thursday, November 20

A father called the office looking for support and information concerning his 8-year old daughter. His daughter was sexually assaulted by her mother's boyfriend while she was living with them.

A newspaper reported that a 37-year old local man was arrested on eight child-sex charges that allegedly happened over a period of five years.

A 38-year old woman who lives in an adult/disabled housing complex was sexually assaulted by her father when she was eight years old and was disowned by her family after disclosing the abuse in her teens. This survivor attended drop-in services provided by her local sexual assault support program.

A newspaper reported that a 43-year old man will go to prison for three years after pleading guilty to sexually abusing a 14-year old girl.

A staff member provided stalking resource kits to a local school in response to a request from the school resource officer.

A 14-year old student disclosed to an educator how she was sexually assaulted by her brother a month ago.

Friday, November 21

An advocate attended a containment meeting with the Department of Corrections and probation to review nine high risk sex offenders living in the county.

An advocate reported to DHHS/Child Protective Services about a child who was sexually assaulted at school.

A child sexual abuse survivor who has received services from the sexual assault support program called with great anxiety after reading about curtailments to social services. She was afraid that the center was going to close. The advocate provided reassurance and support.

An advocate received a call through the hotline from a survivor who was recently assaulted by his partner, is being harassed by him and wants to know what he can do.

An advocate was contacted by a detective who was going to the hospital to talk with a girl who had been sexually assaulted by an ex-boyfriend.

A newspaper reported that a former schoolteacher was sentenced to 30 days in jail for having a sexual relationship with a 13-year old boy.

An advocate met with a college student about her experience with sexual violence and also learned of many new disturbing incidents on campus.

Saturday, November 22

A staff member presented an 8-hour advocate/hotline training for new volunteers.

Sunday, November 23

A 14-year old called the hotline and disclosed that her dad had been assaulting her since her mother died.

An advocate provided support to a hotline caller who is working on issues of child sexual abuse. The advocate also provided information about an upcoming support group that may be helpful.

Monday, November 24

A staff member took a hotline call from a 45-year old survivor of child sexual abuse who called to talk about her increasing anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. A crisis plan was created and the caller was referred to talk to her doctor about her issues with depression.

A staff member received a hotline call from a stalking victim who called to say that she thought she had seen the stalker. The caller has been very cautious but feels like there is nothing she can do. Support and a safety plan was provided.

Tuesday, November 25

A staff member took a hotline call from a woman who had had a forensic exam in the previous month. This was her first time calling since she met with an advocate during the exam. The victim/survivor had recently spoken to the District Attorney's Office who wanted to offer the perpetrator a plea agreement. The victim/survivor had some questions about this because she felt it was not a fair plea. A meeting to address these concerns was set up with the DA.

An advocate provided support to a victim/survivor through a four hour medical forensic exam at the hospital.

A man called the hotline looking for support around an assault he experienced at age 13. He is also looking for a therapist and support group in the area. That information was provided to him.

An advocate provided training to 12 staff members of a local school district on how to respond to a sexual assault.

Wednesday, November 26

A newspaper reported that a 76-year old man convicted of sexually abusing a girl will spend three years in prison.

A staff person took a call from a person with a question about the legal age of consent and what the mother could do if she found out.

An advocate met with a mom and daughter who had just reported a sexual assault to the police and helped them fill out paperwork for a Protection from Abuse Order.

An advocate met with a victim and provided support regarding her ex-partner who was calling her, the disclosure that her son was sexually abused, and the uro-genital problems she is experiencing as a result of her trauma.

Thursday, November 27 (Thanksgiving)

Sexual violence happens every day, even on holidays. Trained advocates are on call to respond to victims/survivors and their loved ones with support, referrals and other information 24-hours a day.

Friday, November 28

An advocate received a hotline call from an ongoing client who reported that her stalker has reappeared and that "something happened". The advocate attempted to assess and discuss options. The client feels that she can't call police because she hasn't been believed in the past and has been charged with false reporting.

A woman called the hotline with questions about sexual harassment and the laws in Maine.

Saturday, November

A woman called the hotline after being assaulted in her sleep by a friend whom she had invited to spend Thanksgiving at her house.

Sunday, November 30

A rape/stalking victim called the hotline two times because of her anxiety. The perpetrator has been violating the protection order and the victim/survivor says she is not receiving much help from the police. The advocates provided support and referred her to talk with the SART Coordinator on Monday for assistance with police. The advocates also helped with safety planning.

A young man who is working on issues related to child sexual abuse called the hotline for support. The advocate provided support and information about the program's male support group.



SEXUAL VIOLENCE DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE.

In one month in Maine, 1,140 people of every age, ethnicity, and gender, are sexually assaulted. Every year, sexual violence costs the citizens of Maine hundreds of millions of dollars, in courts of law, corrections, crisis support, victims' compensation, law enforcement, and elsewhere. The comprehensive costs to Maine of child sexual abuse alone in 2004 were \$138,057,000, more than a dollar for every resident in the state.

Sexual violence is difficult to confront. It is painful to read accounts such as those in this snapshot. It's hard to comprehend the magnitude of sexual violence in Maine. It's even more difficult to know that it can happen to anyone, and has probably happened to someone we love. Finally, it is a challenge to find out how to help, and to maintain hope that we can each make a contribution toward ending sexual violence in Maine.

The good news is that there is help for survivors, and that every citizen can participate. Advocates at sexual assault support programs, along with the nurses who are Maine's Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners, district attorneys and prosecutors, local police officers, and hundreds of citizen volunteers, are working every day across the state with the goals of supporting survivors and ending violence in our communities forever. Here are just a few of the ways you can be a part of this effort:

- Donate your time, skills, or financial resources to your local sexual assault support program.
- Speak with your elected representatives at the state and national level about supporting legislation that addresses sexual violence, and funds its prevention and services.
- Speak up when others make explicit, derogatory, or harassing remarks. Avoid products that rely on exploitive images for advertising and contact the media who carry these images.
- Attend events in your community that support survivors and sexual assault education and prevention. Invite an advocate to speak at your school, workplace, or social group about sexual harassment, violence prevention, and/or services.
- Most importantly, if a friend or loved one has been assaulted, listen to them, believe them, and support them in their healing process.

Everyone in Maine is impacted by sexual violence, but together, we can support survivors and end sexual violence in Maine forever.

If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, even if the assault was in the past, you can contact the Statewide Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Line at 1-800-871-7741 (TTY: 1-888-458-5599), and be connected to your nearest support center. Trained advocates are ready to help, regardless of your age, background, ethnicity, or gender.



Maine's Sexual Assault Support Programs

In Maine, victims/survivors of sexual violence and their loved ones have access to free services and resources through the nine sexual assault support programs. The services can be accessed by calling the statewide sexual assault crisis and support line at:

1-800-871-7741 (or TTY: 1-888-458-5599)

The programs provide the following confidential services, free of charge: a 24-hour confidential hotline, support groups, crisis intervention and information, support for survivors and those close to them, advocacy for survivors who choose to seek medical attention, report to the police, or go through the criminal justice system, referrals to mental health professionals, and community and school-based education programs.

Augusta – Sexual Assault Crisis & Support Center
Area served: Kennebec, Knox, Somerset & Waldo Counties
www.silentnomore.org

Farmington – Sexual Assault Victims Emergency Services
Area served: Franklin County
www.savesrapecrisis.org

Bangor – Rape Response Services
Area served: Penobscot & Piscataquis Counties
www.rsonline.org

Lewiston/Auburn – Sexual Assault Crisis Center
Area served: Androscoggin County
www.sexualassaultcrisiscenter.org

Brunswick – Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine
Area served: Eastern Cumberland, Sagadahoc & Lincoln Counties
www.sassmm.org

Portland – Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine
Area served: Cumberland and York Counties
www.sarsonline.org

Caribou – AMHC Sexual Assault Services
Area served: Aroostook County
www.amhc.org

South Paris – Rape Education Crisis Hotline
Area served: Oxford County
www.reachmaine.org

Ellsworth – Downeast Sexual Assault Services
Area served: Hancock & Washington Counties
www.downeasthealth.org

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual violence and would like information on your options, referrals for services, and support, please contact the support program nearest you by calling 1-800-871-7741 (TTY: 1-888-458-5599) 24-hours a day.



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