

POWER



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HELP

The POWER booklet is a joint project of the Victorian CASA Forum and Resourcing Health and Education (RhED) in the sex industry, a program of the Inner South Community Health Service. The booklet is part of a larger project about sexual violence in the sex industry called **The Power We Share is the Power We Have.**

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DISCLAIMER

The information supplied in this booklet is not legal or health advice. To the best of our knowledge it was correct at the time of publication. It should only be used as a guide and you should seek assistance from qualified health, legal or other advisers as required.

INTRODUCTION

01:

This booklet is for sex workers only. It's about sexual assault in the context of sex work in Victoria. We hope you find it relevant to your work and to your sense of personal power.

Sex workers know how powerful it is to be in charge of your own body, to assert MY BODY'S MINE! Control over what happens to your body is a most fundamental right. Ugly Mugs (and Ugly Bosses) try to take that control away, because they feel entitled. Well, they're not! Sex that is not negotiated is not part of the deal. Sexual assault is not part of the job.

Too many sex workers have been made to feel, after an assault, that 'nothing could be done' **because** they are sex workers. This booklet encourages you to take action. The action may be as small as passing this booklet on to another sex worker or as large as standing up as a witness when someone who assaulted you is on trial. We hope the booklet inspires you to explore your options and encourages you to share what you know about safety with each other.

The power we share is the power we have.



MEANINGS

SEX WITHOUT CONSENT

02:

You have the right to control your own body. You have this right whether your work involves sex or not. You have a right to expect that your body will not be assaulted.

Sexual assault is sexual activity that you didn't agree to, where another person uses physical or emotional force against you.

Sexual assault is anything that happens after I say no... (...or haven't said yes to).

SEXUAL ASSAULT IS A CRIME!

03:

Sexual assault is NOT just a 'job that goes wrong'. **The law says sexual assault is a crime.**

Sexual assault is a crime:

- * whether any semen is ejaculated or not
- * even if you've had sex with the person some other time
- * even if you agreed to another type of sexual service (for example, you may have agreed to vaginal penetration but this doesn't mean you agreed to anal penetration)
- * whether you're female, male or transgender
- * whether you're a sex worker, community worker or construction worker.

Sexual offences include rape and indecent assault.

RAPE

04:

Rape means sexual **penetration** without your consent and when the person is aware that you are not consenting. (It's also rape if the person doesn't withdraw as soon as he realises you are not freely agreeing to the sexual penetration.)

There's no consent if you're so out of it or drunk that you are incapable of freely agreeing; where there's force or you're threatened; when you're unable to leave or you're locked up; if you're asleep or unconscious.

Sexual penetration means penetration, to any extent:

- * by a penis into a vagina, anus or mouth
- * by another part of the body, such as a tongue or finger, into a vagina or anus
- * by an object into a vagina or anus.

Vagina includes a vagina that's surgically constructed.

INDECENT ASSAULT

05:

Indecent assault includes sexual acts **other than penetration** without your consent or against your will (for example, being touched on the bum or breasts or being forced to watch a sexual act).



PROTECTION

ON THE JOB

06:

The best protection is taking care, never proceeding without caution. Planning to be careful **before** you do a job is a smart and safe way to do business. Take **precautions** before **every** job, every client—even regulars! Don't let familiarity drop your guard!

Sometimes we think that just because we've done a job in that place a few times before, or seen that client before, that we're safe ...but that's the time you can be caught off guard...

BEWARE OF THE RISKS

07:

Generally, the risk of violence for sex workers depends on the location of work: street work is the most dangerous, next most dangerous is indoor work when you're working alone. The safest is indoor work with other people around. Where you work is more significant to your risk of danger than your age, drug use, length of experience in sex work or anything else.

Fit the precautions to the job!

WORKING ALONE DOESN'T MEAN WORKING ISOLATED!

08:

No matter where you work, develop strategies to reduce your isolation and stick with them, every time. Don't be tempted by short cuts to a fast dollar. Have your mobile phone or other communications systems in place. Have your buddies, spotters, back-ups and 'trusted others' in place. Have your plans in place and have your self-esteem in place!

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!

09:

If you feel you are being pressured into something you don't want, then you **are** being pressured! Don't want to do the job with that client? Then **don't!** Go with your gut feeling! Don't worry about being 'nice'—don't be! Offending someone is better than being assaulted. Losing a job is better than losing your confidence, your health or your life.



...PROTECTION

THE MAN WHO RAPES LOOKS LIKE THE MAN WHO DOESN'T RAPE!

10:

Remember that most Ugly Mugs look and act like ordinary men, come from all social classes, income levels, races and age groups—they fit nicely into normal society, have nice girlfriends/boyfriends, nice wives, nice mates, nice jobs and nice hobbies. Some men choose to rape and others don't.

It's rare but a man who rapes can have an accomplice who is a woman.

*This is what you're paying for.
This is the limit!*

*We're going to do whatever we
can to make you happy but there
are boundaries.*

*If they don't like it they don't book
me, full stop!*

*Say what you'll do, what they can
do and... for what you don't want
them to do, say beforehand 'don't
even think about it!'*

TAKE CONTROL—FROM THE START! AND KEEP IT!

11:

Taking control is what you're good at. That's what you do. Build a façade, construct a screen, be who you want to be, as long as you put yourself across in a way that your boundaries and barriers are clear—and the client knows not to screw you around!

Negotiate with confidence. Make your negotiations clear. Set the terms—make sure they're understood. Say what they can and can't do and what you will and won't allow. You have the right to set limits about touching or sexual behaviour. Everyone's limits are different. If someone has reached your limit, tell them quickly and clearly.

Take the money up front and at the start. If there's no evidence that they can pay, they're probably planning not to pay. Make sure you're playing the same rules!

Don't do jobs when you're so out of it that you lose control.

Stay on top of the action. Don't put yourself in a position where you can be pinned down.

Be cool, calm and in control—if you're not, act as though you are.

And remember, there's a big difference between rape and a rape fantasy!

IT'S NOT OVER TILL IT'S OVER !

12:

Don't relax after the job's done—that can be the time he'll assault you. Relax after he's gone!

ARM YOURSELF

13:

WEAPONS BAD! A weapon that you carry for self defence can be turned against you and you can end up being the one who gets injured. As well, carrying a weapon can get you:

- * a fine up to \$12,000 or up to 6 months imprisonment if it's designed to be a weapon (like a flick knife)
- * a fine of up to \$6,000 or up to 6 months in prison if it's designed for something else but used as a weapon (like a kitchen knife). Then it's a 'controlled weapon' and you can be fined for carrying it without a 'lawful excuse'. A lawful excuse does **not** include self defence
- * a fine of up to \$6,000 or up to 6 months in prison for 'misusing a dangerous article'.



ARM YOURSELF

...13

WEAPONS GOOD! Think about getting skilled up in self defence. Contact RhED if you want information about sex worker friendly self defence classes.

WEAPONS SHARED! If you know someone is an Ugly Mug, let others know! If you've learned a good safety tip, let RhED know. If you're a more experienced worker, teach someone new. Someone who seems like competition today might be your best back-up tomorrow. The power we share is the power we have.

ON THE STREETS

14:

Street work is dangerous work because of anti-street work laws and social attitudes. Sometimes street workers don't report crimes against them because they are scared of being fined for working illegally—Ugly Mugs know this, and take advantage of it!

If you're working the streets—be seen, work alongside other people, stay in touch with outreach workers, get the latest Ugly Mugs reports, be connected. Don't look vulnerable.

Try to work with one or two other people—a spotter, a friend or just a friend for the night—look out for each other. Know the scene! That means making sure you can trust the people you're relying on for your safety. Have a standing arrangement that someone will call the cops if you're late back from a job.

Really, REALLY, check him out while you're still on your own ground. If he feels suss on your turf, he'll only get worse once you're on his turf.

Try to do the job in a place that you're familiar with and that someone else knows about. Use a room if you can. If for some reason you're on your own, make like you're not. Call someone, be heard to leave a message or be seen to send a text message.

... I'm on the mobile phone saying 'I'm just on my way to a job now, the rego number's blah blah blah, I'll be back in half an hour. If not, call the police...'. Even if the phone's not working it puts the scare factor in him.

GEAR

15:

Wear clothes that keep you safe—shoes you can run in or kick off easily, no chains or jewellery you can be strangled with, no across-the-body shoulder bags you can be grabbed by.

Carry some sort of personal alarm—you can get one for a few bucks at electronics stores—and maybe a can of body spray, deodorant spray or perfume just in case you need to bring someone to a grinding halt.

Try and stay straight till you've finished work. Being out of it means you have less control.

Learn to weigh up risk before money. Don't let lures of money or gear cloud your judgement. Your most urgent need is to stay alive.

When I'm talking business with them, before I agree to the job, I watch their face—if they have certain reactions when I'm saying what I won't do...it's like my gut instincts kick in, and I won't do the job—not for any money, not for anything!



...PROTECTION

IN CARS

16:

Do your negotiations while you're still outside the car.

Get the rego number as you're walking up to a car. Write it down if you can. With lipstick on the footpath if you have to. Or find some other way to record it. On a mobile phone, maybe. Or, get another worker or a spotter to do it. If all else fails—note the rego in your head. Some workers make a rhyme or develop some other system of their own for memorising the number plate.

If you can't see the plates, ask him to turn off the headlights so you can. Let him know his rego has been noted.

Take note of the car's make, dents or damage, colour and any decoration as well as the rego number.

Avoid clients in hire cars or cars with interstate rego plates or cars without keys in the ignition.

Don't lean too far into a car when you're negotiating a job.

Ask the client to put the light on in the car. If he won't or it doesn't work, beware!

Don't do a job if there's more than one person in the car—look, make sure. Make sure the passenger door handle opens from the inside—make sure there is a door handle!

Don't be shy to ask him to put the window down so you can check before you get in the car.

If there's a steering wheel lock in the car move it to the back seat behind where the client's sitting.

Look under any blanket or jacket on the back seat in case there's a weapon or ropes or anything else that worries you. Try to find a way to check the glove box and other places for hidden weapons.

Keep an eye on both hands when he's driving—in case he slips his hand down beside the driver's seat for a concealed weapon.

Get him to park where **you** want, where **you** know.

Never let him park the car where you can't get out! Like hard up next to a tree, a wall or a pillar.

If the car has central locking open your door a little so the locking doesn't work.

HOTELS, HOUSES, HIS PLACE

17:

Have an escape line planned, before any job, before every job!

So I said I needed to go to the toilet, please let me go. I said I'll be right near the door so you've still got me. But I bolted.

If you think things could turn dirty let him think you could throw up in his car.

Leave your mark in the car. Leave fingerprints. Leave DNA (hair, a bit of finger nail).

I always touch the dashboard or maybe leave a bit of hair or spit and rub it on the gear stick or their console or whatever. A lot of the rapists use condoms so you need to leave your DNA in the car or scratch him and get some of his skin under your fingernails.



Work with some sort of back up arrangement if you're doing hotels, houses or his place—friend, security person, driver, agency.

If you have a driver it's best to get them to check the lay of the land and collect the money before the booking starts.

Whether you have a driver or not, make sure you have a mobile phone and personal alarm and that they are in good working order. (The licensee of an agency must, by law, make sure you are supplied with a one way or two way electronic device.)

If it's an agency job ask if they've done their check of the client's name and address against the phone number he's at. If you're a private worker, always use caller i.d.

Listen outside for extra voices.

As you arrive, phone in to your agency, a friend or even your own answering machine. Let the client know you're not isolated. Say out loud the address, the time and the time you expect to be leaving. Even if you're not working through an agency, get as much information as you can about the client and let him know you've got it.

...PROTECTION

HOTELS, HOUSES, HIS PLACE

...17

Go 'do you mind if I use the phone?'. Even if I just call my own mobile, I've got the home number. And I always have a look around the phone and the fridge—look for any mail, any other details, the exact address—you've got to be able to call their bluff.

Plan your exit route when you arrive. Check out the layout straight away—see if there's anything odd about the place. Look out for deadlocked doors or windows. If in doubt, about **anything**, leave.

Be aware of the area you're in. Know where to go if you need to find a main road, a cop shop, a lit up area.

If the client is really out of it or drunk, leave.

If you're doing a job and another person walks into the room, always stand up so you can see all points in the room. Leave if the second person was not expected by you.

Get your agency, security person, driver, or buddy to call you a few minutes before the job's due to finish. Or you call them. Have a code worked out for when there's a problem.

BROTHELS AND PARLOURS

18:

Make sure that the place has panic or 'duress' alarms in all the rooms with buttons or buzzers that are accessible (**not** at the base of the bed or tucked under the carpet where you can't reach).

As soon as you have suspicions about a client take action. If you can't get to a duress alarm, use any tactic you can to leave the room, to make sure you're not alone with him in the room or to change the dynamic. Tactics can include:

- * using the intercom to call for help, use your voice, break something, just be heard!
- * making an excuse to go get a drink or call down to get someone to bring you a drink
- * trying to sell the client on bringing another person into the booking
- * offering to swap workers (to get you out of the room)
- * trying to sell him a different type of service
- * knocking the phone off the hook if that will attract attention at the front desk.

If a sexual assault occurs in your workplace don't be pressured into 'keeping it quiet' for the 'sake of the business'. Even if you don't want to take legal action, let RhED know!

SAFER ESTABLISHMENTS

19:

Working alongside others in a licensed brothel is fairly safe. In a licensed brothel alarms and other communications systems are in place and licensees have a legal responsibility to make sure the workplace is healthy and safe. Expectations about price, length and type of service are set so there's a clear base for negotiations with clients. **You have the right to refuse to see a client if you think the situation is unsafe.** However, not all brothels are licensed, not all licensed brothels have a safe culture and sexual assault happens even in licensed brothels.

Where the owner is not licensed as a 'prostitution service provider' they are operating illegally and may or may not have alarms or communications systems for your safety. It can also be harder to state clearly to a client what's included in the deal when the owner of the place is not licensed. If you have doubts about whether management supports your safety, look for work elsewhere!

If you're thinking of working in a new place, try to assess the way safety and support for workers is dealt with. Try to find out from someone who has worked there, or phone RhED for feedback.

A good establishment, licensed or not, will encourage the staff to share information through client cards, an incident book, communications book or some other system to educate and debrief each other.

Wherever you work, try and pick a place where standards and **workers** are valued:

... where there's an impression that the people working there should be respected not despite what they're doing, but because of what they're doing—and thanked for it, every time!

... where it's easy to understand what a standard service is made up of and where the message is good management, happy workers...happy workers, happy customers.

It's about service and a professional approach. All that gives workers power to negotiate better... knowing that 'if I walk out of this room now, the manager will stand up for me'.



SURVIVING

OFF THE JOB

20:

Off the job people who know you do sex work may want to exploit you because of it.

If someone sexually abuses you or threatens to tell the Department of Immigration that you're working in Australia illegally, contact RhED for information, support or assistance.

There are laws to protect against

- * sexual harassment
- * the threat of violence, including sexual violence, by a client, ex-client, partner, ex-partner. Sexual assault is sexual assault even if you're living with or married to the person who assaults you
- * stalking by a client, ex-client, partner, ex-partner
- * blackmail or unreasonable demands with threat if someone threatens to expose you as a sex worker unless they get free services. (You might want to remind them that sex work is not illegal in Victoria.)

There are also laws to protect your privacy.

These rights and protections are the same whether you are sex working or not! You are entitled to them!

WHEN YOUR BACK'S AGAINST THE WALL

21:

TAKE FLIGHT! Don't worry about the money. Get out of there as soon as you have a doubt about him.

TURN NOISE INTO A WEAPON!

Yell, scream, bang on walls, let off a pocket alarm—whatever! Try to let someone else know you're under attack.

TRUST YOUR SURVIVAL INSTINCTS!

Do what you **can**, don't give yourself a hard time. **Know** that you will do what you can. Stay alive.

TAKE NOTE! Anything (that's **anything!**) about him that might become important in a description later—his size, clothes, scars, tattoos, car, the way he says something. Sex workers make excellent witnesses because they're good on detail! Try to capture that detail—and a bit of his DNA!

KEEP CLEAR ABOUT WHO YOU ARE!

Know that you have strengths and strategies that will see you through to survival! Be clear that you are strong. Be clear that your body belongs to you!

GET SAFE! Get yourself to a person or a place of safety.

CONTROL

GETTING IT BACK

22:

Knowing that you can and will be the one 'in control' is the essence of good sex work.

It's normal to want to get back in control after a sexual assault—especially if providing sexual services is how you earn your living—but go easy on yourself.

Don't try to be tough. You'll heal better if you listen to your heart and take care of your needs.

BLAME AND SHAME

23:

Sexual assault is a crime. **If you're sexually assaulted it's not because you failed to prevent it!!!**

Many people think that some women are 'asking' to be raped or that some victims have themselves to blame. Sex workers are easy targets for this blaming. Don't buy into it! Nobody asks to be assaulted.

Rape is the fault of the man who chooses to rape! The shame is his, the blame is his, the responsibility is his.

Don't blame yourself and don't put it down to 'just a job that went wrong'.



FEELING SMALL

24:

If you've been sexually assaulted you can feel unable to make decisions because your will and wishes have been violated. Afterwards you might feel like you just want someone else to make decisions about what to do next.

It's okay to feel small. What's important is to know when enough is enough and when to get some help that lets you move on and gets you back in control.

KEEP YOUR OPTIONS OPEN!

25:

You might want time to work out if you want to go to the police or take legal action—but try as hard as you can to not wash, not take a shower, not take a bath and not douche. Try as hard as you can to not disturb clothing or anything else that might become evidence.

Try not to drink anything, brush your teeth or have any chewy if there was oral sex.

The "preservation and continuity of evidence" is important in case you want to take further action.

It's really hard. It's part of the cleansing of the aura, that need to take a shower—but it would hamper the evidence.

Even if you had to take a shower, maybe clothes would be useful and other bits and pieces like a tissue used to wipe yourself... or any other evidence you could collect.

SUPPORT THAT'S RIGHT

26:

Get support **before** you think you need it. Most people who have been sexually assaulted say they most needed support at the time of the assault by way of "someone to talk to" and "emotional support".

Sometimes other workers can be bitchy about it—'oh, she didn't really get raped' sort of thing. She's using that as an excuse' and it's not an excuse, it's actually happened to you. I think you need some sort of support or someone you can speak to about what's actually happened to you.

Support that's right leaves you:

- * feeling believed
- * knowing that it's not your fault
- * feeling reassured and validated
- * more able to make your own decisions
- * with your privacy, confidentiality and decisions respected
- * feeling that your wellbeing is more important than the wellbeing of the perpetrator, your workplace or anyone else
- * having faith that someone will stick up for you and act on your behalf if and when you need it.

Counsellor/Advocates who work in Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA) know how to give good support. If a sexual assault has happened in the last 7 days, a CASA will see you within 24 hours of contacting them.



...CONTROL

IN CONTROL— OUT OF CONTROL!

27:

There is no 'right way' to respond to a rape—during or after, short term or long term. Responses to violence or sexual assault can include shock, disorientation, fear, humiliation and feeling degraded—you might feel like crying but you might also feel like laughing madly or you might feel nothing.

What you feel has nothing to do with your work, past experience of sexual assault or the amount of sexual experience you've had.

Sexual assault is usually experienced as a life threatening event; after a sexual assault some workers have experienced one or more of the following feelings or effects:

- * a feeling of 'nothingness'—a sort of altered state, as though it happened to someone else
- * feeling 'dirty' (or getting into excessive cleaning rituals)
- * sadness, loss and grief (because your right to control your own body was violated)
- * depression or feeling hopeless
- * feeling the need to be 'silent' about what happened or that you must 'go on as normal'
- * behavioural problems and problems in your relationships
- * picking up, going back to old addictions or getting into some new addiction
- * nightmares or flashbacks
- * not wanting to touch anyone or be touched
- * not wanting to work, being gripped by fear that you won't want to work again
- * taking on many more clients than is normally okay for you
- * self blaming
- * self harming through slashing up, abusing yourself or doing sex when you don't want to or feeling that you're 'only good for sex'
- * fears or phobias (inspired by violence associated with sexual assault)
- * taking risks with yourself and your health that you normally wouldn't take, such as doing jobs without a condom
- * relief that you survived
- * ripped off and pissed off!

EFFECTS ON YOUR WORK

28:

When your profession involves negotiations to provide a particular sexual service, with particular limits, you need to stay confident that your control is absolute. Knowing that you can draw on that confidence whenever you want is important. A sexual assault can undermine that confidence and affect your future work. Don't underestimate your need for support if you experience a sexual assault. Dealing with the feelings and developing survival strategies can make a difference to your future work.

It's important that your life doesn't get more affected by the assault than it needs to. Some workers, for instance, might do drugs more often or do more drugs in response to feelings about an assault—but that can make you less in control of future situations, or with some other Ugly Mug.

These feelings may last a short time or a long time.

If you **don't** experience any of those feelings or effects after a sexual assault, that's okay too!

Talk to a Centre Against Sexual Assault about your best options for counselling—through a CASA, a private counsellor or a counsellor in a community centre. Or contact RhED.



...CONTROL

ACTION

EFFECTS ON YOUR WORK

...28

You might want to talk to a counsellor who is sex worker friendly and sex work savvy about ways to:

- * trust your capacity to suss out Ugly Mugs
- * control feeling vulnerable, afraid or tense during a job or a booking
- * not be afraid of all clients.

And remember—violence is not part of the job! A client's breach of the terms of a contract or agreement with you is **not** okay. Rape is **not** an occupational hazard.

Sexual assault is never just a job gone wrong!

MOVING ON

29:

Some people handle all their feelings about being assaulted in a very short time. If this happens to you, don't feel guilt and don't feel that you have no 'heart'. Just give yourself permission to move on.

Once you feel you have moved on, still keep a look out for effects of fear or trauma that can surface at some other, future, significant or odd time. Don't underestimate the impact of sexual assault on your mind, body, sense of self or sexuality! If you've had a past experience of assault or abuse some small or not-so-small incident can re-open 'old wounds', making you vulnerable to really intense feelings or even thinking you're 'going mad'. Get counselling if you need it, when you need it—even if its 20 years later!

TAKING ACTION CAN BE HEALING

30:

Sexual assault is about someone taking your personal power away from you. You are entitled to restore that control for **yourself**, to get that power back! You are entitled to heal.

Even though you may just 'want it to go away', taking action after an assault can help move you from feeling like a victim to being a survivor.

I did nothing 'cos I was too scared that I'd be the one who ends up with the charge.

REPORTING

31:

You have a legal right to report a sexual assault to the Police, it's your choice. Because of community attitudes towards sex work and sex workers it can feel really complex to make this decision, especially if you're working in a way that's not legal. If it feels like this for you then get some help by speaking with someone at RhED or a CASA. The people who work at CASAs offer an independent and confidential service. Most importantly it's their job to help you to get back or keep control of life by giving you support and information about your rights.

Even if you don't feel compelled to report it for the cause of justice, consider that this is an important part of the process of resolution for yourself. And maybe you're not in a clear enough space to make those decisions now, but if you report it now you can choose not to go through with it later. But at least you've got it off your chest. If you want it over and done with, the best way is to go through the reporting process because that way you 'get it out'.





WHERE TO REPORT A SEXUAL ASSAULT

32:

You can report a sexual assault by contacting:

- * **CASA** There are Centres Against Sexual Assault all over Victoria, as well as a statewide Sexual Assault Crisis Line that operates 5.30pm–9am Monday to Friday and 24 hours on weekends and public holidays. The role of a CASA is to provide you with counselling support, information about your rights and the legal process. You can contact a CASA and speak with the duty worker without having to give your name.
- * **SOCA Unit, Victoria Police** SOCA stands for Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit. They take initial reports, explain police procedures, take a written Statement, refer you to CASA (within 2 hours of you reporting the assault) and, if needed, arrange a medical examination.
- * **Local police** You can contact your local police station who should link you to the local SOCA Unit. The SOCA Unit should offer you a crisis care unit and contact the Sexual Assault Crisis Line or the local CASA and then take you to the Crisis Care Unit within 2 hours of you making contact with them.
You can also phone 000 or 11444 (Intergraph). They allocate a case number and refer it to an appropriate police unit. In this way you can be assured that the report doesn't just get "overlooked".

- * **Crisis Care Unit** Crisis Care Units are operated by CASAs and are specifically for people (17 years of age and over) who have recently been sexually assaulted. In a Crisis Care Unit you can get information and support about how you might feel over the coming months, where you can get future counselling, the process for collecting medical evidence, your rights with the police and the legal process.
If you choose to make a Statement to the Police, it usually means you will need to have a 'forensic' medical examination where a specially trained doctor will examine you looking for evidence such as traces of semen, hair and skin. ('Forensic' means for use in a court of law). They will also keep the clothes that you were wearing at the time.
If you are under 17 years of age and are sexually assaulted you are also entitled to a Crisis Care Unit. People under 17 are provided a Crisis Care Unit at the Gatehouse Centre or South East CASA.
If you need a Crisis Care Unit call your local CASA (9am–5.30pm), the Victorian Sexual Assault Crisis Line (after 5.30pm) or the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit.
- * **RhED Resourcing health and Education in the sex industry** can go with you to the police or a CASA. RhED has programs for the street industry and for the brothel/private/escort industry. RhED works with female, male and transgendered sex workers. RhED can connect male and trans workers with an appropriate sexual assault outreach program.

...ACTION

REPORTING TIPS

33:

If you decide to make a report to the police here's some tips:

- * If you don't feel like going it alone, contact RhED or a friend to go with you. You also have a right to request an interpreter.
- * When you make a report to the Police (SOCA Unit) you have a choice to make a 'statement' or a 'statement of no further action'. If you make a statement the Police will ask you to take them through every detail of the assault in order to get as much evidence as possible so they can charge the person.

If you make a statement of 'no further action' it means you want the Police to know what happened but not to investigate the assault. You still have to say as much as you can remember about the assault. If you make a statement of 'no further action' the Police are entitled to ignore the fact that you don't want the assault investigated and they can go ahead anyway.

- * Making a statement can take a long time. It can also be distressing to talk and think about the assault. Try and organise your personal needs so that you have the time and focus to make a statement. You can stop making the statement at any time and have a rest. Also you can take a friend along for support.

If you can't make a statement at the time of reporting, be clear about when you can be available and try to follow through.

- * A Detective in the area in which the offence took place will follow up the complaint. Make sure you are told the name and number of the investigating Detective. Stay in touch with the investigating Detective and let them know how you can be contacted —“no further action” is sometimes the end result if the police can't find you.

CARING FOR YOUR BODY

34:

Getting medical care after a sexual assault is important.

If penetration happened during the assault, it's a good idea to get a doctor to check out any tears, cuts or other injuries. If you're worried about contraception you can get Emergency Contraception (such as the morning after pill) from a doctor. Best to get it within 72 hours. If you're worried about sexually transmitted infections (chlamydia, trichomoniasis or gonorrhoea) you can get antibiotics from a doctor but make sure you ask about any side effects like nausea. You might also be offered a Hepatitis B vaccination. The chance of getting HIV through a single episode of sexual assault is likely to be low, but it may be worth checking out post exposure therapy (PEP) against HIV.

A couple of weeks after an assault, get checked out for signs of any new infections and for infections involving the bladder or kidneys. Keep a look-out for any signs such as a bad smell, pus, discharge or pain.



...ACTION

CARING FOR YOUR BODY

...34

There's a couple of ways you can go about getting the medical care you need. If you don't want to make a report to the police you can go to a local doctor or the emergency department of a hospital. If you don't have residency status you can get a check up at the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre without a Medicare card.

If you do want to make a report to the Police then you need to contact the Police or the Victorian Sexual Assault Crisis Line and they will arrange a crisis care unit where a forensic medical officer will examine and treat you.

If you're not sure whether you want to make a report to the Police and have a forensic medical examination then contact the Victorian Sexual Assault Crisis Line so that a counsellor/advocate can help you think about the options.

Whatever you do, treat your body well for a couple of weeks after an assault. Pamper it!

LETTING OTHERS KNOW

35:

Tell workers around you what's happened. Letting someone else know about an assault can be good immediate debriefing and can get you started on the road to healing.

Let workers in other places know about the perpetrator through the Ugly Mugs program at RhED. RhED takes the reports about clients who are violent (physically or sexually), uncooperative about using condoms or are dangerous. RhED sends the reports to other sex workers and to the police.

The police do pay attention to Ugly Mugs reports, particularly to track serial rapists. The best reports include any distinguishing characteristics of the client, car or other details.

Anything at all that will make someone else notice that this is the person who did this to you!

and you think...okay, do I pull out and drop that charge because I'm moving on with my life and I don't want to go backwards? I don't want to go back there again...

I'd say to anyone who's thinking about whether to go to the police or not: 'They're going to do it to someone else if you don't do something about it'.

JUSTICE

BRINGING HIM TO JUSTICE

36:

A Detective investigates the case and draws up a 'brief'. A person is charged, appears in the Magistrate's Court and applies for bail.

The police and the Prosecution collect more evidence. The case goes to a Committal Hearing at the Magistrate's Court through a 'fully-contested' hearing (with a witness) or through what's called a 'hand-up' brief (no witness). The decision is 'no case to answer' or 'go to trial'.

A trial will be held in the County Court, with a Judge and Jury. If the person pleads guilty, he doesn't give evidence. If he pleads not guilty **you'll be called to give evidence in court and you'll be cross-examined.**

The person may choose to remain silent, make a sworn statement or give evidence. If he is found guilty he is sentenced.

TELLING YOUR STORY IN COURT

37:

If you have to tell your story you have the right to:

- * meet the barrister who will be dealing with the case before and after the trial
- * ask that the Court be closed to the public and to have a separate waiting room at the court
- * ask to have arrangements made for you in the court when you give evidence—like putting up screens so you can't see the offender or giving evidence in another room using a video link
- * stay in court after you have told your story.



SURVIVING COURT

38:

As the process of investigating and prosecuting goes on you may feel that you're the one on trial or that the whole thing has nothing to do with you. This is because the focus shifts to justice for the 'accused', whose actions you may have 'witnessed'.

It's the job of the defence to make the jury feel the witness was at fault, adding to the self-blaming feelings most people have after a rape. The defence may try to create the impression the witness is capable of telling lies, adding to the negative attitudes many people have about sex workers.

Some sex workers going through this process have found it hard—but they have also found great strength in being part of a successful prosecution against an ugly mug now in jail.

Get support from the experience of others who have been through the same thing. Talk to someone at a CASA or at RhED about the best way of getting support through this process.

...even though it's you that this has happened to, everyone else is controlling the reins. That's what it feels like.

ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF CRIME

39:

A magistrate hears applications and awards assistance to victims of acts of violence through the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT). Generally the act of violence must be reported to the police within a reasonable time except where special circumstances exist. Applications must be made to VOCAT within 2 years of the act of violence (except in the case of certain childhood sexual assaults). Extensions may be granted in some circumstances.

The Victims Referral and Assistance Scheme (VRAS) can tell you about entitlements and how to apply.

VRAS also administers a Victims Counselling Scheme where a victim of a violent crime can get free counselling.

VRAS can tell you about your nearest Victims Assistance Program for support, information, referrals and practical help.

As a sex worker you are entitled to any benefits these schemes offer. Go for it.

COMPENSATION FOR INJURIES IN THE WORKPLACE

40:

You may be entitled to benefits from WorkCover if you are covered by them for other injuries in the workplace (and if the sexual assault has happened during work). You may be entitled to compensation for time lost from work or for other expenses. Usually you would need to make a claim within 30 days of the assault.



HELP

LANGUAGE ISSUES

Telephone Interpreting Service **131 450**

SEX WORKER ISSUES

RhED—Resourcing Health
& Education in the sex industry
10 Inkerman St, St Kilda 3182
Email: sexworker@sexworker.org.au
Web: www.sexworker.org.au

03 9534 8166

POLICE

Emergency Services **000**

Sexual Offences & Child Abuse Units
Melbourne **9247 5538**
Box Hill **9890 4977**
Dandenong **9767 7469**
Frankston **9784 5608**
Greensborough **9435 5444**
Knox **9881 7939**
Moorabbin **9556 6128**

Sexual Crimes Squad **9865 2540**

LEGAL ISSUES

Federation of Community
Legal Centres **9602 4949**

Women's Legal Service Victoria
9642 0343 or **1800 133 302**

Court Network
9603 7433 or **1800 133 302**
or **1800 681 614**

SEXUAL ASSAULT ISSUES

Victorian After Hours Sexual
Assault Crisis Line
9349 1766 or **1800 806 292**

CASA House **9344 2210**

ECASA—Eastern Centre
Against Sexual Assault **9870 7330**

Northern CASA—Northern Centre
Against Sexual Assault **9496 2240**

SECASA—South East
Centre Against Sexual Assault
www.secasa.com.au **9594 2289**

WestCASA—Western Region
Centre Against Sexual Assault **9687 5811**

Gatehouse Centre—
for people under 17 **9345 6391**

Ballarat CASA **5320 3933**

Bendigo CASA **5441 0430**

Geelong Rape Crisis Centre **5222 4802**

Gippsland CASA **5134 3922**

Horsham-Wimmera CASA **5381 9272**

Mallee Sexual Assault Centre **5022 3444**

Goulburn Valley CASA **1800 112343**

South Western CASA **5564 4144**

Upper Murray CASA **1800 622 016**

Domestic Violence and
Incest Resource Centre **9486 9866**

HEALTH ISSUES

AIDSLINE **9347 6099**

Melbourne Sexual Health Centre
560 Swanston St, Carlton
9347 0244 or **1800 032 017**

Women's Health Victoria
9662 3742 or **1800 133 321**

Directline—Drug and
Alcohol Telephone Info **1800 888 236**

RELATIONSHIP ISSUES

Relationships Australia **1300 364 277**

The Bouverie Centre **9376 9844**

Lifeline
24 hour Telephone Counselling **13 1114**

VICTIMS OF CRIME ISSUES

Victims Referral and Assistance Service
www.justice.vic.gov.au/victims
9603 9797 or **1800 819 817**

COMPENSATION ISSUES

Victorian WorkCover Authority
9641 1444 or **1800 136 089**

COMPLAINTS

About Police
Victoria Police Ethical Standards
Department Customer Assistance
and Community Consultation Unit
1300 363 101 (24 hours)

Deputy Ombudsman—Police Complaints
9613 6222 or **1800 806 314** (24 hours)

*About Licensed Brothels
and Escort Agencies*
Business Licensing Authority **9627 7260**

*About Health and Safety
in the Workplace*
WorkCover Advisory Service
9641 1444 or **1800 136 089**

