

Table 2: DEFINITION OF COMMON SEXUAL ASSAULT TERMS

Term	Malay equivalent	Definition
Rape	<i>Rogol</i>	Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman/girl against her will and without her consent.
Statutory Rape	<i>Rogol berkanun</i>	Sexual intercourse between a man and a girl below the age of 16 years, WITH or without her consent
Incest	<i>Inces/sumbang mahram</i>	Sexual intercourse between two people who cannot marry under the law, religion or custom such as a parent, step-parent or sibling.
Molestation	<i>Mencabul kehormatan</i>	Unwanted physical sexual contact with a person, such as, touching or fondling (other than rape or sodomy).
Sodomy	<i>Liwat</i>	Usually refers to the forced insertion of the penis into the anus of another person. Also referred to as “carnal intercourse against the order of nature”.



Activity 17: Dispelling Myths on Sexual Assault

AIMS

To get participants:

- To identify myths on sexual assault
- To recognise that the perpetrator should bear responsibility for his actions
- To understand the feelings of and to empathise with victims of sexual assault
- To recognise the importance of reporting sexual assault

Materials : Worksheet 14: Newspaper Cuttings on Sexual Assault Set A (rape) and Set B (sodomy)

Time : 60 minutes

Group Size : 30 - 40 participants

How to Conduct the Activity

1. Organise participants into groups of 10.
2. Tell participants that each group will be given two sets of newspaper cuttings, Set A and Set B (see Worksheet 14, pg.95).
3. Give each group both sets of newspaper cuttings. Give the groups 10 minutes to read through the newspaper cuttings.
4. Get participants to recapitulate the contents of the newspaper cuttings.
5. Ask the following questions and list down the participants’ answers on mahjung paper:
 - i. What do the newspaper cuttings tell you about sexual assault?
 - ii. How did you feel as you read the newspaper cuttings?
 - iii. How would you feel if the victim was someone you knew or a family member?
 - iv. Why would you feel that way?
 - v. Do you think the perpetrator (the person committing the offence) was aware that he was committing a crime?

6. Get participants to brainstorm on why they think a person commits rape? List down all their answers on mahjung paper. (NB: *Some of their answers may include "sexy dressing", "sexy women", "male lust", "temptation" and "pornography".*)
7. Discuss each answer carefully. Explain how these answers are linked to myths on sexual assault (See Appendix D, pg.114). Use examples from the newspaper cuttings to dispel these myths. For instance, the examples show that anyone can be a victim of sexual assault irrespective of their age or sex. Focus on the fact that in sexual assault, the perpetrator makes a deliberate choice to sexually assault someone.
8. Ask the participants what they think the perpetrator's attitudes and ideas about women are? (Link back to Activity 5, Ideas and Behaviour, pg.32).
9. Point out that the victim is not to be blamed and that the perpetrator of a sexual assault must take full responsibility for the assault.
10. Ask participants the following questions focussing on the victim and list down their answers on mahjung paper.
 - i. How do you think a sexual assault victim feels?
 - ii. Why do you think sexual assault victims are reluctant to make reports?
 - iii. Why is it important for sexual assault victims to make a report?
 - iv. What are some things you could do to help a sexual assault victim?
11. Conclude the session on a positive note. Point out to the participants that with their greater awareness of sexual assault and the feelings of victims of sexual assault, they are in a better position to empathise with the victim and to offer support. Give participants the following information:
 - what to do should an assault take place (see Appendix C, FAQs on Teenage Dating and Rape, pg.106).
 - contact numbers to seek help (see Appendix E, Useful Contacts, pg.117)

Worksheet 14: Newspaper Cuttings on Sexual Assault

Set A: Rape

Sent to reform school for raping his granny

(New Straits Times 3/9/08)

The teenager was supposed to be caring for his ailing 71-year-old blind grandmother. Instead he forced himself on her. The Juvenile Court was told that the youth, who was living with his mother, five siblings and grandmother, had raped his grandmother at their home. The woman was warded in hospital for treatment of the injuries incurred during the rape. Her 51 year old son who visited her in hospital found out what had happened and lodged a police report.

Year-old baby raped: Two held

(New Straits Times 24/12/08)

Police have detained two suspects aged 30 and 16 years, for raping a year-old toddler. The victim's grandmother had picked up the victim from the babysitter's house at 6pm. She told the toddler's mother that the toddler was bleeding from her private parts. The mother immediately took the toddler to hospital where rape was confirmed and the toddler had to be treated for the injuries incurred during the rape.

Dad and his friend raped me, says pregnant 15-year-old

(The Star 27/4/09)

A 15 year old girl who is seven months pregnant claimed she was raped for three years by her father and a friend of his. It was learnt that the secondary school student who lives with her parents told her aunt who then took the girl to the police station to lodge a report. It is believed that the girl had been raped repeatedly by both men since she was 12 years old.

Pregnant woman raped

(Daily Express Online, Sabah 30/1/07)

A glue sniffer broke into a house at a village here and raped a seven-month pregnant local woman as her three small children slept on Saturday. Police believe the suspect, said to be a local, broke into the house at about 2.30am to steal but saw the woman sleeping with her children. District Police Chief, DSP Yahaya Ramli, said the suspect seized the opportunity to rape the 24-year-old woman. He said the woman tried to fight back but gave in after the suspect threatened to harm her children who were still asleep. The woman's husband was away at work. The woman lodged a report at about noon at the district police headquarters the following day.

Worksheet 14: Newspaper Cuttings on Sexual Assault

SET B: SODOMY

College boy sodomised in city centre

(New Straits Times 14/8/08)

A 24 year old college student was robbed by two men and sodomised at knife point by one of them. The victim was waiting alone at a bus stop at 10.30pm to board a coach to return home to Kelantan. He was accosted by two men who took him to an isolated spot where they took his money and his handphone. He was threatened with a penknife, told to take off his trousers and was sodomised by the older man. Shortly before midnight the men released him. The student made a report the following morning.

Bank clerk held over sodomy

(The Star 25/9/07)

A bank clerk was arrested for allegedly sodomising a Form One schoolboy at his house. The man, aged 26, befriended the 13 year old earlier in the year. They started going out for dinner and movies, and one day he took the boy to his house where he forced himself on him. The boy was then paid RM20 to keep the matter a secret. The boy eventually told his brother and a police report was made.

Boy, 13, remanded in sodomy probe

(The Sun 7/10/08)

Police have arrested a 13- year-old boy for allegedly sodomising three younger boys at a children's home. Sources said the teenager, an inmate of the home who shares a room with a nine-year-old boy and two others, both aged 10, had allegedly forced himself on his victims during bedtime. It is said he had carried out the act between three and six times on each of the victims over the months. One of the victims complained to his parents who had come to visit him at the home. The parents then lodged a police report. On arresting the suspect, police discovered that two other boys had suffered the same fate.

Appendix A: ICE BREAKERS

When working with a group of people, it is important that they feel confident and comfortable enough to be able to participate fully in an activity or discussion. It is therefore helpful to break the ice at the beginning of a session, especially if the participants do not know each other. This will lead to participants being more at ease and having the confidence to participate and give honest feedback to the facilitator.

The following are four examples of ice breakers:

Ice Breaker 1: What am I?

Ice Breaker 2: Find Me Someone Who.....

Ice Breaker 3: Introduce Me

Ice Breaker 4: Follow Me

Appendices



ICE BREAKER 1: WHAT AM I?

1. Prepare stickers with names of objects or food or accessories written on them, e.g., piano, compact disc, hot dog, toothbrush, banana, deodorant, etc. This has to be done prior to the activity.
2. Explain to participants that you will stick a sticker on their foreheads but they are not to look at it and neither are they to tell the other participants what they can see on other people's foreheads.
3. Participants have to find out what object is written on the sticker on their forehead by asking the other participants questions. For example, they can ask, "Is it a big object?" or "Is it something I would use?" or "Is it something I would eat?" The other participants can only answer "YES" or "NO".
4. The game begins when all participants have a sticker on their forehead and ends when all participants have identified the objects on their stickers.
5. A small present (e.g., a bar of chocolate or sweets) can be given to the first three participants who identify the object on their sticker the fastest. (NB: A variation to the game is having the stickers stuck onto the backs of participants.)

ICE BREAKER 2: FIND ME SOMEONE WHO...

1. Prepare a list of 5 incomplete statements on a slip of paper. These statements should be applicable to your target audience. For example:
 - Someone who has been to Cameron Highlands.....
 - Someone who is born in the month of July.....
 - Someone who is older than you.....
 - Someone who has long hair.....
 - Someone who has a wrist watch.....

Make copies of this list of statements.

2. Group participants together. Explain to participants that they will each be given a slip of paper with 5 incomplete statements. Tell them that they have to identify people who fit each criterion on the slip of paper and get the person to sign on the dotted line. They CANNOT use the same person to answer any of the other questions. Also tell them that they have 5 minutes to complete this activity.
3. When you are sure participants have understood the instructions, give out the slips of paper containing the questions. Ensure that each participant has a pencil or a pen.
4. Make sure all the participants start the activity at the same time.
5. The first three participants to come back to you with a completed list in five minutes win a prize (e.g., a bar of chocolate or sweets). (NB: A variation of this game is for the facilitator to prepare 8-10 statements. S/he then calls out each statement, e.g., "Bring me someone who has been to Cameron Highlands". The first participant to find a person who has been to Cameron Highlands and to bring that person to the facilitator gets a small prize.)

ICE BREAKER 3: INTRODUCE ME

1. Get participants to pair up with someone they do not know.
2. Explain to participants that they are going to interview their partners for 5 minutes, after which their partners will interview them for 5 minutes as well.
3. Participants can ask their partners questions like: "What is your name?", "Where do you live?", "What sort of music do you listen to?", "What's your favourite food?" and so on.
4. Make sure all participants start the activity at the same time.
5. After 5 minutes, get participants to change roles with their partners.
6. At the end of the activity, the pairs should be given time to introduce each other to the large group. Each participant should be able to make 5 or 6 statements about his or her partner to the large group.

ICE BREAKER 4: FOLLOW ME

1. Get participants (between 10-15 people) to sit in a circle and join the circle as well.
2. Explain to participants that this activity is to help each of them remember the names of the participants in the group.
3. Tell participants that each person in the circle has to first say their name and then carry out an action, e.g., S raises her right hand or L shakes her head.
4. One person in the circle can start the game by stating his or her name and then gesturing or carrying out an action or holding a pose. The second person has to repeat the first person's name and action before stating his or her name and performing his or her action. The activity continues until all the participants in the circle have taken part.
5. The last person in the circle to take part has to repeat all the names and perform the corresponding actions of all the people in the group.

Pay attention and have lots of fun!

Appendix B: ENERGISERS



During a workshop, the facilitator may notice that the energy levels among the participants are very low. Perhaps it is after lunch, or the session has been heavy or difficult to cope with, or the participants are simply tired. It is important to reenergise the participants so that the learning and sharing can continue. The following are activities which can help stimulate and revitalise the participants:

Energiser 1: Remember the Number

Energiser 2: Cat and Mouse

Energiser 3: Dog and the Bone

ENERGISER 1: REMEMBER THE NUMBER

1. Get participants to stand up.
2. Explain that you will call out numbers 1 to 4 but each number denotes a particular action. For example:
Number 1: Participants laugh loudly.
Number 2: Participants cry loudly.
Number 3: Participants run on the spot very fast.
Number 4: Participants change seats.
3. Call out each number and get participants to carry out the corresponding actions. Make sure participants know the actions for each number.
4. Speed up the interval between calling the numbers.
5. Vary the order of the numbers called e.g., 1, 3, 2, 4, 3, 1, 2 and so on.

ENERGISER 2: CAT AND MOUSE

1. Tell participants that they are going to play a game called "Cat and Mouse" where the objective of the game is for the Cat to catch the Mouse.
2. Get participants to choose a partner and stand shoulder-to-shoulder.
3. Next, get the pairs to stand at different locations around the room.
4. Take one pair of participants aside and separate them. Make one person the Cat and the other, the Mouse.
5. Give the Mouse a few seconds to run away from the Cat before the Cat starts chasing the Mouse.
6. The Mouse can find safety by joining a pair of participants and standing shoulder-to-shoulder with one person in the pair. The other person in the pair (i.e., the one furthest away from the Mouse) now becomes the Mouse and has to run from the Cat.
7. If the Cat does catch the Mouse then they change roles. The Mouse becomes the Cat and chases the Cat who is now the Mouse!

ENERGISER 3: DOG AND THE BONE

1. This is a game which can be played with a maximum of 50 participants, provided there is enough space in the room.
2. Get participants to separate into two equal groups. In each group, get the participants to number themselves starting with 1, 2, 3.....
3. Next, arrange the two groups in two horizontal lines facing each other with a gap of at least 12 -15 feet separating the groups.
4. Then place a rolled-up newspaper (the "Bone") in the centre of the gap between the two groups. Make sure that participants are equidistant from the "Bone".
5. Explain to participants that you will call out a number between 1 and X (the number of participants in each group). When you call out the number, participants in the two groups who have been assigned that number must run and get the "Bone". The participant who gets the "Bone" and runs back to her/her position in the team wins a point. If however the other participant touches him/her before s/he reaches his/her position, no point is scored.
6. Do a practice run to make sure participants understand the game.
7. The game ends when every number between 1 and X has been called once. Total up the points scored by both teams. The winning team is the team which gets the most points. The game can be played twice when participants ask for a rematch and there is sufficient time.

Appendix C: FAQs ON TEENAGE DATING AND RAPE

WCC has collated a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about teenage dating and rape by young people.

- **FAQs 1: Teenage Dating**
- **FAQs 2: Teens and Rape**

FAQs 1: TEENAGE DATING

What is dating?

Dating is when two people are attracted to each other and decide to spend time together and get to know each other.

Is it Ok for teens to date?

Dating can be a positive experience when your boy/girlfriend respects you and is supportive of you and your decisions about your life. But many parents discourage dating when young because they fear that you may make yourself vulnerable to being hurt or will be distracted from your studies.

What if all my friends have already started dating?

Do not do things just to be like your friends. Deciding on when and whom you want to date is something you need to think about carefully.

What is a 'healthy relationship'?

A healthy relationship is a positive one. In a healthy relationship, a boyfriend and girlfriend:

- Feel good about themselves and the other person.
- Have fun together.
- Respect each other and their opinions.
- Trust and are honest with each other.
- Support each other.
- Accept each other as they are.
- Do not insult each other.
- Never try to control the other.
- Sort out their arguments through talking.

What is an “unhealthy relationship”?

An unhealthy relationship is one where you don't feel like you can be yourself, are pressured into doing things you're not comfortable or are being abused.

What if my boy/girlfriend is jealous, does it mean s/he loves me?

If your boy/girlfriend always wants to know where you are, what you're doing, and who you are with or gets angry if you spend time with other people, s/he may tell you that it's only because they care about you or love you. Jealousy is one of the most common signs of an unhealthy relationship, and it often gets worse over time. Jealousy is not about love, it's about control.

What if my boy/girlfriend is pressuring me to have sex?

There are many ways to express your love or affection for someone other than sex. If you choose not to have sex, that doesn't mean you don't love or care about your boy/girlfriend. There are many good reasons not to have sex, and you should definitely wait if you're not sure if you are ready.

Don't be pressured into having sex. **It's your body, and your decision.** No one has the right to demand sex from you, even your boyfriend, regardless of how long you have been dating or how much money someone has spent on dates or gifts for you.

If you have been kissing, touching, or involved in other sexual intimacies, with your boyfriend or girlfriend, you still have the right to say “no” to sex. Even if you've had sex with your partner before, you can change your mind and say “no” in the future.

What if my boyfriend says he can't control himself?

It is not acceptable for your boyfriend to say he cannot control himself. This is not a good reason to have sex, and it is not an excuse if he forces you to have sex. If your boyfriend intimidates you, refuses to stop after you have said “no” or forces you to have sex, then it is rape.

What if my boy/girlfriend says “if you love me, you will have sex with me” or threatens to break up with me if I don’t have sex?

If your boy/girlfriend respects you, s/he won’t want to do anything that makes you uncomfortable. S/He should respect your feelings and your decisions, and listen to you if you say you aren’t ready for sex. If s/he loves you, s/he won’t pressure you for sex.

Threatening to break up with you if you don’t agree to have sex with him/her is an attempt to control you. It is a sign that your boy/girlfriend does not respect you and you may not be in a healthy relationship. This may lead to your boy/girlfriend trying to control you in other ways, such as wanting to know or control where you go, what you do, and who you see.

What if I am already in a sexual relationship?

If you are already in a sexual relationship you need to consider a few things. Sex is a very intimate form of sharing both physically and emotionally. You need to be aware of a whole range of concerns including responsibilities of contraception, the risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections, as well as, social and religious attitudes. You also need to know that the person you are with is reliable and trustworthy, and would be willing to see through with you, any difficulties which may arise.

Can I get a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) if I have sex?

STDs are infections transmitted by one person to another through intimate sexual contact. Using condoms can protect against STDs including HIV, Gonorrhea or Chlamydia. If you are sexually active, you and your partner should go for regular check ups at a clinic or a hospital which provides confidential counselling, blood tests, swabs and contraceptive information. You should be aware that a person can carry a STD but still look well or not have any visible symptoms. STDs can lead to infertility if not treated. Some like HPV can lead to cervical cancer and all sexually active females should have regular PAP smears at a local clinic.

Can a single encounter make a girl pregnant?

Unprotected sex or contraceptive failure (improper use of condom or condoms breaking) can result in pregnancy even if it is a girl’s first sexual encounter. Pregnancy can also result if ejaculation takes place outside but near the vaginal opening. Emergency contraception is available but needs to be taken within 72 hours of having unprotected sex. This however should not be used as a form of long term contraception.

I am under 16 years old and in a sexual relationship. Can my boyfriend get into trouble?

There is a law to protect young women under the age of 16 years from being sexually exploited. If you are below this age, sex with or without your consent is considered statutory rape and your partner is liable to criminal prosecution. If your partner is below the age of 18 years, he can be prosecuted in the Court for Children. If found guilty, he will be punished according to the provisions in the Child Act.

What should I do if I’m in an unhealthy relationship?

It’s very difficult when someone you really care about, and who is supposed to care about you, treats you badly. Maybe s/he treats you well some of the time. Maybe s/he apologises after being hurtful. It’s tempting to tell yourself that it’s not really that bad or that it won’t happen again. But you should always be treated with respect.

The first step is to understand what’s happening. The opposite of a healthy relationship is an abusive relationship. Abuse is not only physical. It’s abuse when one person tries to control or hurt the other, whether it’s through hitting, yelling or forced sexual contact.

If you are afraid of your boy/girlfriend, or afraid of what they might do or say, you are probably in an abusive relationship.

Why would a person do this to me?

A person who hurts you may make excuses like, “I was just joking”, “I was angry”, “You made me do it”, or “You’re too sensitive”. A person who tries to control you may say that it’s because s/he cares about you. But really, s/he acts this way because of a lack of respect towards you.

No one has the right to try to control you and no one has the right to hurt you. Remember, the way your boy/girlfriend treats you, is not your fault. Even if s/he feels upset or angry with you about something, s/he should deal with these feelings by talking to you or to his/her friends or family.

Can I get him/her to stop his/her abusive behavior?

The only person who can stop the abuse is the person who is hurting you or trying to control you. That person must learn to respect you and change his/her behavior him/herself. Otherwise the abuse will not stop and will only get worse. That person is responsible for his/her actions.

You can decide not to tolerate such behavior. If the person does not change his/her behavior you can decide to stop seeing him/her and end the relationship.

Should I end the relationship?

Deciding to end the relationship can be very hard. You may still love him/her or feel lost without him/her. Maybe you feel trapped or scared of what s/he might do if you leave.

But if you suspect you are not being respected in your relationship, it is probably best to end it. Staying in that kind of relationship is harmful, and it may become worse. The most important thing to think about is your own safety and well-being. It may help to talk to someone you trust, such as a parent or a friend, about what to do.

What if I'm scared?

If you feel you are in danger at any point, or if you want to end the relationship, but you are scared:

- * Tell your friends, family, or teachers about it and ask them for help.
- * Try not to be alone with the person who is abusive.
- * Have an excuse prepared so you can leave a situation quickly if you feel intimidated.
- * If you are out, arrange your own way home. Take a mobile phone if you can, and transportation money.
- * Listen to your own feelings – if something doesn't feel right, leave, or get out of the situation.
- * Contact a counseling service or an NGO like the WCC, Befrienders, or Mitraline (Mandarin) for help to make a safety plan.
- * Call the police if you feel that you are in danger.

FAQs 2: TEENS & RAPE**What is the difference between Sex and Rape?**

Sex is sexual intercourse between two consenting parties. Rape is not sex. Rape is a violent act where the rapist forces a victim to have sexual intercourse with him. It is an act of aggression to humiliate and control the victim.

What is statutory rape?

Sexual intercourse with a girl aged below 16 years of age, with or without her consent, is considered statutory rape.

Why do men rape?

A common myth is that men rape because they are sexually attracted to the woman and cannot control their lust. However, the reality is that **rape is not about sexual attraction or lust - it is about power and control over the victim.**

How is rape different from other sexual crimes?

The law defines rape as the insertion of the penis into the vagina of a woman, without her consent. However, both men and women can be sexually assaulted in other ways, such as being forced to have oral sex or anal sex, or being subjected to any other unwanted sexual contact. For these crimes, the offender can be charged under other sections of the law such as molestation, outrage of modesty or attempted rape. If you are a victim of any of these sexual crimes, you should make a police report.

Can I get pregnant or contract a STD from rape?

Yes, you can. Even if the rapist used a condom during the rape, you should still get yourself tested for pregnancy and STDs.

Can a woman get married after she has been raped?

Yes, a woman who has been raped can still get married and share a life with someone she loves. However, as society still views women as objects and values virginity, rape victims are often seen as “damaged goods” or “spoiled”. It is important to remember that rape does not make the victim any less whole or human. Rape victims can and do recover from the trauma of rape and have the right to lead a full life.

Does a woman have to marry her rapist?

Sometimes there may be pressure on a woman to marry the rapist, especially if she is pregnant. No one should be forced to marry her rapist. If a woman does marry her rapist, chances are he will continue to abuse her during the marriage.

What should I do if I am raped?

- **Do not wash yourself or change your clothes**, even if you really want to. It will destroy important evidence of the rape, such as semen, blood, saliva, hairs and fibres.
- **Ask a friend or family member to go with you to the hospital and/or police station to lodge a report.** You may find it difficult to make a report given the trauma of the incident. Contact a women's NGO or counselling service if you need further support.
- **Go immediately to the Accident & Emergency Department of a government hospital for a medical examination.** Doctors will examine you to gather evidence of rape and treat you for any physical injury. Evidence collected is crucial for the prosecution of the rapist.
- **Lodge a report as soon as possible.** If you go to a hospital, the hospital staff will notify the police and you can make a police report at the hospital. If you go to the police station first, a policewoman will accompany you to the hospital. You can still make a police report later, but after 72 hours a rape is considered a "cold case", i.e., the evidence may no longer be there.
- **Talk to someone.** You should talk to someone you trust or contact a women's NGO or counselling service even if you decide not to go to the police. Talking can help you deal with the feelings of fear, anxiety and worthlessness that victims of sexual assault often experience. WCC services are free and strictly confidential.
- **Remember, rape is not your fault!** The only person to blame for a rape is the rapist. By reporting the rape, you may be able to stop the rapist from hurting other women.

What should I do if my friend has been raped?

- **Listen to her.**
- **Believe her.** It is important for rape survivors to know that people believe them. Most people do not lie about being raped.
- **Thank her for telling you.** Let her know that you understand how hard it is to talk about what happened.
- **Support her** and tell her that it was not her fault. No woman deserves to be raped. The only person to blame is the rapist.
- **Encourage her** to make a police report and/or contact a women's group, such as, WCC or Befrienders to talk to a counsellor.

What can I do to help prevent rape?

- Educate the people around you by helping to dispel common rape myths (see Appendix D, Myths on Sexual Assault, pg. 114). Rape is never the victim's fault.
- Treat women with respect. Do not make sexist jokes and comments about women and do not tolerate them from others.
- Support the work of the WCC and other women's organisations that are campaigning to stop violence against women.

(Source: *Working with Rape Survivors: A Handbook* by Working Group of the Women's Crisis Centre Network. 2002, Women's Centre for Change, Penang.)

Appendix D: MYTHS ON SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is a general term used to describe crimes involving sexual violence i.e., rape or molestation. Many young people think that it has nothing to do with them or do not need to talk about it. Police statistics indicate a large number of sexual assault victims are below the age of 18 years. The majority of these victims are female but it also happens to males. Our society still has many misconceptions about sexual assault. The tendency is to blame the victim and NOT the perpetrator. As such, many victims will not report an assault for fear of being blamed, disbelieved or looked down upon.

Understanding some of these myths about sexual assault will enable us to be more supportive of sexual assault victims and encourage sexual assault victims to lodge reports and get the help they need. The following are some examples of myths on sexual assault.

Myth 1: Only young, pretty women are sexually assaulted.

Reality: Sexual assault victims range in age from infancy to old age. A victim's appearance is rarely a consideration. Perpetrators will choose to assault victims who are most vulnerable when there is an opportunity to do so.

Myth 2: Women who wear sexy clothes or flirt with men provoke rape.

Reality: Rape is not related to the way a woman dresses or the way she acts. Children, elderly women, and women who dress modestly or who are in tudung have been raped. The rapist will often choose a vulnerable victim who he can have easy access to and who is unable to fight back. The only person to blame for the rape is the rapist.

Myth 3: Women often lie about getting raped.

Reality: False allegations of rape do occur. However studies indicate that false reporting of sexual crimes is no different from the false reporting of other crimes. Underreporting of sexual assault on the other hand however, is very serious and research suggests that only one in ten rape cases are reported. It takes a lot of courage for a woman to come forward and lodge a rape report.

Myth 4: A woman can prevent being sexually assaulted if she really wanted to.

Reality: A victim is never prepared for a sexual assault. A sexual assault often involves physical force and/or threats of force. A victim may not fight back due to fear, shock, or the perception that fighting back will lead to greater harm. Because sexual assault can be a potentially life-threatening crime, the victim will act in a manner to ensure her survival and not necessarily fight back as is often believed.

Myth 5: A rapist is someone who cannot control his lust.

Reality: Rape is not about lust. Rape is a premeditated act of violence and not a sudden act of passion. Men can and do control their sexual impulses. The vast majority of rapists are motivated by power, anger and control, not sexual gratification.

Myth 6: Most women are raped by strangers.

Reality: Statistics from the police show us that only a small percentage of rapes are committed by strangers. It is estimated that in 80% of the cases, the woman knows the rapist - he is usually an acquaintance, friend, or even a family member. And this sometimes makes it even harder for the victim to lodge a report.

Myth 7: It is impossible for a husband to sexually assault his wife.

Reality: Many women who suffer from domestic violence have experienced some form of sexual abuse within their marriage. Some countries have laws against rape in a marriage. In Malaysia, it is against the law for a man to hurt his wife sexually. Regardless of the marital status, if a woman does not consent to sexual activity and the sexual activity continues, she is being sexually assaulted.

Myth 8: It is only sexual assault if a person has been physically injured.

Reality: Many people who are sexually assaulted do not have visible injuries. This does not mean that they were not assaulted; nor does it mean that they are less traumatised because they have less injuries.

Myth 9: Men cannot be victims of a sexual assault.

Reality: This myth is linked to the ‘macho image’ associated with men where males are supposed to be tough and cannot be victims. Police statistics show that 90% of sodomy victims between 2004 and 2006 were male, with 37% of them being over 16 years of age. Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault as long as s/he is in a weaker position than the perpetrator. Unfortunately, this myth prevents male victims from getting the help they need. Male victims may blame themselves for not being able to fight off the perpetrator. They may fear being ridiculed for not being ‘macho enough’ or having their sexual orientation questioned.

Myth 10: Men who are sexually abused are or will become homosexual.

Reality: Sexual assault in itself does not change a person’s sexual orientation. It is highly unlikely that a sexual assault will turn a heterosexual into a homosexual or vice versa.

Remember, a victim of a sexual assault is not to be blamed. The responsibility of the assault always lies with the perpetrator. If anyone you know needs support or someone to talk to, please do not hesitate to call WCC. We are always here for you.

(Sources: Working With Rape Survivors: A Handbook. Working Group of Women’s Crisis Network 2002; Petrak J. and Hedge B. (Eds) The Trauma of Sexual Assault: Treatment, Prevention and Practice. 2002)

Appendix E: USEFUL CONTACTS



Penang Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Government Agencies

Women’s Centre for Change (WCC)

24-D Jalan Jones, 10250 Penang

Tel: 04-2280 342 Fax: 04-2285 784

Email: wcc@wccpenang.org

Website: www.wccpenang.org

WCC provides counselling and temporary shelter services for abused women and girls in crisis situations. WCC also conducts community outreach programmes for children and youth on the prevention of gender violence.

Penang Family Health Development Association(FHDA)

(formerly known as Family Planning Association, FPA)
333 Jalan Perak, 11600 Penang
Tel: 04-2813 144 Fax: 04-2819 380
Email: fpapg@streamyx.com

FHDA promotes the well being of families through their health clinics for women, community outreach and counselling to youth, unwed mothers and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Community Aids Service Penang (CASP)

46 Jalan Thomas, 11600 Penang
Tel: 04-6561 554 Fax: 04-6561 017
Email: casp@streamyx.com

CASP reaches out to people living with HIV and AIDS, providing counselling and emotional support. CASP also works towards eliminating the stigmatisation and discrimination of people living with AIDS by providing education and awareness to the public on HIV/AIDS issues.

Befrienders

104-1A Mewah Court, Jalan Tan Sri Teh Ewe Lim, 11600 Penang
Tel: 04-2815 161 Fax: 04-2822 736
Email: pat@befpen.org
Website: www.befrienders.org.my

Befrienders provides primarily telephone counselling for suicide prevention. It provides emotional support to anyone especially those who are in despair, lonely and suicidal.

Than Hsiang Mitra Welfare Association (MWA)

No 1, Block D, MK 12, Jalan Bayan Lepas, 11950 Penang
Tel: 04-6451 141 Fax: 04- 6421 896
Website: www.thanhsiang.org

MWA provides counselling (in Mandarin) and welfare services. MWA also conducts public education on a variety of issues, including parenting and pre- and post-marital courses.

Helpline 4 U

Website: www.help4u.org.my

Help 4 u is an online helpline on learning-related issues and other problems for youth who are in secondary school, college or university.

Hospitals

Hospital Pulau Pinang	04-229 5333
Hospital Balik Pulau	04-866 9333
Hospital Seberang Jaya	04-382 7333
Hospital Bukit Mertajam	04-538 3333
Hospital Sg Bakap	04-582 4333

Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat (Welfare Department)

Headquarters (KOMTAR)	04-650 5258
JKM Daerah Timur Laut	04-226 4531/227 7413
JKM Daerah Barat Daya	04-866 8442
JKM Daerah Seberang Perai Utara	04-331 3455
JKM Daerah Seberang Perai Tengah	04-538 2584
JKM Daerah Seberang Perai Selatan	04-582 1798

Police Departments

Penang (Headquarters)	04-222 1522
Jelutong	04-282 5922
Bayan Lepas	04-643 0311
Pulau Tikus	04-228 0422
Sungai Nibong	04-643 0222
Air Itam	04-826 8522
Butterworth	04-332 2222
Bukit Mertajam	04-538 2222

Rakan Cop:	04-269 1999
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Useful Contacts Outside Penang

Hotline (Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development)	15999
Child Abuse Hotline	1800 88 3040
Perak Women for Women (PWW)	05- 546 9715
Women’s Aid Organisation (WAO)	03-7956 3488
All Women Action Society (AWAM)	03-7877 4221
Sisters in Islam (SIS)	03-7785 6121
PS The Children	03-7784 4344
Women in Action (WIN) Melaka	06-281 0230
Women of Malacca Action Club (WOMAC)	06-334 3866
Sabah All Women Organisation (SAWO)	088-280 200
Sarawak Women for Women Society (SWWS)	082-423 842

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www.wccpenang.org

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