Sexual Assault

Critical Information
Sexual assault is a crime of violence. For the victim, it is often an experience of fear, humiliation, violence and loss of control. Victims may experience a full range of emotional reactions. It is extremely beneficial for the victim to seek support regarding the assault.

Schools should address sexual assault as a crisis or emergency when:
- A rape or sexual assault occurs on campus
- A member of the victim’s family or friend requests intervention
- Rumors or myths of an alleged incident are widespread and damaging

In the event of a sexual assault or notification of a sexual assault:

**Staff**
- Notify building administration immediately
- Complete all required reports
- Maintain confidentiality during the investigation
  - Direct the individual (e.g. student or staff) not to repeat any information elsewhere in the school, especially if not the direct victim
- Do not leave the victim alone
- Ensure the short-term physical safety of the victim
- Notify the school nurse or student services to provide care and secure immediate medical treatment if needed
- If appropriate, preserve all physical evidence

**Building Administration**
- Maintain confidentiality during the investigation
  - If a staff person heard the report, instruct them not to repeat anything or give any information within or outside the school unless specifically told to do so
- If assault occurred on campus
  - Notify appropriate law enforcement
  - Notify local rape crisis center
- Designate a school counselor or staff member who has a positive relationship with the victim to review the types of support she or he may need
- Determine needs for peer support
- Encourage the victim to seek support from a rape crisis center
- Take action to control rumors
- Document all actions taken by staff and complete incident reports
- Store all records related to sexual assault incidents and services provided in an confidential administrative file

A sexual assault examination is an important piece of evidence in a sexual assault investigation. The exam should be performed as soon as possible to preserve quality and quantity of the evidence. A trained medical professional will perform the exam. The victim must be advised on how to protect the evidence she or he may have. The victim must be told not to douche, bathe, shower, wash or throw away the clothing she or he was wearing at the time of the sexual assault.