

COMMON MYTHS

MYTH	FACT
Women who wear revealing clothes are asking to be sexually assaulted.	No one asks or deserves to be sexually assaulted. Women dress to feel comfortable and attractive. Perpetrators are responsible for their own actions.
Men cannot be sexually assaulted.	Both men and women are sexually assaulted. 1 in 20 men and 1 in 5 women in Australia over the age of 15 years have experienced sexual violence sometime in their life.
Most sexual assaults occur at night in dark alleys away from others.	Many sexual assaults occur during the day and often in the homes of the people involved.
A man can't be sexually assaulted by a woman.	Although men are usually sexually assaulted by men, some are assaulted by women.
A man who sexually assaults another man is gay.	Men who sexually assault other men are usually straight and can be in a relationship with a woman. Sexual assault is about the use of power and control, not about sexual attraction.
If someone is drinking or taking drugs they are asking to be sexually assaulted.	Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs can prevent a person from being able to consent to sexual acts with another person. It is a crime to have sex with a person who cannot consent due to being intoxicated or drugged. Remember that drinking and taking drugs does influence good decision making.
If a man became erect and ejaculated then he must have wanted and enjoyed the sex.	Erection and ejaculation are normal bodily responses to physical stimulus. This can not be controlled. It does not mean he wanted or enjoyed the experience. Sex without real consent is a sexual assault.
Most sexual assaults are committed by strangers.	8 out of 10 victims of sexual assault are assaulted by someone they know.
Women enjoy being sexually assaulted.	Any form of sexual violence is a frightening and humiliating experience during which the person has no control over what happens. No one enjoys an experience like that.
Men sexually assault others because they are sexually frustrated or cannot control themselves.	The majority of sexual assaults are well planned and do not involve a loss of control on the perpetrator's part.
If a person did not scream or fight or has no injury, it could not have been a sexual assault.	Despite what you might see on TV, most people do not scream or fight. This is because they freeze. It is a common reaction for people to become paralysed with fear.

It is not possible for a man to sexually assault a woman unless he has a weapon.	When someone is in fear of being hurt or killed they will submit to what is being forced upon them.
Prostitutes cannot be sexually assaulted.	Everyone has the right to say NO to sexual acts they do not want.
Children who dress like adults and act in a provocative way are asking to be sexually abused.	A child's appearance or behaviour does not excuse an abuser's behaviour. A child, by law, is unable consent to any sexual activity with another person no matter how they dress or act. No child asks or deserves to be sexually abused.
Men who assault other men are homosexual.	Men who assault are often heterosexual and in a relationship with a woman.
Some children let the abuse go on for a long time because they like it.	A child may not tell anyone about the abuse for many reasons. This may be because the abuser threatened them, or they may feel ashamed or they may feel guilty. Sometimes they do not tell in order to keep the family together.
Sexual abuse of a child or young person occurs within a loving relationship.	People who love children do not have sex with them. Child sexual abusers use threats, intimidation and manipulation to stop children from telling anyone about the abuse. This can have long-standing and harmful physical and emotional effects. That is not love.
Rohypnol is used to spike drinks.	Most sexual assaults involving a drink spike involve additional alcohol and not drugs.
NO can sometimes mean YES – women sometimes play 'hard to get'.	No means NO!
If you buy someone dinner then it is OK to expect that person to have sex with you.	Buying something for someone does NOT entitle you to have sex with them. Sex without real consent is a sexual assault.
Men who are sexually assaulted are, or will become homosexual.	Sexual orientation is not affected or influenced by sexual assault. Both homosexual and heterosexual men can be assaulted.
Children who are sexually abused become abusers.	The majority of children who have been sexually abused do not grow up to be abusers.
It is a man's right to have sex with his wife or partner whenever he wants.	Forcing a woman to have sex or perform sexual acts when she does not want to is a sexual assault.

All of these myths excuse the behaviour of the assailant and imply they are not responsible for their actions.