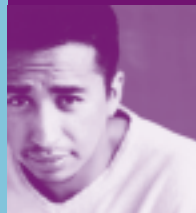
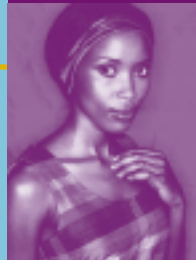


Report to the Florida Legislature

The Sexual Battery Victims'  
Access to Services Act,  
The Rape Crisis  
Program Trust Fund  
and  
Rape Crisis Services in  
Florida

2003



Each victim of sexual assault has suffered terrible trauma.

## Executive Summary

**In landmark legislation passed during the 2003 session, the Florida legislature created the Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act and the rape crisis services trust fund in the Department of Health.** The Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act acknowledges that victims of sexual assault in the state of Florida should have access to basic services including hotline, crisis intervention, advocacy, support services, therapy, medical intervention, service coordination, and community awareness. The Act creates a funding system for distribution of monies generating a fine of \$150 that will go to rape crisis centers by a designated formula. This Act authorizes the Department of Health to contract with a statewide non-profit organization to distribute these funds. The Act creates a \$151 (\$1.00 for the court) fine on offenders convicted of sexual battery and other offenses including many of the aggravated battery and battery offenses. A Rape Crisis Services Trust Fund was created to accept collected fines and other funds designated for rape crisis services.

As of January 29, 2004, \$65,561.84 has been deposited in the trust fund. Estimates of the revenue likely to be generated from this fine vary widely, and various factors make it unlikely that significant revenue will be generated for several years. Among these factors, the fine can only be assessed on offenders convicted after July 1, 2003. Additionally, judges must be educated about the new fine and must remember to assess it. In terms of payment, offenders may be required to pay other fines first, or, if incarcerated or unemployed, may not have sufficient income to pay the fine. While creation of the trust fund is an important step forward, in order to ensure that services are available to all victims of sexual violence in the state of Florida, additional funding sources are needed.

## The Scope and Impact of Sexual Violence

**According to national researchers, approximately one out of every nine adult women in Florida has been the victim of forcible rape.** In other words, more than 700,000 women in Florida have been the victims of forcible rape (Ruggiero and Kilpatrick, 2003).

- **Sexual Violence is costly to community well-being.**
- **Victims of sexual assault who do not receive services are in danger of increased substance abuse and mental health problems including major depression, suicide, and post-traumatic stress disorder (National Center for Victims of Crime, 1999).**
- **Rape is responsible for 11–20 percent of teenage pregnancies (Boyer and Fine, 1993).**
- **Rape victims' visits to medical providers increase almost 60 percent a year after the assault and over 30 percent in the second year after the assault (Koss, 1993).**
- **Sexual assault hurts our state's economy, and the economic impact worsens if victims do not receive the services they need to re-gain their stability.**
- **Medical expenses, lost productivity, treatment of psychological trauma, pain, and suffering are estimated to cost each victim \$110,000 (USDOJ).**
- **Twenty-one percent of victims miss 11 or more days from work as a result of the crime. The loss of productivity based on each sexual assault is estimated at \$1,261 per victim (Bureau of Justice Statistics).**

# The Response to Sexual Violence: Rape Crisis Services

**Rape crisis centers provide Florida's frontline response to the crime of sexual assault.** In 38 programs around the state, staff and volunteers of rape crisis centers provide an immediate response to sexual assault emergencies, operate 24-hour hotlines, provide advocacy and accompaniment through medical and legal processes, follow-up with ongoing care through individual and group counseling, serve adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, coordinate response efforts, and educate their communities on the issue of sexual violence.

Rape crisis services are provided in a wide variety of formats throughout our state. A few stand-alone rape crisis services provide the full array of rape crisis services including medical intervention. Approximately one-third of rape crisis programs in Florida are co-located with domestic violence/emergency shelter services, and these are often referred to as "dual programs." In several communities, the county provides funding for sexual violence services through a general Victim Services center or program. In three areas—Broward County, Orlando, and Jacksonville—the county or city funds stand-alone rape treatment centers. Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami houses a hospital-based rape treatment center. Several communities house rape crisis centers within umbrella mental health agencies. In two circuits in Florida, rape crisis services are provided through the State Attorney's office. Many counties in Florida are significantly under-resourced and lack sexual assault services.

## Other Funding Sources for Rape Crisis Centers

**VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT (FEDERAL)** Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, which began in 1986, enabled rape crisis centers to survive through the 1990's. This program, funded from the United States Department of Justice through Florida's Attorney General, provides funding for direct services to most of Florida's 38 rape crisis programs.

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (FEDERAL)** The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant passed in 1996 and re-authorized in 2000 has improved the systemic response to sexual violence in Florida, but has done little to bolster direct services for victims. Currently, six programs in Florida receive funding to provide services through VAWA grants to encourage arrests through the Department of Children and Families.

**PREVENTIVE HEALTH BLOCK GRANT (FEDERAL)** The Florida Department of Health's Rape Prevention Education Program funds seven Rape Crisis Centers to provide victim services through the Preventive Health Block Grant.

**CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (FEDERAL)** The Rape Prevention Education Program provides funding through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through the Florida Department of Health. This source supports many of Florida's rape crisis hotlines, public awareness events, and rape prevention education.

### RAPE CRISIS SERVICES

Hotline/information and referral

Crisis intervention

Advocacy/  
accompaniment

Support groups

Counseling/therapy

Medical intervention

System coordination

### TYPES OF PROGRAMS

Stand-alone private

Dual domestic  
violence/rape crisis

Umbrella mental health  
agencies

County-funded victim  
services

Agencies/treatment  
centers

State Attorney's office

Community  
awareness/prevention

**COUNTY FUNDING (LOCAL)** Florida's communities have acknowledged the need for rape crisis services. However, because of limited funds and the sensitivity of the issue, communities have responded to the need in a variety of ways largely based on whether or not, and where, funding was available. Several counties have historically supported rape crisis centers, but many others do not.

## Services Standards for Rape Crisis Centers

**In the summer of 2000, the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence began developing standards and a certification process for Florida's rape crisis services with the following guiding principles:**

- **A broad array of high-quality, sexual violence services must exist in every community.**
- **Victims are best served through sexual violence services provided in the context of a coordinated, collaborative, and multidisciplinary approach including medical/forensic providers, advocates, criminal justice professionals, and social service providers.**
- **All service providers must have victim empowerment as the cornerstone of service delivery.**
- **Currently, rape crisis center standards, including both service standards and non-profit management standards, are being piloted in three test sites throughout Florida. Information from these pilot projects will be used to guide the standards implementation process.**

## Unmet Need

**At this point in time, rape crisis programs are experiencing severe staffing shortages, have insufficient funds and cannot meet the state's need.** There are approximately 100 rape crisis advocates in the state of Florida who provide services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In order to serve every victim of rape in Florida, each advocate would need to reach 7,130 female survivors to provide hotline services, crisis intervention, advocacy, medical intervention, and therapy. With current resources, less than 10 percent of sexual violence programs are able to provide the standard services identified as those most needed by rape victims. As a result, many programs have waiting lists. Additionally, rural counties and outlying areas have very few, if any, services available. In rural areas, many victims have to drive two hours or wait two weeks until a rape crisis counselor is available to visit their county.

## Conclusion

**Each victim of sexual assault has suffered terrible trauma.** The Department of Health's Sexual Violence Prevention Program, in partnership with the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence and Florida's rape crisis centers are working to ensure that each victim is also offered an opportunity to heal.

## Rape Crisis Centers in Florida

Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Incorporated (ACT)  
**Fort Myers**

Alachua County Office of Victim Services  
**Gainesville**

Another Way, Incorporated  
**Bronson**

APPLE Services Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, Incorporated

NEP Forensic Services

Hotline of Hillsborough and 211  
**Tampa**

Betty Griffin House  
**Saint Augustine**

Bridgeway Center  
**Fort Walton Beach**

Broward County Sexual Assault Treatment Center  
**Fort Lauderdale**

Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies (CARE)  
**Punta Gorda**

Chautauqua Office of Psychotherapy and Evaluation (COPE)  
**Defuniak Springs**

City of Jacksonville, Sexual Assault Response Center

Women's Center of Jacksonville Rape Recovery Team  
**Jacksonville**

Creative Services, Ocala Rape Crisis/Domestic Violence Center  
**Ocala**

The Dawn Center  
**Spring Hill**

Domestic Abuse Shelter, Incorporated, Sexual Assault Response Assistance (SARA)  
**Marathon Shores**

Family Service Centers Rape Crisis Program and Sexual Assault Victim Services  
**Clearwater**

Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties, Incorporated Sexual Assault Program  
**Leesburg**

The Healing Tree/Sexual Trauma Recovery Center

Howard Phillips Center for Children and Families

Sexual Assault Treatment Center, Victim Service Center of Orange County  
**Orlando**

The Journey Institute  
**Miami**

Lakeview Center Rape Crisis and Rape Awareness Programs  
**Pensacola**

Manatee Glens Rape Crisis Services  
**Bradenton**

Martha's House, Incorporated  
**Okeechobee**

M.U.J.E.R., Incorporated  
**Homestead**

North Central Florida Sexual Assault Center, Incorporated  
**Lake City**

Palm Beach County Victim Services  
**West Palm Beach**

Peace River Rape Recovery and Resource Center  
**Lakeland**

Project Help, Incorporated  
**Naples**

Putnam County Health Department, Sexual and Physical Violence Intervention Program  
**Palatka**

Quigley House, Incorporated  
**Orange Park**

Rape Crisis Center of Volusia and Flagler Counties  
**Daytona Beach**

Refuge House, Incorporated  
**Tallahassee**

Roxcy Bolton Rape Treatment Center/Jackson Memorial Hospital  
**Miami**

Safe Place & Rape Crisis Center (SPARCC)  
**Sarasota**

Salvation Army Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Program  
**Panama City**

Sexual Assault Assistance Program  
**Fort Pierce**

Sexual Assault Victim Services  
**Viera**

Sunrise of Pasco County, Incorporated  
**Dade City**

Women's Center of Brevard County  
**Melbourne**

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