

### **What is sexual assault?**

Rape is generally defined as nonconsensual sexual penetration perpetrated through physical or psychological force, or threat of bodily harm.

Sexual assault is the use of sexual actions and words that are unwanted by and/or harmful to another person. Some common terms that are used interchangeably with sexual assault are sexual abuse and sexual violence.

### **Sexual assault in America**

In 2003, it was estimated that:

- A forcible rape was committed every 5.6 minutes in America.
- 38.5 percent of sexual assault victims reported the crime to the police (a decrease from 2002).
- In 84 percent of the rape/sexual assault cases, no weapons were involved.

### **Who are victims of sexual assault?**

- 90 percent of rape/sexual assault victimizations are against women.
- Persons age 20-24 had the highest rates of rape/sexual assault victimization of all age groups.
- Nearly 70 percent of victims knew their attackers.
- Both male and female victims were most likely to be victimized by a friend or acquaintance.

### **Sexual assault in Minnesota**

- There were 6,255 reported sexual assaults in Minnesota in 2003, of which 2,387 were forcible or attempted rapes. Half of the rape cases were cleared by arrest, up from 48 percent in 2002.
- In 2003, there were 6 rapes per day or one every four hours in Minnesota.
- From 1987 to 1992, Minnesota's rape rate was below the nation's, but since 1993, Minnesota's rate has been higher.

### **Victim programs in Minnesota**

In 2004, there were 61 programs for victims of sexual assault in Minnesota. These programs served 6,080 victims. Victims served were most likely to be ages 18 to 29 (33.6 percent) followed by ages 13 to 17 (24 percent). The victims were most likely to be white (67.5 percent), followed by 9.5 percent immigrant/refugee, 6.8 percent African-Americans, 6.4 percent Native Americans, and 4.1 percent Latina.