



26 September 2018

To survivors in the OSU community & those who support them:

As representatives of the [Survivor Advocacy and Resource Center](#) (SARC), Interpersonal Violence Services at [Counseling & Psychological Services](#) (CAPS), the [Hattie Redmond Women & Gender Center](#), and [Student Health Services](#) (SHS), we are writing to reaffirm our commitment to believing and supporting survivors of sexual and interpersonal violence on OSU's campus, across identity and experience. We recognize that the constant influx of media around disclosures of sexual violence and trauma has a significant impact on members of our campus community; the recent news can feel inescapable, overwhelming, or triggering. We want to remind you that it is normal to be experiencing any number of feelings and reactions to this flood of distressing news about trauma and violence - healing is not linear, and no matter where you are in your process it is normal to be struggling and to need support. Your stories and experiences matter, and we are here to support you and your healing, no matter what that looks like.

We also wish to respond to the recent discourse around survivors reporting, or choosing not to report, their experiences of interpersonal violence. We stand in firm opposition to those who would shame and invalidate survivors for their choice not to disclose their experiences. We know that [more than two-thirds of assaults go unreported, and that survivors choose not to report for myriad reasons](#), including but not limited to a pervasive culture of silence and stigma around sexual violence; feelings of guilt, shame, and self blame; fear of retaliation; distrust of institutions; fear of not being believed or being blamed; and feeling that their experiences were not "that bad," or perhaps not even recognizing them as violent. We trust you, as the expert of your own experience, to know what is best for you in your healing, and know that reporting may be an important part of that process. At the same time, you are never under an obligation to disclose to anyone as "proof" of your experience, and a decision not to report doesn't mean that it didn't happen, or that your story doesn't matter. We believe that you have the right to tell your story when, where, and to whom you want as a measure of regaining power and control in what can often feel like an uncontrollable situation. What happened was not your fault, and you have the right to do whatever you need to do to keep yourself safe and to move through your experience in whatever way is right for you. Vulnerability should be a choice, not a burden - our role at CAPS, SARC, the Women & Gender Center, and SHS is to create and maintain as many safe and supportive spaces on campus as possible for you to choose vulnerability on your own terms.

We recognize that this may be a particularly difficult time to navigate survivorship, and we want to remind you that there are a number of resources here on campus dedicated to supporting you in whatever way you might need. We want to remind you that all university employees, with the exception of confidential resources (CAPS, SARC, and clinicians at SHS), are responsible for informing the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access (EOA) when they receive a disclosure of sexual violence. This, of course, doesn't mean that you can't or shouldn't talk to your professor, RA, advisor, or anyone else on campus - we simply believe you have the right to make an informed choice about how and with whom to share your story.

- The **Women and Gender Center**, a non-confidential resource, is here to provide a supportive space for you to build connection and community. The Women & Gender Center will be hosting their first [Crafternoon](#) on Thursday 9/27 from 2-4 PM - all are welcome to join the space to create and connect with others.
- The **Survivor Advocacy and Resource Center** (SARC) is a confidential resource that offers on-campus advocacy for all OSU community members affected by any form of sexual violence. Advocates provides crisis intervention, information about your rights and options on and off campus

as a survivor, assistance with safety-planning, and connection to other resources (medical, academic, housing, counseling, etc.). SARC also hosts Circle of Support, a weekly drop-in support group for survivors that meets from 4:00 -5:30 PM on Thursdays in the SARC office.

- The **Interpersonal Violence Services (IVS) team at CAPS** is a confidential resource offering supportive, trauma-informed, survivor-centered counseling. CAPS clinicians are here to hold space for you to process your thoughts, feelings, and emotions, no matter where in your healing journey you find yourself. In addition to individual counseling, CAPS will be offering a Trauma Empowerment group for survivors of interpersonal violence on Wednesdays from 3:00 - 4:30 PM in the CAPS office - please contact CAPS if you are interested in joining this group.
- **Student Health Services (SHS)** offers the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program to support any student who has experienced sexual violence and would like to receive a medical exam. You are not required to report the assault to have an examination. This program is available year-round during regular SHS hours, and visits with a SANE are completely confidential. SHS also offers testing for sexually transmitted infections. Most services are free or available for a minimal charge.
- For those students and staff who would like to report their experience of sexual violence to the university, you have the option to do so through the [EOA website](#). An anonymous reporting option is available. SARC advocates are also available to help guide you through the university and/or criminal legal (i.e. police) reporting processes, should you decide this is right for you.
- The [Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence](#) (CARDV) is a community resource in Corvallis offering 24-hour crisis response and support groups for survivors.
- If you are in need of immediate crisis support after hours, you can talk to a licensed mental health provider by calling CAPS at (541) 737-2131, or SARC at (541) 737-2030. You can also call the 24-hour support line at CARDV at (541) 754-0110.

In closing, we are committed to creating and sustaining a campus community that allows you process, heal, and grow in your own time and on your own terms. We are here to continue to affirm and hold space for you as you navigate these experiences and the climate around them, and we want you to know that you never have to do that alone. We believe you and are here to support you, if and when you need us, in whatever way you choose, every step of the way.

In solidarity,

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