

# What do I - a male survivor who has been abused as an adult - need you to do if I tell you I have been sexually abused



## 1 What I need my Family and Friends to Remember:

I may need to do things to make me feel like I have control of my life. After all, I had so much control taken from me, I crave it.

Telling me to "just get over it" is just about as helpful as a spit in the bucket.

In my life, there's the me from before the assault, and then there's me after. These selves are mutually exclusive, I might have the same social security # or address, but that's it.

## 2 What I need Society to Remember:

I am not any less of a man because of these experiences.

Being sexually abused doesn't "make me" gay or happen because I am, or was, perceived as such.

Male rape is not sex; it is about controlling the victim, and often the perpetrators use violence, deception and torture to achieve that.

It's just as much a case of rape if your attacker is female as it is if he's male. It is JUST as much of an assault! Women can overpower men, they can be offenders.

It doesn't matter HOW big we are, how much we weigh, what we do for a living, or how good we are at fighting. Rape is still rape and it can and DOES happen.

## 3 What I need my Family and Friends to Do:

Tell me that you believe me, tell me that you understand that there may have been no way I could have stopped the abuse, tell me that you are open to hearing as many details as I feel comfortable telling you, tell me that it is ok to tell you in little bits and pieces.

Encourage me to do what I can, when I can. Some days will be better than others and some will

be worse. A bad day doesn't mean that things aren't getting better.

Encourage me to seek help, encourage me to go to the hospital if needed, but do not send me alone despite how much I says "ok, I'll go." Chances are I will not. Accompany me, but do not victimize me.

Tell me that it is not my fault, tell me that it is normal to feel responsible for my abuse, tell me that it is normal to feel ashamed, guilty, helpless, powerless or angry, tell me that it is possible to heal from the wounds of this abuse with support and love and information.



**MALESURVIVOR**  
*Overcoming Sexual Victimization of Boys and Men*

4768 Broadway #527  
New York, NY 10034  
MaleSurvivor.org

# What have I - a male survivor who has been sexually abused as an adult - been told by others that has hurt me more



## 1 What my Family and Friends have done:

- ▶ At home, my family and friends have treated me as "damaged goods." Though I may not be "myself" due to the shock, depression, despair and other feelings, I am still a man.
- ▶ My family and friends have dropped out of my life. Many fear "saying the wrong thing" so they drop out of site. Since they do not know what to say, they say nothing. They stay away so they do not have to confront their own anxiety.

## 2 What Professionals have told me:

- ▶ All you need to do is connect with the "Little Boy" inside of you. Sadly, I was assaulted as an adult, not a boy.
- ▶ The pain, struggle, and issues that you face are the same as other male survivors.
- ▶ Since you are hesitating to undress for an exam, you are just being oppositional or defiant. What professionals don't understand is that I have trust issues, I have issues with touch!

## 3 What Society has told me:

- ▶ it's your fault for "letting" yourself be abused (acts repeated over time, may or may not have more than one perpetrator) and assaulted.
- ▶ You must have "wanted it" because you didn't "stop it."
- ▶ Since your body responded, that was "proof" that the acts were "consensual" and "wanted."
- ▶ "Rape is worse for females than it is for males." Rape is horrific regardless of the target or the perpetrator.
- ▶ It wasn't abuse, it was just a "lovers' quarrel" or that it was just sex and you wanted it.



**MALESURVIVOR**  
*Overcoming Sexual Victimization of Boys and Men*

4768 Broadway #527  
New York, NY 10034  
MaleSurvivor.org