

# **WOMEN'S HEALTH**

## **Violence Against Women Program**

### **Sexual Assault Prevention and Services**

#### **What is the purpose of the program?**

To reduce the incidence of sexual assault in Georgia.

#### **What does the program do?**

Provides a network of twenty-one rape crisis centers that each offers a 24-hour crisis line, crisis counseling, assistance to victims undergoing a forensic medical exam, assistance for victims and their families throughout the criminal proceedings, long-term counseling, and support groups. In addition, the program works with communities to assist in changing the attitudes of community members regarding non-consensual sex. The program also provides training to various community agencies including law enforcement, medical personnel, criminal justice personnel, and victim services personnel in identifying, treating, and responding to victims of sexual assault.

#### **How many people are helped by the program?**

In FY03, rape crisis programs assisted 1,918 persons who were either recently assaulted or assaulted in the past. Approximately 1,345 members of law enforcement, 894 staff from other agencies, 396 volunteers, and 58,564 youth ages 6 to 24 were provided educational programming and/or training by rape crisis center staff.

#### **Why is the program important?**

Sexual assault is a traumatic event for a victim and can have a devastating impact on the individual, their family, and the community at large. The social, emotional, physical, economic, and psychological impact can be far-reaching and long-term, and having the specialized expertise and quality services provided by the sexual assault centers available to the citizens of Georgia is of great importance. Additionally, prevention is a major focus of the program. The prevention program aims to change societal norms, attitudes and behaviors of Georgia citizens, in an effort to educate and increase awareness, as well as reduce the incidence of non-consensual sex and other of violence.

#### **Who is eligible?**

The sexual assault prevention program is targeted toward elementary, middle, high school, and college students. Crisis services are targeted to victims, aged 12 and older.

#### **Where are services located?**

The twenty-one rape crisis programs provide services to residents in seventy-four counties. The prevention education program is available in 103 counties. In addition to the rape crisis programs, sexual assault prevention programs have been established in two health districts.

#### **Outcome measures**

- Reduce the incidence of sexual assault in Georgia.
- Increase by one percent a year the number of public health rape crisis center-assisted victims who report a sexual offense to police.

#### **Legislative authority**

Title XIX, of the Public Health Law, Part A, Education and Prevention Grant to reduce Sexual Assault Against Women. Funded by The Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center of Injury Prevention and Control.

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