

How to make a referral:

An important part of being helpful to a survivor of sexual assault is providing information about options and resources. You may do this by helping the student get connected with the Student Health and Wellness Resource Center located in Morrow Hall room 153 or by phone at 541-278-5965. If the student does not wish to connect with the Student Health and Wellness Resource Center, please contact them for a list of more resources available. Some ways to facilitate a referral for a victim of sexual assault are provided below:

1. I am here to listen and support you, but it would also be helpful for you to talk to someone who has specialized knowledge in this area.
2. There are places that you can go anonymously to get information or support.
3. Even if you don't know what you want to do right now, it can be helpful to talk to someone about your options.
4. I would be happy to go with you to talk to someone.
5. What would make it feel safe for you to go talk to someone?

*Witnesses and Bystanders: BMCC faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to report incidents of sexual violence to the BMCC Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment (BITA) team or to local law enforcement agencies. Silence about these crimes contributes to the creation of a sociocultural environment that is supportive of sexual violence and communicates to victims that sexually violent behavior is tolerated. We all have a responsibility to protect the members of our community by refusing to create such an environment. Any faculty, staff, or student may file an anonymous report that does not identify the parties involved with BMCC's BITA Team. This report may be filed regardless of any legal or college disciplinary action and will provide BMCC staff with information about the incident that may be valuable in efforts to prevent future incidents and to educate the BMCC community about high-risk situations.

Questions

Blue Mountain Community College
Human Resources, Morrow Hall, M-217
PO Box 100
Pendleton, OR 97801

541-278-5850
GetInfo@bluecc.edu

More information can be found on the web at www.bluecc.edu



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SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS

Blue Mountain Community College



BMCC is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment.

In compliance with federal law, specifically the Jeanne Clery Act (Clery Act) and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act), BMCC has adopted policies and procedures to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. These guidelines apply to all members of the BMCC community (Students, Faculty, and staff) as well as contractors and visitors.

Zero Tolerance

BMCC will not tolerate sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, as defined below:

Sexual Assault: Sexual assault is any sexual contact made without consent. Consent is a clear yes, not an absence of no.

Domestic Violence: Includes asserted violence misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by the victim's current or former spouse, current or former cohabitant, person similarly situated under domestic or family violence law, or anyone else protected under domestic or family violence law.

Dating Violence: Means violence by a person who has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim. Whether there was such a relationship will be gauged by its length, type, and frequency of interaction.

Stalking: Means a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for her, his, or others' safety, or to suffer substantial emotional distress.

It is important that members of the BMCC community respond appropriately to students who are sexually assaulted.

As a first point of contact, it is important to provide sensitive care and support, to ensure that the student is not re-traumatized as a result of reporting the incident.

- When you are made aware of a sexual assault, your first responsibility is ALWAYS to ensure the immediate safety of the victim. Regardless of when the assault occurred.
- Once the victim is safe: It is important to remember that your role is NOT to assess or to define the assault, or to determine whether or not the assault actually occurred. Your primary responsibility is to remain supportive of the victim, while **referring the student to campus or community agencies** that are trained in providing assistance and intervention for survivors of sexual violence.
- You do not have to have all of the answers. If someone is disclosing to you, it typically means that you are someone they trust and often times they just want to be heard. Don't be afraid to tell them that you don't know the answers, and use that as a point for referral. It is not your responsibility to "fix" the problem.

"...be aware that the supportiveness of your response can be critical in the healing process."

While you are not expected to act as a counselor, when you are present with someone who has been assaulted, you should be aware that the supportiveness of your response can be critical in the healing process. Though there is not one "right" way to respond to someone who has been sexually assaulted, the following may serve as a guide in identifying more or less helpful responses:

- Listen without interrupting. Encourage the student to take his/her time, if necessary.
- Don't panic. Remain calm and concerned.
- Respect the language the student uses to identify what's happened.
- Understand that individuals from different cultural backgrounds may express or experience their reactions to an assault in different ways.
- Allow for tears and expression of feelings.
- Validate the student's experiences or reactions.
- Believe and support the student.
- Acknowledge courage and discomfort.
- Remind the student that he/she is not at fault.

- Help the student identify safe individuals within his/her existing support system
- Encourage the student to seek medical attention and/or consoling
- **Allow the student to make his/her own decisions.**
- Ask what you can do to be supportive.
- Provide resources and options.
- "use" is a better choice than "utilize."
- Use paragraphs often. A wall of white text makes it hard for the reader to skim a story and find a way to quickly drop in and out of your content.

Unhelpful responses:

- Asking "why" questions or other questions that might imply blame. (i.e. "why didn't you yell," "What were you doing there?")
- Blaming or judging the student's actions (i.e. "You shouldn't have had so much to drink")
- Dismissing the student's feelings or minimizing his/her experience (i.e. "You should just forget about it")
- Trying to "fix" the problem. (i.e. pressuring them to report and/or telling them what to do).

Above all, do no harm. Sometimes, when individuals feel overwhelmed by just having heard someone's story, people feel "pressured" to do something. When this occurs, often times people unintentionally say things that could be hurtful. You don't have to say anything.