For more information, contact the Women's Department in the Ministry of Human Development & Social Transformation:

**Belize City:** 227-3888, 227-7397, Fax: 227-1275,
Email: sec.wd@humandev.gov.bz

**Corozal:** 402-2120,
Email: wdoczl@humandev.gov.bz

**Orange Walk:** 302-2058,
Email: wdoow@humandev.gov.bz

**Cayo:** 804-2098,
Email: wdocayo@humandev.gov.bz

**Stann Creel:** 502-0038,
Email: wdocang@humandev.gov.bz

**Toledo:** 702-2021,
Email: wdompg@humandev.gov.bz
Sexual violence is any sexual act that is perpetrated against someone's will. There are many types of sexual violence as it encompasses a range of offenses, including:

- Completed non-consensual sex act (i.e., rape),
- Attempted non-consensual sex act, (i.e., attempted rape)
- Abusive sexual contact (i.e., unwanted touching), and
- Non-contact sexual abuse (e.g., threatened sexual violence, exhibitionism, verbal sexual harassment).

All types involve victims who do not consent, or who are unable to consent or refuse to allow the act. It constitutes a profound violation of the body and person and is usually carried out in order to use control to dominate the survivor and to try to humiliate the survivor. Anyone can experience sexual violence, but most victims are female. The person responsible for the violence is typically male and is usually someone known to the victim.

Every individual has the basic right to a life free from fear and violence. All forms of violence and intimidation constitute a violation of the individual’s basic human rights.
January
2012

- January 2\textsuperscript{nd} - New Year’s Day
  (in lieu of Sun. 1st January)
### Calendar for December 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sexual Harassment

- **Sexual Harassment** involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

- Employees should feel comfortable that their claims of sexual harassment will be taken seriously without fear of losing their jobs.

- **HIV Status**
  - Employees who are HIV positive are entitled to work legally and without discrimination. According to the amended Labor Act No. 237 of April 2011 (Section 42), the following reasons do not constitute good and substantial cause for dismissal or for the imposition of disciplinary action:
    - Being infected with HIV and AIDs;
    - Pregnancy or childbirth;
    - The following are not grounds for a claim of sexual harassment.
    - Being required to work during maternity leave;
    - Taking maternity leave;
    - Being a woman;
    - Being pregnant;
    - Being a female worker;
    - Being male;
    - Being a male worker;
    - Being pregnant;
    - Being a woman without pregnancy.

- **Employment Protection**
  - The new amendment provides for continuity of employment in certain circumstances where the employee is unable to perform their duties due to maternity leave or other health-related reasons. This ensures that employees are protected against unfair dismissal.

- **Sexual Harassment**
  - Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct.
Since first being diagnosed in the 1980’s, there has been a gradual change in those being most affected by HIV. In this feminization process of the epidemic, young women have been particularly affected. It is estimated that women between the ages of 15 and 24 years account for 60% of people living with HIV.

HIV risk increases during violent or forced-sex situations. This greater biological risk to women is due to the larger concentration of the virus in semen and the fact the female genital membrane is very fragile. Women who have experienced sexual violence are at greater exposure to HIV infection since this type of sex causes more injuries in the vaginal and anal tissue.

Cultural factors related to the acceptance and expectation that men have multiple sexual partners and disparity in social and gender roles which generate early sexual initiation of girls, often coerced, and genital mutilation also place women at greater risk of HIV infection.

Further, women’s economic vulnerability may increase the likelihood of her engaging in high-risk behaviour such as commercial sex work or transactional sex. Fear of sexual violence often pressures them into accepting unsafe sexual relations and from asking their partner to practice safe sex.

Together, Let us STOP ALL FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN and decrease the rate of HIV Infection!!!
No woman wants or asks to be raped. When women drop their rape cases because of victimization by society, the society is the one to blame. This is WRONG!

Rape is a crime, whether the person committing it is a stranger, a date, an acquaintance, spouse, or a relative. Rape is about power, not sex. It exploits and abuses force or violence, or threats of violence, of a person of any age. Rape can happen to both men and women.

Rape

Family member,

November 2022
Sexual Violence can have an emotional impact as well. Victims often feel fearful and anxious. They may replay the incident over and over in their minds. They may have problems with trust and be wary of becoming involved with others. The anger and stress that victims feel may lead to depression or even attempted suicide. Sexual Violence is also linked to negative health behaviors. Some persons may smoke, abuse alcohol and drugs and engage in risky sexual activity as a way to try to mask and cope with what they going through. You can contact the Women’s Department in your district for information on various services that can help you.

If you have experienced any form of sexual violence, it is very important that you talk with a counselor. Counseling can help you learn how to cope with the emotional and physical impacts of the assault. You can find a counselor by contacting:

Belize City Community Counseling Center- 54 Freetown Rd, 3rd Floor Belize City 223-1406 or contact a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP) at a clinic or hospital in your district

There is no need for you to feel alone as you go through this experience. Finding someone to talk to can be a very helpful way for you to express your feelings and heal emotionally. Counseling services are SAFE and CONFIDENTIAL.

March
2012

- March 1st - International Children’s Day of Broadcasting
- March 5th - Children’s Day (local)
- March 8th - International Women’s Day
- March 12th - National Heroes and Benefactors Day
  (in lieu of Fri, 9th March)
2012
October

Date Rape

Remember: even if a victim of sexual assault drank alcohol, she is NOT at fault for being assaulted. Any sex without consent is still Rape!

* Have a non-drinking friend with you to make sure nothing happens.
* Don't drink anything that looks or smells strange.
* Don't drink from a bottle or a cocktail g Can you open the bottle?
* Keep your drink with you at all times.
* Don't accept drinks from other people.
* Tell a family member or friend where you are going and when you should expect you back home.

How can I protect myself from being a victim of date rape?

* Drugs such as Rohypnol can also slipped into alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.
* Drinking too much alcohol can also cause blackouts and memory loss.
* If you can't remember how much alcohol makes it harder to resist sexual or physical assault.

Is alcohol a date rape drug?

Victims trust their perpetrator may use drugs which render the victim helpless while the perpetrator sexually forces themselves on the victim.

Date rape is a crime usually committed by someone known to the victim, who usually takes advantage of the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As members of the society who care about the welfare of our children, we ALL have a duty to report child abuse and neglect. MANDATORY REPORTING became a part of Belgian law with the enactment of the Families and Children Act and was further regulated in the Child Abuse Regulations in 1999. In summary, it states that: 

- Every person who believes or learns of the facts and circumstances which give rise to a reasonable belief that any child has suffered or is suffering child abuse shall report to the Department of Human Services for investigation. 

Any medical personnel including doctors, nurses who attend a child exhibiting signs of child abuse, any family member, teacher, social worker, school counselor, employees of children's institutions, administrators of any educational institution, police officers, or other persons whose daily duties involve dealing regularly with children also have a legal obligation to report any suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Department of Human Services for investigation. 

It is extremely important that you recognize that if you remain silent and do not make a report, more than likely, the child will continue to be abused.  

Mandatory Reporting
If you have been raped, here is what you should do:

- Go to a safe place. Call a friend, a family member, or someone else you trust who can be with you and give you support.
- If you want to report the crime, notify the police immediately. Reporting the crime can help you regain a sense of personal power and control.
- Preserve all physical evidence of the assault. Do not shower, bathe, douche, eat, drink, wash your hands, or brush your teeth until after you have had a medical examination. Save all of the clothing you were wearing at the time of the assault. Do not clean or disturb anything in the area where the assault occurred.
- Get medical care as soon as possible. The doctor or nurse can also document any injuries you have sustained. Following a rape, it is critical that women access both the emergency contraceptive and a 28-day course of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to reduce HIV infection, within 72 hours.
- If you suspect that you may have been given a "rape drug," ask the hospital or clinic where you receive medical care to take a urine sample.
- Write down as much as you can remember about the circumstances of the assault, including a description of the assailant.

---

**September 2012**

- September 8th - International Literacy Day
- September 10th - National Day
- September 21st - Independence Day
- September 21st - International Day of Peace
The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is a form of sexual violence, economic exploitation and modern day slavery that violates the human rights of its child and adolescent victims. CSEC is a crime committed by those who pay for, whether in cash or in kind, facilitate, make threats to lure or use persons under the age of 18 years in commercial sexual activities, which include:

- Sexual intercourse or other sexual acts
- Production or selling of pornographic videos or photographs, or the possession of such material for personal use
- Performing in public or private sex shows that take place in nightclubs, at parties, etc.

Trafficking of children for commercial sexual exploitation purposes occurs when underage persons are lured, transported, or transferred to places far away from their communities, within the country or abroad, taken in or given refuge in order to sexually exploit them. Victims of trafficking may be sold several different times, locked up, threatened and forced to carry out sexual activities.

The adult who “sells” the child or who “pays” for sexual relations with him or her is the one who commits the crime, and NEVER the underage person!

---

May 2012

- May 1st - Labour Day
- May 15th - International Day of Families
- May 21st - Sovereign’s Day/Commonwealth Day (in lieu of Thur. 24th May)
Commit to make changes to end violence in our life and elsewhere.

- Involve friends, family, neighbours and co-workers to end domestic violence.
- The foundation for all forms of abuse against women.
- Take responsibility in re-educating sons and young men on how sexism and male dominance and privilege have led to violence.
- Lack of actions and silence allow violence in the community to continue.
- Having place to live.
- Realize that it is a problem that will never end until all men work to end it. Everyone deserves a safe and peaceful world.
- Play a role in creating a culture and social shift that no longer tolerates violence against women.

Role of men in ending sexual violence.
A central characteristic of any abuse is the dominant position of an individual, usually an adult that allows him or her to force or coerce a child into sexual activity. Child sexual abuse may include fondling a child’s genitals, masturbation, oral-genital contact, digital penetration, and vaginal and anal intercourse. Child sexual abuse is not solely restricted to physical contact; such abuse could include noncontact abuse, such as exposure, voyeurism and child pornography. Abuse by peers also occurs.

Accurate statistics on the prevalence of child and adolescent sexual abuse are difficult to collect because of problems of underreporting. However, there is general sentiment that child sexual abuse is not uncommon and is a serious problem in Belize.

Talk to your child; Listen to your child; Believe your child! All allegations of sexual abuse must be taken seriously.
July 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

July 11th - World Population Day

How can you lower your risk of sexual assault?

There are things you can do to reduce your chances of being sexually assaulted. Here are some things to put into practice:

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Walk with confidence
- Stay away from alcohol
- Be assertive - don't let anyone violate your space
- Trust your instincts
- Lock your doors and windows
- Watch out for unwanted visitors
- Park in well-lit areas and lock your car
- Never hitchhike
- Avoid walking or jogging alone, especially at night. Vary your route and stay in well-travelled, well-lit areas.

Try to put these safety tips into practice as soon as possible.