

## **Dealing with Male Victims of Rape and Domestic Violence**

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Rape and domestic violence are two of the top offenses where victims can be re-victimized in the process of attempting to receive crime victim assistance and obtaining resources. They are offenses that are thought of in a gender specific manner. When you identify an individual as a victim of domestic violence or rape you generally think of the victim as a female and the offender as a male. If the case turns out vice versa you begin to think of all the possible ways that the victimization did not or could have occurred. If the victim and offender are males the same response is met, only with the thought that the stronger of the two was the aggressor. Male victims of domestic violence and/or rape have difficulty in reporting these offenses and getting services. This is due to the societal lessons of gender roles and the gender categorization of these types of offenses. Society has trained us to view males as superior with the ability to overpower females and for them to be a victim of domestic violence or rape is impossible. Despite the ideology of society, males are victims of domestic violence and rape. Due to stigma and criticism many do not report these offenses out of fear they will be judged and discriminated against.

As professionals within the judiciary system, it is our obligation to end the way these offenses are categorized and to advocate for equal assistance and resources for male victims of domestic violence and rape.

In order for that to occur we must first make sure that we are treating male victims of domestic violence and rape as we would treat any victim of crime. The following is a list of ways professionals can assist male victims in order to provide them with services that will assist them in regaining their safety and security:

### **1. Empower them through their voice and story**

Male victims of domestic violence and rape can be empowered through their story. It restores freedom and begins the healing process.

### **2. Be mindful of unnecessary questions**

There are a thousand questions that can arise out of a situation where a male is a victim of a domestic violence or rape. Questions like, “she is a women, how could you not over power her? “, should be avoided as well as facial expressions that suggest that one is judging the victim.

### **3. Express empathy**

Male victims will need empathy. How you empathized with a male victim will affect how he responds to you and his situation.

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### **4. Be honest**

Being honest with your male client is very important. They need to understand that the process to get resources, possible justice and even healing from the offense will not be easy. Ensure them that with patience and assistance from the appointed resources they will be able to work through the process and regain their sense of self and safety.

### **5. Advocate**

Our job as professionals is to ensure that our clients are able to receive appropriate services. If we see that there is a lack in services for clients it is our responsibility to advocate for them. The same amount and or type of services that is available for one population should be accessible to other populations despite their race or gender.

Disclaimer: This article was not written to direct attention away from female victims of domestic violence or rape. It was written to assist professionals in working with male victims of domestic violence and rape and bring awareness to this population.