Sexual assault is any sexual or sexualised act that has not been consented to, agreed upon, invited, or chosen. It is a betrayal of trust and a denial of each person’s right to determine what happens to their body. Sexual assault can be committed against people regardless of their gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and background. Sexual assault is sometimes referred to as sexual abuse, sexual violence, or rape.

**MYTH: SEXUAL ASSAULT IS UNCOMMON**

FACT: 1 in 5 women will experience a sexual assault in their lifetime, and women aged 15-24 are at the highest risk. 7% of all sexual assaults are experienced by men. Sexual assault also disproportionately affects people within certain communities, including women with disabilities and LGBTIQ people.

**MYTH: ‘STRANGER DANGER’ – SEXUAL ASSAULTS ARE COMMITTED BY STRANGERS IN DARK ALLEYS**

FACT: 70% of sexual assaults are committed by a family member, close friend, fellow student, or colleague. 29% of sexual assaults are committed by someone met in a social setting. Only 1% of sexual assaults are committed by a complete stranger. Most sexual assaults occur in a home, a workplace, or a car.

**MYTH: SEXUAL ASSAULT CAN’T OCCUR IN A RELATIONSHIP**

FACT: Sexual assault occurs when there is no willing and voluntary consent between individuals. Being in a relationship does not mean that consent automatically exists. For example, sexual assault within marriage is a crime.

**MYTH: MEN DON’T EXPERIENCE SEXUAL ASSAULT**

FACT: Up to 7% of sexual assaults are experienced by men, and they are often assaulted by other men.

**MYTH: IT’S NOT SEXUAL ASSAULT IF YOU DIDN’T SAY ‘NO’ OR ‘STOP’**

FACT: Under the law, the person accused of sexual assault must show all the steps they took to actively gain the consent of the other person. Not saying ‘no’ or ‘stop’ is not the same and saying ‘yes’. If there is no active consent, then it may be sexual assault.

**MYTH: PEOPLE ENCOURAGE SEXUAL ASSAULT BY WHAT THEY WEAR, HOW THEY ACT, IF THEY ARE DRINKING**

FACT: It is never the fault of the person who experiences the sexual assault. Perpetrators are responsible for their own actions, and sexual assaults are often planned and pre-meditated. Everyone has the right to dress and act as they wish, without being sexually assaulted.