

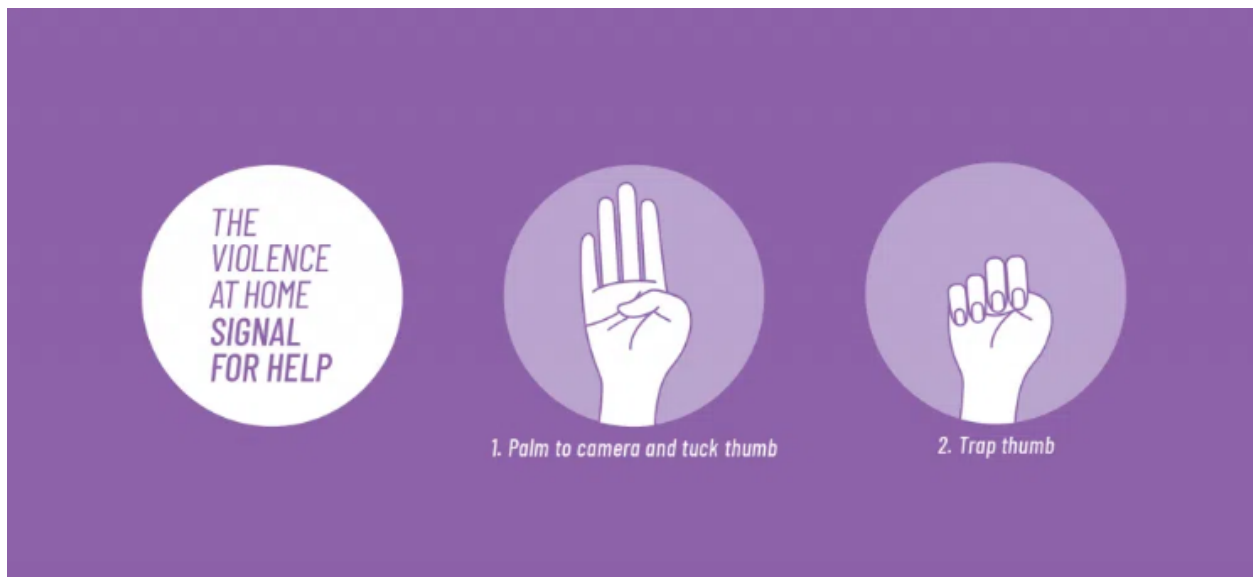
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Hyde County Hotline's Mission:

The purpose of Hyde County Hotline, Inc. is to work to eliminate domestic abuse, and sexual victimization, and provide safe shelter in Hyde County, North Carolina through the collaborative efforts of a compassionate community. We promote dignity, respect, and safety at home resulting in safer communities.

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## This secret hand signal could save victims of domestic abuse



Domestic violence is a serious global issue, and the problem may be getting worse for many families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stay-at-home orders can make the act of escaping a violent partner or family member especially difficult, and many countries around the world are reporting a troubling increase in reports of [domestic violence incidents](#). In an effort to combat the rise of domestic violence in their own country, the Canadian Women's Foundation has launched a new initiative to give victims in need a way to silently and secretly ask for help. It's called the Signal for Help, and it's catching on in more places than just Canada.

The foundation's [Signal for Help](#) is a simple hand gesture that can be done over Zoom calls, TikTok, FaceTime or any other type of video service. To make the signal, you hold up your open palm, tuck your thumb against it, and then close your fingers over your thumb.

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When the signal is given, those on the receiving end should know to check on the victim discreetly and seek emergency help if needed. The Canadian Women's Foundation recommends meeting in person or calling and asking "yes" or "no" questions (in case someone else is listening) or open-ended questions to help determine what the victim needs.

"There's ample evidence that disaster situations often lead to a surge in violence that women, girls and trans and non-binary people are at highest risk of experiencing," a [press release](#) states. "The Canadian Women's Foundation is calling on other organizations to help spread awareness of Signal for Help. Their hope is that support services and organizations will encourage the use of this gesture to let women, girls and trans and non-binary people know that they don't need to suffer in silence."

Though the signal was launched in Canada, the campaign has been shared globally on social media. It's also being promoted by the [Women's Funding Network](#), an alliance of more than 100 women's foundations and funds spanning 14 countries.

In the U.S., nearly one in three women and one in four men have experienced [intimate partner violence](#), according to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Sadly, this type of violence also impacts millions of children.

The [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) reports that more than 15 million children live in a home in which domestic violence has happened at least once. Children who grow up in this environment and witness and/or experience abuse are at higher risk for:

- Entering into abusive relationships.
- Becoming abusers themselves.
- Experiencing health problems, like depression and anxiety, as they get older.

Domestic violence is a huge problem, and obviously a hand signal is not a foolproof way to stop it. The Canadian Women's Foundation acknowledges that the signal won't be usable for all people. "We know that internet and video calling are not readily accessible to some," says Paulette Senior, President and CEO of the Canadian Women's Foundation. "Shelters and support services are doing everything they can to respond to the surge in violence. Signal for Help seeks to contribute to these efforts."

Some are also expressing concern that advertising the signal on social media could tip off abusers and put victims at risk. "Sharing these signs on social media is the worst idea," one user writes on [Instagram](#). "I work with women who have experienced abuse, and the abuse only gets worse if they are caught trying to get help. This video is now

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readily available for the abuser to see. We need to find more discrete ways of passing messages like this on so the abuser won't be able to find the signal."

Others point out that social media may be the only way for some victims to learn about the signal, and even if it's imperfect, it's still a valuable option. "You can see from the video she's doing it in such a way that only the caller on the other end can see it," another user adds. "This will work for some people. Other things will work for other people. Many people in abusive relationships don't have the luxury of professional [help], but do have friends and family."

So, what do you do if you have a friend or loved one who [needs help](#)? According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, you should:

- Find a safe, private location to talk about what's happening.
- Avoid shaming or placing blame on the victim.
- Help them create a [safety plan](#).
- Be supportive of their wants and needs, even if they aren't ready to leave the relationship.
- Find a domestic violence agency or other local resources for help.

If you or someone you know is at risk, you can also contact the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) at 800-799-SAFE (7233).

Watch the video on YouTube: [Violence at Home #SignalForHelp](#)

Source: [This secret hand signal could save victims of domestic abuse - Care.com Resources](#)

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# Sexual Assault

Sexual assault can take many different forms, but one thing remains the same: it's never the victim's fault.

## What is sexual assault?

The term sexual assault refers to sexual contact or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the victim. Some forms of sexual assault include:

- Attempted rape
- Fondling or unwanted sexual touching
- Forcing a victim to perform sexual acts, such as oral sex or penetrating the perpetrator's body
- Penetration of the victim's body, also known as rape

## What is rape?

Rape is a form of sexual assault, but not all sexual assault is rape. The term rape is often used as a legal definition to specifically include sexual penetration without consent. For its Uniform Crime Reports, the FBI defines rape as "penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim." To see how your state legally defines rape and other forms of sexual assault, visit RAINN's [State Law Database](#).

## What is force?

Force doesn't always refer to physical pressure. Perpetrators may use emotional coercion, psychological force, or manipulation to coerce a victim into non-consensual sex. Some perpetrators will use threats to force a victim to comply, such as threatening to hurt the victim or their family or other intimidation tactics.

## Who are the perpetrators?

The majority of perpetrators are someone known to the victim. Approximately [eight out of 10 sexual assaults](#) are committed by someone known to the victim, such as in the case of [intimate partner sexual violence](#) or [acquaintance rape](#).

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The term “date rape” is sometimes used to refer to acquaintance rape. Perpetrators of acquaintance rape might be a date, but they could also be a classmate, a neighbor, a friend’s significant other, or any number of different roles. It’s important to remember that dating, instances of past intimacy, or other acts like kissing do not give someone consent for increased or continued sexual contact.

In other instances the victim may not know the perpetrator at all. This type of sexual violence is sometimes referred to as **stranger rape**. Stranger rape can occur in several different ways:

- **Blitz sexual assault:** when a perpetrator quickly and brutally assaults the victim with no prior contact, usually at night in a public place
- **Contact sexual assault:** when a perpetrator contacts the victim and tries to gain their trust by flirting, luring the victim to their car, or otherwise trying to coerce the victim into a situation where the sexual assault will occur
- **Home invasion sexual assault:** when a stranger breaks into the victim's home to commit the assault

Survivors of both stranger rape and acquaintance rape often blame themselves for behaving in a way that encouraged the perpetrator. It’s important to remember that the victim is never to blame for the actions of a perpetrator.

*To speak with someone who is trained to help, call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.HOPE (4673) or chat online at [online.rainn.org](http://online.rainn.org).*

#### Legal Disclaimer

The Rape Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) website provides general information that is intended, but not guaranteed, to be correct and up-to-date. The information is not presented as a source of legal advice. You should not rely, for legal advice, on statements or representations made within the website or by any externally referenced Internet sites. If you need legal advice upon which you intend to rely in the course of your legal affairs, consult a competent, independent attorney. RAINN does not assume any responsibility for actions or non-actions taken by people who have visited this site, and no one shall be entitled to a claim for detrimental reliance on any information provided or expressed.

Source: <https://www.rainn.org/articles/sexual-assault>

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## What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is the business of stealing freedom for profit. In some cases, traffickers trick, defraud or physically force victims into providing commercial sex. In others, victims are lied to, assaulted, threatened or manipulated into working under inhumane, illegal or otherwise unacceptable conditions. It is a multi-billion dollar criminal industry that denies freedom to 24.9 million people around the world. Please scroll down to learn more about what constitutes the crime of trafficking. We hope this information is useful to you. Please note that the staff of the National Hotline is focused on assisting victims and survivors and is not available to answer more general questions about their work or about human trafficking generally for research or other purposes.

## Force, fraud, or coercion

[U.S. law defines human trafficking as the use of force, fraud, or coercion to compel a person into commercial sex acts or labor or services against his or her will.](#) The one exception involves minors and commercial sex. Inducing a minor into commercial sex is considered human trafficking regardless of the presence of force, fraud or coercion.

## Who is vulnerable?

Human trafficking can happen to anyone but some people are more vulnerable than others. Significant risk factors include recent migration or relocation, substance use, mental health concerns, involvement with the children welfare system and being a runaway or homeless youth. Often, traffickers identify and leverage their victims' vulnerabilities in order to create dependency.

## Who are the traffickers?

Perpetrators of human trafficking span all racial, ethnic, and gender demographics and are as diverse as survivors. Some use their privilege, wealth, and power as a means of control while others experience the same socio-economic oppression as their victims. They include individuals, business owners, members of a gang or network, parents or family members

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of victims, intimate partners, owners of farms or restaurants, and powerful corporate executives and government representatives.

## How do traffickers control victims?

Traffickers employ a variety of control tactics, the most common include physical and emotional abuse and threats, isolation from friends and family, and economic abuse. They make promises aimed at addressing the needs of their target in order to impose control. As a result, victims become trapped and fear leaving for myriad reasons, including psychological trauma, shame, emotional attachment, or physical threats to themselves or their family.

## Who are the survivors?

Victims and survivors of human trafficking represent every race and ethnicity but some forms of trafficking are more likely to affect specific ethnic groups.

Source: [What is Human Trafficking? | National Human Trafficking Hotline](#)

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**Remember: no one deserves to experience abuse of any kind—for any reason.**

And every type of abuse is serious.

Source: [Domestic Abuse Warning Signs | The National Domestic Violence Hotline \(thehotline.org\)](#)

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Come out and shop to support Hyde County Hotline!

Hyde County Hotline Thrift Store  
Thursday, Friday & Saturday  
8:30a.m. – 2:00p.m.

Come out to find some great deals!

*All profits and donations made at this thrift store supports Hyde County Hotline and the clients we serve.*

**Where you shop truly makes a difference! Thank you for your support!**

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#### **What We Do?**

• Crisis Intervention • Advocacy & Prevention \*Domestic Abuse, Sexual Victimization & Human Trafficking • Survivor Services • Safe Shelter • Safety Planning • Support Groups • Program Presentations for Adults and Children in Churches, Businesses, and Schools • Referrals

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**SUPPORT GROUPS**

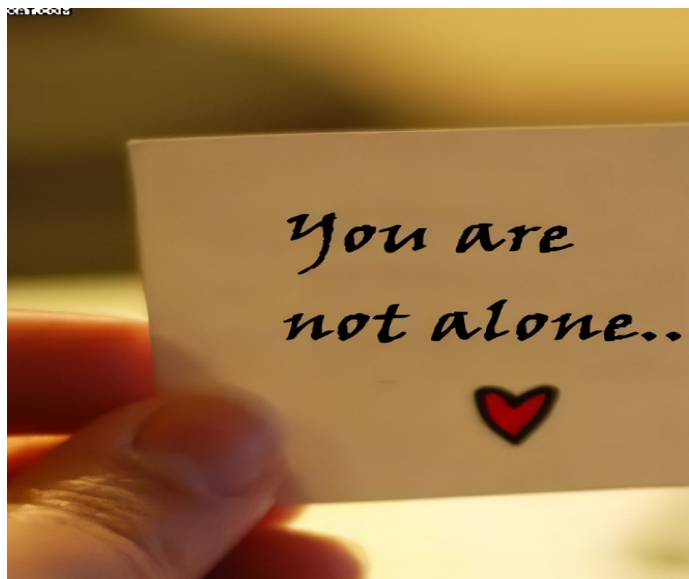
Begin your journey to healing.

**Domestic Violence Survivors**

Please join us on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month from 2:00p.m.-3:00p.m.

**Sexual Assault Survivors**

Please join us on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month from 2:00p.m.-3:00p.m.



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Heartfelt   
**THANKS**  
**TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!**

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### **How You Can Help**

- Ask Us About Community Presentations
  - Tell Others About Us
  - Become a Crisis Line Volunteer
  - Donate to Our Thrift Store
  - Ask for a Copy of Our Shelter Needs List
  - Monetary Donations are Accepted.
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#### **Council for Women & Youth Involvement**

#### **Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB)**

This newsletter is partially funded by N.C. Council for Women and Youth Involvement-Family Violence Prevention and Services Act Program, US DHHS, & NCDPS-GCC

