

Responding to Sexual Violence

This is a quick guide to responding to sexual violence. It is recommended that faculty and staff wishing to receive specialized training on supporting people affected by sexual violence register to attend Support Guide training. Please email osvper@macewan.ca for information about the Support Guide program and the next training opportunity.

Sexual violence refers to any sexualized act or act targeting a person's sexuality that is committed, threatened, or attempted against a person without that person's Consent. Sexual Violence varies in severity, can be physical or psychological in nature, and may include but is not limited to all forms of sexual contact, sexual humiliation, sexual exploitation, degrading sexual imagery, sending unwanted sexualized text messages, cyber harassment, indecent or sexualized exposure via electronic or social media or otherwise, sexual harassment, sexual discrimination, stalking, and sexual assault.

There are four ways you may respond to sexual violence, depending on the situation.

Type of Situation	Type of Response	What you Should Do
1. Disclosure	Supportive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen, Believe, Validate Emotions, and Explore Options • Debrief with Sexual Violence Response Coordinator
2. Safety Concern	Safety Assessment and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think there is an imminent or on-going risk to safety? • Contact Security Services to assess and respond to the safety concern
3. Witnessing Sexual Violence	Bystander Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take action to intervene • Choose one of the 4D's of Bystander Intervention
4. Complaint	Complaint Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer the individual to the Sexual Violence Response Coordinator

1. Disclosure

A person who has been impacted by sexual violence may disclose their experience to any member of the campus community with the purpose of seeking support. If you receive a disclosure from another MacEwan University community member, it is important to respect their privacy and confidentiality. Avoid making promises you may not be able to keep. Focus on providing a supportive response and follow these simple steps: (1) Listen, (2) Believe, (3) Validate Emotions, and (4) Explore Options. You may choose to debrief your response to a disclosure and seek guidance by contacting MacEwan University's Sexual Violence Response Coordinator at osvper@macewan.ca.

More comprehensive information about responding to disclosures is available under the [Give Support](#) section of our website. The website also provides information about campus and community resources, and upcoming training opportunities.

2. Safety Concern

It is always important to assess safety when responding to disclosures. If you are concerned there is an imminent or ongoing risk to the safety of an individual(s), please contact Security Services (24/7) at 780-497-5555 or 911. Examples of imminent safety concerns include concerns someone may attempt suicide or physically assault another person.

3. Witnessing Sexual Violence

If you witness sexual violence, or a situation that may become sexually violent, you can take action as a bystander. Bystander intervention is when a person who is not directly involved in a situation intervenes and potentially change the outcome. Every situation is different, and there is not one way to intervene. The 4D's of bystander intervention provide options:

- a) **Distract:** Create a distraction or redirect the focus of either person. This can derail or de-escalate the situation, giving the individual being targeted an opportunity to exit.
- b) **Direct:** Confront the harmful behaviour directly, so the target of the behaviour can leave the situation or the person engaging in the behaviour can choose to stop.
- c) **Delegate:** Ask others to get involved to help intervene. You could potentially ask for help from someone with more authority, such as your supervisor or security services.
- d) **Delay:** If you are not able to intervene in the moment, you can take action afterwards. Offer support to the person impacted by the behaviour, or talk to the person who engaged in the behaviour and let them know that how they acted was not okay.

The Office of Sexual Violence Prevention, Education, and Response offers training on bystander intervention. For information about upcoming workshops, visit the [Workshops & Training](#) section of our website.

4. Complaint

If a MacEwan University community member has experienced sexual violence, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, relationship violence or cyberviolence, they may choose to file a complaint. A complaint is a formal report of sexual violence submitted to the University for the purpose of initiating an investigation and seeking disciplinary action.

If a student, staff, or faculty member is considering filing a complaint of sexual violence, they should be referred to the Sexual Violence Response Coordinator at osvper@macewan.ca. The Sexual Violence Response Coordinator can provide information about the complaint process and fill out a complaint intake form if the person decides to make a report. More information is available under the [Report Sexual Violence](#) section of our website.

For more information, please visit our website at macewan.ca/SexualViolence.