

# What's happening at Lewis County



*Changing Lives ... One family at a time*

## **At least 1 in 4 college women will be the victim of a sexual assault during her academic career. <sup>1</sup>**

Heading off to college can be an exciting and emotional time. Especially when you have grown up in a close knit community and school district. You may have known some of your close friends your whole life. It is important not to transfer that trust that you have with your friends to new people that you meet at college. Getting to know someone takes time and your trust needs to be earned. Many colleges and universities are making it a priority to educate students on the risks of sexual assault. Although there is no sure means of preventing sexual assault, these are some things to consider when you go out.

### **Tips:**

- Avoid leaving with someone you don't know well. If you do leave with a new friend, tell your friends where you are going and when you are coming back.
- Speak up if you are uncomfortable with any plans.
- Drinking can impair your judgment. You might not be able to make the same decision you would make if you were sober.
- Don't drink something that has been left unattended. Premixed drinks can have more alcohol in them than you might want to drink. Drugs like Rohypnol and GHB have no color or odor and can be dissolved in drinks, causing the person who consumes the beverage to lose consciousness quickly.
- Communicate your limits firmly and directly. If you say "No," say it like you mean it. Avoid giving mixed messages. Back up your words with a firm voice and clear body language.
- Listen to your gut feelings. If you feel uncomfortable or think you might be at risk, leave the situation immediately and go to a safe place.

### **Helping A Friend Who Was Victimized:**

- Offer your support, listen to her.
- Let her know that you are concerned for her.
- Make sure your friend has a safe place to stay.
- Advise her to go to the hospital to be examined.
- Let her make her own decisions, and regain some sense of control she may have lost.
- Offer to accompany your friend to a helping resource (e.g., hospital, Health Center, Victims Assistance Center, Counseling Center).

At Lewis County Opportunities we recognize that men as well as women can be victims of sexual assault or domestic violence and we provide services for all victims.

1.Hirsch, Kathleen (1990)"Fraternities of Fear: Gang Rape, Male Bonding, and the Silencing of Women." Ms., 1(2) 52-56.

**Has Opportunities helped you? Send your story to "News" at the address below.**

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**Monday – Friday: 8 am – 4 pm**

**[www.lewiscountyopportunities.com](http://www.lewiscountyopportunities.com)**

**24-hour Crisis Hotline**

**376-HELP (4357)**