

■ On becoming a Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner or a Volunteer Rape Crisis Counselor call Rockland Family Shelter Sexual Trauma Services at 845.634.3391.

■ About Rockland Family Shelter or our services, visit our website at [www.RocklandFamilyShelter.org](http://www.RocklandFamilyShelter.org)

■ Please contact the NY State Coalition Against Sexual Assault for information, technical assistance and advocacy to survivors, families, allies, and the community at [www.NYS CASA.org](http://www.NYS CASA.org).

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*For More Info:*

**Rockland Family Shelter Sexual Trauma Services**  
**24 Hour Hotline: 845.634.3344 • TTY: 845.634.3119**

9 Johnsons Lane, New City, New York 10956  
 Free and Confidential Services  
 Short-term Counseling for survivors, friends, and family  
 Multilingual/Multicultural Counseling Programs: Creole, French, Spanish  
 Group and/or Individual Therapy  
 Advocacy/Accompaniment Services to Police, District Attorney, Court and Hospital  
 Medical and Legal Information and Referral Services  
 Assistance with Crime Victims Board Applications  
 Professional Training and Technical Assistance  
 Community Education Program  
 Satellite offices: Haverstraw and Spring Valley  
 Sensitive to the needs of the Jewish Orthodox Community

**Rockland Family Shelter**

**Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner**



*Why would I need to use SAFE?*



*The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) Program provides specially trained nurses to people who report sexual assault at Good Samaritan Hospital or Nyack Hospital. Examiners offer prompt, compassionate, non-judgmental care and forensic examination for injury identification and evidence collection.*

*What to do if you are sexually assaulted?*

- Get to a place where you feel safe.
- Preserve evidence of the attack. Do not wash, smoke, urinate, change your clothes, eat or drink anything, brush your teeth or clean up the area where the sexual assault occurred. There still may be evidence to collect, even if you have done any of these things.
- Call our 24 Hour Hotline at 845.634.3344 so that a rape crisis counselor can give you all the information you need to decide what to do.
- Go to either Good Samaritan Hospital or Nyack Hospital where a rape crisis counselor and Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner can meet you for medical attention.
- Call a friend or family member to support you.





### *Quotes from people who have benefitted from using the SAFE Program:*

“Evelyn was a wonderful help, and I would recommend her to anyone who needs help. Thank you Evelyn.”



“I am most grateful to have had such a caring and supportive nurse as one of the first responders. I think it essential that victims of sexual assault at least have the benefit of working with caring and competent first responders for the sake of their mental and physical help.”



“The nurse responded to all of my questions and concerns in the most caring and professional manner that I could have asked for. She really helped me to feel like I was regaining control over the situation with the way she performed her examination and exhibited genuine concern for my emotional welfare in conjunction with my physical well being.”



“I continue to be extremely grateful for having interacted with such kind and knowledgeable people that night in the hospital.”



“I think the examiner did a really good job of taking evidence, and explaining to me what constituted evidence, which is part of why I became motivated to go forward with a complaint.”



“Going to the hospital after a sexual assault can be such a scary experience, but perhaps if more people know about the help of people like SAFE examiners then perhaps people will not hesitate as much to go if they need to.”



“I learned of the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) Program when the police officer checked me in at the Nyack Hospital Emergency Room and the nurse told me I’d have to wait while they called in the SAFE team who were on call that night. Although I was not previously aware of the existence of this program, I was immediately relieved that I did not have to be ‘juggled’ among the other patients. I felt privileged to be treated as a ‘private patient’ even though I was in the ER. The examiner personified “safe”; I will forever remember her kind and gentle caring. I never tell people of my assault and rape without mentioning how extremely grateful and lucky I felt that the SAFE Program had been launched only 26 days prior to my attack.”

### *What is Rape and Sexual Assault/Abuse?*

Any unwanted sexual contact. It could include vaginal, oral or anal penetration; sexual touching directly or through your clothing. You are not to blame for what happened. If you could not say “No” because you were drunk, high or unconscious, or have a disability, it is still considered rape or sexual assault. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime. 85% of the time the victim knows the perpetrator.

### *Why would I need to use SAFE?*

After surviving a crime of sexual violence it is important to be treated for physical injuries which may have occurred. You might also want to collect any evidence on your body of the crime. This may include semen, saliva, bruises or cuts. Examiners are trained in how to collect this evidence. If you choose, you can also be treated preventatively for HIV, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and the possibility of pregnancy. Examiners can collect urine and blood to detect if you have been drugged. It is important for you to not drink, eat, smoke, urinate, bathe, comb your hair or remove your clothing after an assault. Material on or in your body could be used as evidence if you decide to complete a police report. If you like, a rape crisis counselor can accompany you to the Emergency Room to provide information, support, advocacy and counseling through the process.

### *Do I have to report to police if I use the SAFE program?*

In most cases you will decide whether or not to involve the police. You can have evidence collected and given to the police directly or it can be held for 30 days while you decide to report to the police or not. A rape crisis counselor can help you to make the decision to report by providing you with all your options.

### *Is SAFE available to everyone?*

Adults and teenagers age 12 and up are currently provided SAFE services. SAFE is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is always best to go to the hospital immediately after a sexual assault but SAFE is available up to 4 days or 96 hours after an assault. For those whose primary language is not English, translation is available. There is no cost for the forensic exam but you may be billed for the cost of medication and the use of the hospital room. A rape crisis counselor can help you to fill out paperwork to get compensation for medical costs related to the exam.

### *I am a teenager; do I have to tell my parents?*

In most cases NO. You do not need your parent’s permission to receive medical treatment. We will help you to make the best decision for you about whom to tell about what happened.

### *How do I access the SAFE program?*

You can call our free, confidential hotline and speak to a rape crisis counselor who will help you decide if SAFE is a good choice for you at 845.634.3344 or go to either Nyack or Good Samaritan Hospital Emergency Room.

### *Who else will know if I use the SAFE program?*

The services that will be provided to you are confidential. If you decide to report to the police the forensic examiner can provide expert testimony. An advocate can help you through the process of reporting and interactions with the criminal justice system.

### *How to Help a Friend*

- **Listen.**
- **Believe Them.**
- **Be There. Don’t be judgmental.**
- **Be Patient.** Understand that your friend may experience nightmares, flashbacks, difficulty eating and sleeping, irritability, depression, anger, anxiety, fear, self blame and difficulty concentrating.
- **You and your friend can use our 24 Hour Rape Crisis Hotline at 845.634.3344 for support.**