

# Sexualised Violence

Information Broschure

Frauen gegen VerGEWALTigung (ed.)



**Frauen\* gegen  
VerGEWALTigung**

counselling prevention information

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## Introduction

Sexualised violence occurs in all areas of life – most frequently in the family and within relationships. In recent years, we have seen a decrease in taboos regarding sexualised violence, partly due to the successful work of women's institutions.

Since #MeToo has been introduced, the discourse in the media and private conversations on sexualised violence and everyday sexism has intensified. Nevertheless, the media often use stereotypical images of victims and perpetrators that do not reflect the real experiences of survivors of sexualised violence.

Sexualised violence affects women both as children and as adults. For various reasons, women who have experienced sexualised violence in their childhood are sometimes only able to seek support in adulthood.

We wanted to create a comprehensive information brochure for girls and women who are survivors of sexualised violence. For this reason, one of the main topics of the brochure is trauma and how to cope with it. We see the identities behind the terms *girls* and *women* used in the brochure as diverse and flexible and not as a predefined category. The terms *perpetrator/offender* are used with a view to the fact that sexual offences are almost exclusively committed by cis men.

The aim of this brochure is to encourage survivors to speak about what they have experienced, to help them to understand their own behaviours and reactions after being traumatised, and to make it easier for them to use support and counselling services.

The brochure also wants to reach out to relatives and professionals. It aims to provide information on and guidance for the support of affected girls and women so that “unusual” behaviours and reactions can be better understood. We are aware that sexualised violence occurs in various forms (see 2.1). The term rape is used in the individual chapters to represent the entire spectrum of sexualised violence.

Each chapter can be read on its own. In order to allow for every chapter to be a standalone section, some of the content repeats itself.

With this brochure, we hope to contribute to a better understanding of traumatised girls and women who have experienced sexualised violence.

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## 1 General Information

# 1 General Information

This section contains general information about sexualised violence. Sexualised violence is an issue that affects many people, is mostly considered a taboo, provokes fear and is rarely talked about.

The definitions below aim to provide a better understanding of the term *sexualised violence*.

## 1.1 What is sexualised violence?

In recent years, the term *sexualised violence* has increasingly been used in literature instead of *sexual violence*, especially in the German-speaking world. To do justice to the context of Austria, sexualised violence will be used throughout the brochure. The following should help to understand the difference between the terms.

*Social science literature, fields of work that deal with survivors as well as psychological and therapy contexts often use the term sexual violence or, more specifically, sexualised violence. The term sexualised is used to show that aspects of violence do not have their origin in sexuality but are expressed in this case by means of sexual acts. (cf. German Wikipedia)*

*Sexual violence includes any form (physical, psychological or verbal) of sexual behaviour that is contrary to the will of the person against whom it is carried out. These sexual acts are often forced upon the person using threats (e.g. against their own children) or violence. In addition to sexual violence, which is often clearly defined and regulated under legislation governing sexual offences, there are many other forms, such as subtle or overt pressure from a partner to engage in sexuality or certain forms of sexuality, sexualised atmospheres pervaded by family members, etc.*

*In addition to the term sexual violence, the term sexual abuse has become common place. This is misleading, however, as it suggests that there is a "correct" form of sexual practice.*

(cf. website of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, information for women)

**The following list describes different forms of sexualised violence:**

- Suggestive looks;
- Sexist remarks;
- Unwanted touching;
- Threat of sexualised violence;
- Sexual coercion;
- Sexualised violence in childhood;
- Rape;
- Trafficking in women;
- Forced prostitution;
- Forced marriage;
- Genital mutilation;
- Digital sexualised violence.

***Sexualised violence* begins when women and girls are reduced to their bodies and are humiliated.**

**What the *various forms of sexualised violence* have in common is that power, degradation and humiliation play a central role.**

***Sexualised violence* is a profound attack on a person's physical, mental and emotional health.**





## 2 Facts and Figures

## 2 Facts and Figures

Widespread myths and prejudices about rape continue to exist to this day. They constitute an expression of social power inequality between the sexes. Sexualised violence is linked to power structures and maintains these at the same time.

The following list of common opinions illustrates some of the prejudices mentioned above. Among other things, assumptions like these often prevent women from seeking support.

*Only young and attractive women or women who dress or behave "provocatively" get raped.*

***Women of any age and appearance, of any social background, nationality or religion are raped. There is no behaviour that prevents rape. Any woman or any girl can be affected.***

*"Real" rape victims defend themselves vigorously and show clearly visible injuries.*

***Many affected women are unable to defend themselves physically in a rape situation. They literally freeze out of fear. Often there are no physical injuries, but most women and girls suffer severe psychological damage.***

*"Real" rape victims report the perpetrator to the police.*

***Only between 10 and 30 percent of rape and sexual coercion cases are reported to the police. It is easier for survivors to report the offence if it is committed by a stranger. Rape within one's social environment is reported far less often due to fear, feelings of guilt, etc.***

*Rapes are typically committed by strangers as a sudden attack, and the choice of victim is rather random.*

*Two thirds of all rapes take place in the social environment of the woman or girl affected (family, friends, workplace, neighbours).*

*Women and girls are most at risk where they feel safest, in their personal environment!*

*Most rapes are not accidental but planned. The offender waits for an opportunity to open up.*

*Rapists are abnormal, mentally ill or sexually disturbed.*

*Over 90 percent of rapists do not exhibit any pathological mental disorders; they often lead an inconspicuous sex life and do not display any recognisable social behaviour.*

*The offender could no longer control his "sex drive".*

*This statement is one of the most widespread prejudices and excuses. There is no biological, physical or psychological reason why a man can no longer control his sexual behaviour. It is a matter of him asserting his will against the woman or girl and exercising power. The perpetrator bears sole responsibility for the offence.*

*Rape is an aggressive form of sexual intercourse that some women even perceive as pleasure-enhancing or particularly "masculine".*

*Women and girls experience rape as a profound attack on their physical and emotional integrity, as an enormous threat, often in acute fear of death, and never as a sexual act.*

*Rape constitutes an act of violence.*

Rape is primarily an act of violence motivated by aggression that involves the exercise of power and control, the subjugation and humiliation of the victim (cf. Beratung-Bonn).

The myths and prejudices mentioned above contribute to the fact that women and girls who have been raped are often not taken seriously. The violence is trivialised or hushed up. As a result, survivors are often discriminated against, made out to be liars or even blamed for the crime.

The offender, on the other hand, is apologised for and sometimes portrayed as the victim. This leads to a reversal of victim-perpetrator roles (often referred to as victim blaming). As a result, women and girls who have been raped often feel guilty for the crime that was committed against them.

**The perpetrator bears sole responsibility for the offence.**

## 2.1 Statistical data

The following information is taken from the Amnesty International report on Austria and gives an overview of the frequency and incidence of sexualised violence:

**49,7%** of the world's population are women.

**At least one in three women** is abused, forced into sexual intercourse or otherwise sexually harassed in the course of her life.

**One in 5 women** is a victim of rape.

In the US, one woman is raped **every 90 seconds**.

In France, **25,000 women** are raped **every year**.



In Bosnia-Herzegovina, **between 20,000 and 50,000 women** were raped **during the three-year war** from 1992 onwards. (cf. Amnesty International)

In Germany, a large-scale study on the living situations, safety and health of women was carried out in 2004. Around 10,000 women between the ages of 16 and 80 were surveyed. The authors of the study assume that the figures can be applied to Europe. This study in addition to the first EU study on violence against women from 2014, in which 42,000 women between the ages of 18 and 74 were surveyed, confirm the following facts::

**25% of women** have experienced violence from a current or former partner.

**58% of women** have experienced sexual harassment.

**25% of women** have experienced sexualised violence in childhood.

**99.1%** of rape victims are women.

**Two thirds** of affected women know the offender.

**Only around 8% of cases** of sexualised violence are reported.

**93.3% of criminal offences involving violence against women** do not come to the attention of the police or public prosecutor.

**Sexualised violence occurs most frequently within families and relationships.**





## 3 Symptoms & Implications of Traumatization

### 3 Symptoms & Implications of Traumatisation

This chapter deals with trauma, traumatisation and the possible symptoms and consequences that can occur after rape.

The term trauma comes from the Greek language and means *injury/wound*. A psychotrauma is a psychological injury/wound.

Women and girls experience rape as a profound attack on their physical, mental and emotional health.

Rape is associated with experiencing intense fear – often even fear of death. If the perpetrator is familiar or known, the attack is also a serious violation of trust. In this extreme situation, there is no “typical”, no “right” or “wrong” behaviour. Women and girls defend themselves in the way that is possible for them.

This refers to both physical resistance as well as the unconscious development of survival strategies. Some defend themselves vocally or try to engage the offender in conversation. Others behave in a seemingly accommodating manner in order to minimise the danger to their own lives. Many women freeze out of fear and horror and allow the rape to pass over them seemingly impassively (see 4.3.2 Physical reactions). This is just a small number of possible responses. Every behaviour in an extreme situation represents a protective mechanism to ensure one’s own physical and emotional survival.

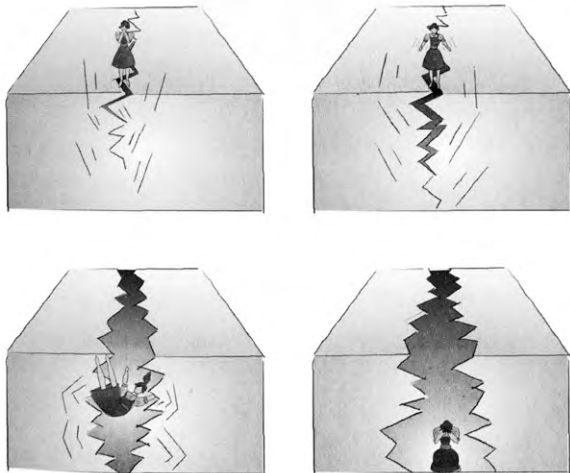
**Every woman and every girl shows resistance in the way that is possible for her in an extreme situation. Violence is always an extreme situation.**

### 3.1 Rape and traumatisatisation

Alongside torture, rape is considered one of the most severe forms of traumatisatisation and can have gravely negative effects on survivors. Trauma is defined as *an event and the consequence of an event that shatters a person's normal experiences, action capacity and coping strategies. Post-traumatic stress is the individual's reaction to this event, a reaction that at some point enabled physical and psychological survival in a threatening and destructive situation but interferes with the individual's normal life.* (cf. Herman, 1993)

This definition describes the reaction to a life-threatening situation that is outside a person's "normal" range of experience. This triggers protective or stress reactions that are intended to enable the individual to cope with the extreme experience.

*A trauma is happening*



*Graphic illustration "Trauma", Huber, M., p. 19*

**Protective or stress reactions can vary from woman to woman, for example:**

- Some push the experience aside and suppress it.
- Some experience the event again and again in their thoughts or dreams.
- Others avoid comparable situations that could trigger similar feelings and, for example, no longer go out on their own in the evening.

### **3.2 Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**

If these behaviours (the protective and stress reactions outlined above) only persist for a certain period of time and decrease in intensity and severity, then they are **normal behaviours** in response to **abnormal experiences**.

However, if the aforementioned behaviours persist for longer than four weeks without decreasing in intensity and frequency, there is a high probability of developing PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). Around 80 to 90 percent of women and girls who have been raped suffer from PTSD.

Generally, the earlier treatment/counselling/psychotherapy begins, the better and faster PTSD can be processed. At the same time, it is important to emphasise that every woman must decide for herself when the time is right to seek support.

### 3.3 Symptoms and implications

Women and girls find themselves in an exceptional emotional state as a result of rape.

The reactions to rape are as varied and diverse as the women and girls affected and their respective life situations. Their reaction is an attempt to deal with a severe traumatic experience.

**Every reaction is appropriate!** There is no “typical” or “right” kind of behaviour. All reactions are healing attempts.

#### 3.3.1 Potential PTSD symptoms

**The symptoms and behaviours that occur vary. They are an attempt by the body and soul to live with the life-threatening event of rape:**

- Increased anxiety and states of fear;
- Sleep disorders and nightmares;
- Frequent re-experiencing of parts of the trauma;
- Avoidance of (preferably all) stimuli that are associated with the trauma;
- Occurrence of feelings like insensitivity, isolation from others, loneliness, helplessness, despair, alienation from loved ones, inability to make contact, etc.;
- Feelings of guilt and shame;
- Suicidal thoughts, self-harm;
- Impaired perception of the environment as well as one’s own body and feelings;
- Hampered concentration and performance;
- Lack of appetite or excessive appetite;

- Abuse of alcohol, drugs, medication as an attempt to cope with the situation and to numb the symptoms.

Survivors also report insidious changes that are not directly associated with the trauma.

**The following changes may occur, among others:**

- Loss of zest for life;
- Limited ability to think about ideas for future developments;
- Reduced interest in everyday things.

These symptoms may or may not occur. Sometimes they are very intense and/or subside after a certain period of time.

In the next section, we would like to describe the physical reactions to an extremely stressful situation in order to better understand the behaviours and symptoms mentioned above.

### **3.3.2 Physical reactions**

The following provides an overview of the physical (brain-organic) responses that are triggered by an extremely stressful external event (such as rape).

The brain's attempts to cope with a life-threatening situation are automatic and unconscious. These kinds of reaction are also referred to as automatisms.



### There are three different patterns:

- **FIGHT** is when the body is put on alert to mobilise strength and fight the danger;
- **FLIGHT** describes the attempt to escape from a dangerous situation, e.g. by running away, screaming, etc.;
- **FREEZE** means being frozen, paralysed.

If in the event of rape, for example, neither fight nor flight is possible, extreme fear or even fear of death arise. The body's self-defence mechanisms collapse as a result. This is a reflex – "pretending to be dead" – that is not consciously controlled and makes the body become stiff or limp. At the same time, reality fades and a "mental state of drifting away" can occur. The woman or girl affected distances herself internally from the scene, so to speak. This phenomenon is referred to as dissociation.

In the time after a traumatic event, both body and soul try to gradually cope with the experience. If sufficient help is available, e.g. external support services, it is possible to avert PTSD. If the symptoms described persist for a longer period of time, it is definitely advisable to seek support.

### **3.4 Risk factors for developing post-traumatic stress disorder**

There are a number of factors that increase the risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder.

**These risk factors can be categorised as follows:**

#### **1. Before the traumatic event:**

- Previously experienced traumatising events (e.g. experiences of violence and/or abuse);
- Poverty, isolation;
- Little or no social environment;
- Physical and/or mental impairment;
- Accumulation of mental impairments within the family.

#### **2. During the trauma:**

- Threat to one's own life;
- Duration, severity and repetition of the trauma.

#### **3. After the traumatic event:**

- No supportive environment and/or external support;
- Other stressful life experiences and life events;
- Lack of recognition and/or disbelief of the event by others;
- Other occurring stress factors, such as financial stress, relocation, job changes, job loss and repeated threats.



## 4 Support and Counselling

## 4 Support and Counselling

At the beginning of this chapter, we would like to elaborate on some differences between psychosocial counselling and psychotherapy in Austria.

### COUNSELLING

Psychosocial counselling centres provide information and support and can be contacted in person, by telephone or by email.

#### **Counselling centres offer:**

- The possibility to deal with experiences of violence in a safe environment;
- Support for strengthening self-determination and self-responsibility;
- Support for coping with everyday problems;
- Help with legal matters.

Counselling is usually free of charge, confidential and, if desired, anonymous. However, anonymity is not guaranteed for assistance with proceedings ("Prozessbegleitung"; often referred to as court assistance).

### PSYCHOTHERAPY

#### **Psychotherapy sessions provide support for:**

- Dealing with personal questions and problems;
- Coming to terms with stressful life events;
- Personal development.

***Trauma-centred psychotherapy* is a specific form of psychotherapy that helps to:**

- Regain stability;
- Work on strengths and resources;
- Work on/with the traumatic event;
- Process the event and integrate it into one's own life.

The emotional state of an individual after a rape is one of exception. Feelings such as fear, despair, disgust and shame are profound. An individual's self-confidence, dignity, sexuality and bodily sensations may be impaired.

Scientific studies have shown that traumatisation caused by rape is similar to traumatisation caused by torture. Survivors report similar reactions, symptoms and behaviours.

Minor triggers, such as sounds, smells, films, similarities with the perpetrator, etc., can lead to the traumatic situation being relived (flashback).

Survivors often suffer from strong feelings of guilt and shame or self-blame. Their thoughts constantly revolve around questions such as, "Why didn't I fight back?", "Why did I trust him?", etc.

These self-reproaches are sometimes reinforced by the reactions of other people. Relatives, partners, friends or acquaintances often respond with resistance, disbelief, blame, etc.

Some time after the rape, the overall situation may calm down in an attempt to repress what has happened. The desire occurs to "forget everything and be normal again".

However, the effects of rape can last for weeks, months or years.

Our experience shows that many survivors of rape find it difficult to come to terms with what they have experienced on their own or to seek external support. However, it can be an important and valuable

step to get out of isolation and talk about one's own feelings. It's not about describing the details of the experienced violence. The focus is on regaining control over one's own life and achieving a certain degree of stability.

Counselling centres offer the possibility to talk to experienced, understanding and non-judgemental professionals about what has happened anonymously and free of charge. If desired, a suitable psychotherapist can be found together.

Counselling centres also help to arrange appointments with authorities, different organisations and institutions as well as legal counsellors and can accompany the individual to these appointments.

When an event is reported, assistance with proceedings (*Prozessbegleitung*); often referred to as court assistance; see chapter on legal information) is available free of charge. Survivors decide themselves how and to what extent they want to seek help.

**Survivors can seek support from counselling centres at any time, regardless of how long ago a rape occurred. Every woman/girl decides for herself when the right time has come to seek external help.**

## **4.1 First aid for survivors of rape**

The aim of counselling is to support survivors of rape in regaining control over their own feelings and restoring stability in everyday life.

It is important to provide a safe and protected environment in which survivors can talk about what they have experienced.

**The following aspects, seen from the perspective of affected women, can help in the initial phase after traumatisation and contribute to more stability:**

### **Support from outside:**

In the initial phase after a rape, it is helpful to surround yourself with understanding and supportive people. These can be family members, friends, acquaintances or employees of counselling centres.

### **Internal and external safety:**

Initially, it is important to regain “the ground under your feet”, “find yourself again” and develop inner calmness.

After a traumatic event, a feeling of safety needs to be restored first. Initially, this is often limited to external safety, e.g. familiar surroundings, trusted people, etc.

### **Reassurance, stability:**

Everything that has been helpful in dealing with difficult situations in the past should also be applied now. A structured daily routine can be helpful. A nice film, reading your favourite book, physical activity or talking to friends can provide reassurance.

**Medical care:**

Good, comprehensive medical care is just as important for traumatic events as it is for physical injuries. Temporary medication can be useful to help deal with symptoms that may occur. The aim is to regain a certain sense of safety and security.

**Talking about the trauma and allowing feelings to surface:**

After a recent trauma, it can be important to allow feelings like anger, rage, sadness, shame, guilt, etc., to surface and talk about them. It is essential not to lose yourself in detailed descriptions of what you have experienced in order to avoid getting overwhelmed with feelings and images.

**Become an expert for yourself:**

Some reactions and symptoms after a rape can make survivors feel as they were going "crazy". Being aware of and knowing about potential symptoms and behaviours makes it easier to comprehend them and to better understand yourself. This will allow you to help yourself, calm down and regain a sense of safety and security.

**Distancing:**

In the initial phase after a traumatic experience, it is important to calm yourself down, to distance yourself from what has happened and to realise that your life up to now does not only consist of the traumatic event.

**Help with flashbacks:**

Flashbacks are sudden and involuntary throwbacks to what has happened. Flashbacks can be very intense and realistic. As a result, there is a risk of re-traumatisation (re-experiencing what has happened). Physical movement (standing up, stamping your feet, leaving the room and walking around, etc.) can help to interrupt flashbacks. It is important to realise and tell yourself that this is a memory from the past.



## **Help with dissociative states/"stepping out of the body":**

Dissociation is a "normal" reaction by the body (brain) in response to an extremely stressful situation. The following strategies can help to control this response:

- Realising that this is a temporary condition that will pass;
- Saying out loud to yourself, "I am now a grown woman who is safe.", "I am in a safe place.", etc.;
- Keeping your eyes open and feeling the ground beneath your feet;
- Holding a pleasant and calming object in your hand and focussing on it;
- Waking up or activating yourself with cold water, e.g. by running it over your hands, arms or face;
- Listening to calming, relaxing music;
- Recognising the difference between past and present, clearly affirming what the date today is, who you are, how old you are and where you are. Say these sentences repeatedly out loud to yourself;
- Breathing clearly and consciously. Paying attention to how you breathe in and out and keeping your eyes open. Concentrating mainly on the exhalation;
- Doing something that requires your full concentration and activates your sense of perception. Reading something or looking at a picture, listening to music, playing music, smelling a scent, tasting a distinct flavour, etc.;
- Exercising, going for a walk, etc.;
- Performing an activity with your hands – painting, gardening, etc.;

- Surrounding yourself with people who are good for you and with whom you feel safe, comfortable and secure;
- Imagining that you are locking the experience from your past into a safe. You only open it when you feel the desire to do so. This locks away the stressful images and thoughts for a while and prevents them from haunting you for a certain period of time.

**Knowing about the symptoms, duration and development of trauma can help to overcome fears and make it easier to process the trauma.**

## **4.2 Past traumatisation**

Many women have experienced sexualised violence in childhood or in the past. It is often only in adulthood that memories and the associated feelings emerge, which can have a strong impact on an individual's everyday life.

**It is NEVER too late to seek help!**

No matter how long ago the traumatic event occurred, an individual's feelings and the associated psychological strain should be taken seriously.

### 4.3 Support for relatives and friends of rape survivors

The rape of a loved one can be burdensome for partners, friends and family members, too, and can trigger a wide range of reactions and responses:

- Dismay, extreme worry, helping and protective behaviour, over-protection, the desire to distract the survivor, to avenge her, to make up for everything;
- Reproachful responses, such as doubt, offence, refusing affection and attention, the feeling that she is no longer “who she used to be”, questions as to why she was not more careful, etc. (cf. Kretschmann)

As understandable as these reactions are, they can trigger inner conflicts in survivors of rape. This can lead to the woman/girl feeling responsible for the feelings of others, not wanting to burden them any further.

Moreover, these reactions can lead to an increase in insecurity, to feelings of guilt and shame or doubts about one’s own credibility in survivors of rape.

**Important:**

**Support from family and friends can make it easier to overcome an event of rape.**

### How to provide help:

- Encourage the woman or girl affected to talk about her feelings. Avoid asking precise questions about the offence due to a potential risk of renewed traumatising;
- If possible, make yourself available for conversation. However, the woman or girl affected should determine the time of the conversation;
- Try to respect changes in behaviour after a rape;
- Try not to doubt or question the woman's/girl's statements;
- Try not to make any accusations or apportion blame.
- Do not give hasty, well-intentioned advice, such as, "It's not that bad!", etc.;
- Try not to put the survivor under pressure with your expectations;
- Point out external support services. Here, too, the woman/girl concerned should decide for herself whether and when to contact a counselling centre;
- Try not to pressure the woman/girl concerned into any actions. Rape is a massive transgression of boundaries. It is therefore important for survivors to feel independent and self-determined.

#### **Wichtig:**

**Auch Angehörige haben die Möglichkeit, sich Hilfe, Information und Beratung bei einschlägigen Beratungsstellen zu holen.**



## 5 Prevention

## 5 Prevention

The aim of prevention is to protect girls and women against sexualised violence. However, prevention efforts cannot be seen independently of the social environment. Prevention is a socio-political task and includes the responsibility of society as a whole.

Prevention is a lifelong process and ideally begins in childhood. For upbringing, this could mean teaching the child age-appropriate language for sexuality, respecting and appreciating the child's boundaries, and giving the child the right to make their own decisions about their body.

Due to the everyday nature of sexualised violence in all its forms (e.g. verbal harassment, unpleasant looks, unwanted touching, etc.), many women and girls perceive assaults and threats as "normal". As a result, their own perceptions are often ignored, it is difficult for them draw a line and often impossible to react.

Therefore, preventative work needs to: raise awareness about the root causes and background of sexualised violence, term/label sexualised violence, encourage sharing of different life experiences and associated strategies, and expand the existing possibilities for action and reaction.

Preventative work regarding sexualised violence against women and girls focuses on the abilities, strengths and needs of each individual and takes their respective life situations into account.

**Women/girls have the right to demand that their boundaries are respected at all times.**

**Every woman and every girl has the right to say 'no' without having to justify it.**

## 5.1 Self-defence

**Does this sound familiar to you?**

**Have you ever ...**

- ...been subjected to stupid comments on the street?
- ...been harassed at work or at school?
- ...heard derogatory remarks about women in a social gathering?
- ...experienced telephone harassment?
- ...been so baffled that you were speechless at first?
- ...so afraid of the dark that you hardly go out at night?
- ...been physically assaulted?

At the beginning of the 1970s, various forms of self-protection and self-defence for women were developed as part of the second women's movement. We would like to introduce WenDo as one example.

WenDo means the way of women. This form of self-defence was developed by women for women and includes physical and mental strategies to counter various forms of violence.

Women and girls learn how to protect and defend themselves in their private, professional and school lives. WenDo is not a martial art but a way of taking good care of yourself at all times.

The basic idea of WenDo is to strengthen self-assurance and self-confidence. It is of central importance that each participant finds support on her individual path.

### WenDo courses comprise:

- Easy-to-learn self-defence techniques (punches and kicks);
- How to use your voice;
- How to experience your own determination and physical strength;
- Perception exercises and exercises for setting boundaries (role play);
- Conversations about experiences of violence and defending oneself;
- Games, fun and relaxation.

WenDo courses are frequently organised by counselling centres for women.

## 5.2 Defence options

Below you can find various items that can be used in emergency situations.

### 5.2.1 Pocket alarm or whistle





As the name suggests, a pocket alarm is designed to be carried in a pocket and will sound an alarm in case of danger or emergency.

In a dangerous situation, you pull out the safety pin on the device – the resulting loud noise attracts attention and is intended to scare the attacker away or call for help. Pocket alarms are available in various sizes and forms, from key rings to protective alarms for certain occupational groups. The device is light and requires little effort for operation.

#### The pocket alarm works on four levels:

- **Alerting:** The penetrating and loud sound alerts other people;
- **Deterring:** The loud noise hurts the ears. It cannot be switched off by the attacker;
- **Gaining time:** The offender is startled. This moment can be used to run away, make an emergency call, etc;
- **Safety:** The pocket alarm cannot be used against you.

A whistle can also be used to alert others, act as a deterrent and gain time. A whistle is inexpensive, can be purchased at any sports shop and can be worn around the neck.

In the event of repeated harassment calls, the whistle can be blown loudly into the phone to deter the caller.

#### 5.2.2 Pepper spray

A pepper spray is a spraying device with an irritant that has unpleasant physical effects on humans and mammals. Its method of operation is the same as for other spray cans. The spray pattern is usually a conical mist or a jet with a range of 1.5 to 5 metres.



### **The pepper spray affects the eyes, breathing and skin:**

- **Eyes:** Contact causes burning pain and subsequent spasmodic closing of the eyelids for around 5 to 10 minutes.
- **Breathing:** In most cases, there is a coughing reflex;
- **Skin:** Usually, reddening of the skin occurs.

### **The legal situation in Austria is as follows:**

According to a ruling by the Supreme Court of 18 May 1999 (11Os43/99), the pepper spray used in a specific case was not considered to be a weapon as per Section 143, second case, of the Austrian Criminal Code.

This ruling confirms that the use of pepper spray in an emergency situation is legally permitted in Austria.

### **Hints and tips for use:**

- The pepper spray should be kept ready to hand. In a dangerous situation, it is almost impossible to find the pepper spray in your handbag;
- Ideally, you should hold the pepper spray with both hands and press the button with the thumb in an emergency;
- Pepper spray targets the eyes, respiratory tract and skin. It should therefore be directed at the attacker's eyes, nose and mouth.

**Caution:** Pepper spray can be an effective means of self-defence in the event of an attack. However, in the worst case scenario, the pepper spray can also be used against you.

To a certain extent, self-protection also means bridging the time between the occurrence of an emergency situation and the arrival and implementation of organised help.

### **5.3 Information & protection against chemical substances**

Counselling centres are reporting an increase in the use of knockout drops (also known as date-rape drops or roofies) in connection with rape. These range from dissolved sleeping pills and tranquillisers to illegal substances.

Knockout drops are usually mixed into drinks. They lead to incapacitation, impaired consciousness and loss of willpower. Affected women/girls report memory gaps or mental blanks. Another problem is identification and detectability. The time during which the use of drugs can be identified and proven ranges from a few hours to several days.

Alcohol enhances the effect of the anaesthetic substances.

#### **Preventive measures:**

- Do not leave drinks unattended;
- Ask friends or people you trust to keep an eye on your drink, e.g. when going to the toilet, dancing, etc.;
- The drops or powder are usually tasteless or have a salty or soapy flavour. The drink may also appear cloudy. If in doubt, do not drink it;
- Do not accept drinks offered by strangers, unless they are in sealed bottles;
- If any symptoms occur, reach out to somebody you know or the staff immediately. Many bar owners and workers are aware of

the issue of knockout drops and sexualised violence thanks to the Luisa is here! initiative and other prevention concepts.

- If in doubt, seek medical help.

*„If women suspect that they have fallen victim to a violent assault, rapid action is required. In any case, it is advisable to undergo a medical examination and to be checked for injuries, infections or pregnancy and have these documented. Doctors are bound to confidentiality, which means the incident is not necessarily reported. This can be done at a later stage and can be discussed at a counselling centre. Sexual assault following the administration of knockout drops is a criminal offence. Other criminal offences, such as deprivation of liberty, might also have occurred.“ (cf. Frauennotruf, women’s helpline)*

Since 1 January 2020, healthcare professionals have been obliged to report a serious violent offence such as rape. There are exceptions to the obligation to report, however, for example if reporting would contravene the explicit desire of the adult (above 18 years of age) person concerned.

A medical examination does not automatically lead to a report being made to the police. If you do not or do not yet feel ready to report the offence, ask the treating physician to refrain from reporting it.



## 6 Sexualised Violence Online

## 6 Sexualised Violence Online

New forms of violence, such as online hate speech, cyber violence and cyber stalking, are on the rise and affect younger women and LGBTIQ+ people in particular.

Studies show that online hate can have a very similar impact on those affected as physical violence, and in some cases online hate might have an even stronger and more threatening effect than physical violence.

Online assaults can occur independent of time and place. The feeling of being vulnerable everywhere and at all times can trigger a heightened sense of powerlessness. As spreading is easy, attacks can affect many areas of life, e.g. school or the workplace. Sexualised digital assaults often trigger profound feelings of shame.

**Sexualised violence on the internet includes, but is not limited to:**

- **Upskirting** photographing or filming intimate body parts (“up the skirt”) without the woman’s consent or knowledge;
- **Revenge porn:** intimate videos posted online without the woman’s knowledge;
- **Sextortion (sex + extortion):** women being blackmailed with the publication of nude pictures or videos;
- **Slut shaming:** women being insulted and humiliated on the internet because of their sexuality or the way they dress;
- **Digital stalking:** women being spied on using special software on mobile phones: reading text messages, copying photos and videos, switching on the camera. This allows intimate messages, photos or videos to be distributed.

The internet is not a lawless space. In 2021, new legal provisions against online hate came into force. One major development is that free-of-charge psychosocial and legal assistance with proceedings (“*Prozessbegleitung*”; often referred to as court assistance) is more widely available, e.g. for the following cases\*:

**Persistent persecution/stalking (“Beharrliche Verfolgung”, Section 107a of the Austrian Criminal Code)**

*Anyone who persistently and unlawfully persecutes a person shall be liable to a custodial sentence of up to one year or a monetary fine of up to 720 times the daily fine rate. Persistent persecution is if somebody continues to persecute a person for a prolonged period of time in a manner that is suitable to unreasonably interfere with that person’s way of life:*

- *Seeking to be in physical proximity;*
- *Establishing contact by means of telecommunication or other means of communication, or via third parties;*
- *Using personal data to induce third parties to contact the person; or*
- *Publishing facts or images of the most personal sphere of life of the person without their consent.*

*If the offence exceeds a period of time of one year or results in suicide or attempted suicide of the persecuted person, the offender is liable to receive a custodial sentence of up to three years.*

**Persistent harassment by means of telecommunications or a computer system (“Fortdauernde Belästigung im Wege einer Telekommunikation oder eines Computersystems”, Section 107c of the Austrian Criminal Code)**

*A custodial sentence of up to one year or a monetary fine of up to 720 times the daily fine rate shall be imposed on anyone who, by means of telecommunications or a computer system, unreasonably interferes with a person’s way of life by*

*(1) ... committing a criminal act against the honour of the person in a way that is perceptible to a larger number of people for a longer period of time; or*

*(2) ... making a fact or image of the person's most personal sphere of life perceptible to a large number of people for a longer period of time without the person's consent.*

*If the offence results in suicide or attempted suicide of the person affected, the offender is liable to receive a custodial sentence of up to three years.*

*The interpretation of the term "perceptible for a longer period of time" must be based on the circumstances of the individual case. For the term "a large number of people", ten people can be taken as a rough guide.*

*\*(translated version; in case of doubt, please refer to German version.)*

**Further information:**

[www.zara.or.at](http://www.zara.or.at)

ZARA – a network for moral courage and combatting racism with specialised counselling centres for victims of online hate speech and racism

[www.saferinternet.at](http://www.saferinternet.at)





## 7 Legal Information

## 7 Legal Information

The following section outlines a brief excerpt of relevant legal texts (translated version; in case of doubt, please refer to German version).

### **Section 201 of the Austrian Criminal Code: rape ("Vergewaltigung")**

*(1) Anyone who coerces a person to perform or tolerate sexual intercourse or a sexual act equivalent to sexual intercourse by force, by deprivation of personal liberty or by threatening to endanger life or limb (Section 89) shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of six months to ten years.*

*(2) If the offence results in grievous bodily harm (Section 84(1)) or pregnancy of the raped person, or if the raped person is put in an agonising state for a prolonged period of time or is particularly humiliated, the offender shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of five to fifteen years; but if the offence results in the death of the raped person, the offender shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of ten to twenty years or life imprisonment.*

### **Section 202 of the Austrian Criminal Code: sexual coercion ("Geschlechtliche Nötigung")**

*(1) Anyone who, except for the cases outlined in Section 201, coerces a person to perform or tolerate a sexual act by force or by dangerous threat shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of up to five years.*

*(2) If the offence results in grievous bodily harm (Section 84(1)) or pregnancy of the coerced person, or if the coerced person is put in an agonising state for a prolonged period of time or is particularly humiliated, the offender shall be liable to a custodial sentence of one to ten years; but if the offence results in the death of the coerced person, the offender shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of five to fifteen years.*

**Section 205 of the Austrian Criminal Code: sexual abuse of a defenceless or mentally impaired person**  
**(*"Sexueller Missbrauch einer wehrlosen oder psychisch beeinträchtigten Person"*)**

*(1) Anyone who abuses a defenceless person or a person who is incapable of understanding the act or of acting in accordance with this understanding due to mental illness, feeble-mindedness, a profound disturbance of consciousness or any other serious mental disorder equivalent to one of these conditions by taking advantage of this condition and performing a sexual act on the person or having the person perform a sexual act on him/her or inducing the person to perform a sexual act with another person or, in order to arouse or satisfy himself/herself or a third party, performing a sexual act on themselves shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of up to five years.*

*(2) If the offence results in grievous bodily harm (Section 84(1)) or pregnancy, the offender is liable to receive a custodial sentence of one to ten years; but if the offence results in the death of the abused person, the offender shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of five to fifteen years.*

**Section 205a of the Austrian Criminal Code: violation of sexual self-determination**  
**(*"Verletzung der sexuellen Selbstbestimmung"*)**

*(1) Anyone who, by taking advantage of a predicament or after prior intimidation, has sexual intercourse with a person or performs a sexual act equivalent to sexual intercourse against that person's will shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of up to two years, unless the offence is punishable by a more severe penalty under another provision.*

*(2) Likewise, anyone is punishable who induces an under-14-year-old in a way outlined in Subsection 1 to engage in or tolerate sexual inter-*

*course or a sexual act equivalent to sexual intercourse with another person or, to sexually arouse or satisfy himself/herself or a third party, to involuntarily engage in a sexual act equivalent to sexual intercourse on themselves. (valid from 1 January 2016)*

**Section 206 of the Austrian Criminal Code: severe sexual abuse of under-14-year-olds  
("Schwerer sexueller Missbrauch von Unmündigen")**

*(1) Anyone who engages in sexual intercourse or a sexual act equivalent to sexual intercourse with an under-14-year-old is liable to receive a custodial sentence of one to ten years.*

*(2) Likewise, anyone is punishable who induces an under-14-year-old to engage in or tolerate sexual intercourse or a sexual act equivalent to sexual intercourse with another person or, to sexually arouse or satisfy himself/herself or a third party, to engage in a sexual act equivalent to sexual intercourse on themselves.*

*(3) If the offence results in grievous bodily harm (Section 84(1)) or pregnancy of the under-14-year-old, the offender shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of five to fifteen years; but if the offence results in the death of the under-14-year-old, the offender shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of ten to twenty years or life imprisonment.*

*(4) If the age of the offender does not exceed the age of the under-14-year-old by more than three years, if the sexual act does not consist of penetration with an object and if the offence does not result in serious bodily harm (Section 84(1)) or the death of the under-14-year-old, the offender shall not be punished according to Subsections 1 and 2, unless the under-14-year-old has not yet reached the age of 13.*

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**Section 207 of the Austrian Criminal Code: sexual abuse of under-14-year-olds**  
**(“Sexueller Missbrauch von Unmündigen“)**

*(1) Anyone who, except for the case outlined in Section 206, performs a sexual act on an under-14-year-old or has such an act performed on him/her by an under-14-year-old shall be liable to a custodial sentence of 6 months to 5 years.*

*(2) Likewise, anyone is punishable who induces an under-14-year-old to perform a sexual act (Subsection 1) with another person or, in order to arouse or satisfy himself/herself or a third party, to perform a sexual act on themselves.*

*(3) If the offence results in grievous bodily harm (Section 84(1)), the offender is liable to receive a custodial sentence of one to 10 years; but if the offence results in the death of the under-14-year-old, the offender is liable to receive a custodial sentence of 5 to 15 years.*

*(4) If the age of the offender does not exceed the age of the under-14-year-old by more than 4 years and if none of the consequences of Subsection 3 have occurred, the offender shall not be punished according to Subsections 1 and 2 unless the under-14-year-old has not yet reached the age of 12.*

**Section 218 of the Austrian Criminal Code: sexual harassment and public sexual acts**  
**(“Sexuelle Belästigung und öffentliche geschlechtliche Handlungen“)**

*(1) Anyone who harasses another person by means of a sexual act*  
*1. performed on the person*  
*2. performed in front of the person under circumstances that are likely to cause justifiable nuisance,*

*shall be liable to receive a custodial sentence of up to six months or a monetary fine of up to 360 times the daily fine rate if the offence is not punishable by a more severe penalty.*

*(1a) Pursuant to Subsection 1, anyone who violates the dignity of another person by intensively touching a part of the body belonging to the sexual sphere\* shall also be punished.*

*(3) In the cases of Subsection 1 and Subsection 1a, the offender shall only be prosecuted with the authorisation of the affected person.*

*\*sexual sphere: the inside of the thighs, buttocks, etc.*



## 8 Reporting to the Police

## 8 Reporting to the Police

It does not seem sensible to us to make a clear statement as to whether it is right to report an offence to the police or whether it is better not to do so. The decision depends on various factors.

In any case, it is important to obtain sufficient information in advance about the possibilities and consequences of reporting an offence.

### 8.1 Aspects that may speak in favour of reporting the offence

- Possibility to defend oneself against the endured injustice;
- Rape of other women/girls by the same accused person can possibly be prevented;
- Filing a report can enable both the survivor and their relatives to distance themselves from the accused person or protect themselves against the person;
- Raising awareness about rape within society;
- Making the extent of sexualised violence against women and girls visible.

### 8.2 Aspects that may speak against reporting the offence

- The duration of proceedings cannot be determined in advance. There is no fixed time frame from filing the report to the main trial taking place;
- Questioning by a third party (criminal investigator, investigating judge, certified expert) may be troubling;



- Reservations regarding credibility might occur (evidence procedure);
- The survivor may be re-traumatised as a result of the proceedings;
- Proceedings may also be discontinued if the public prosecutor considers the available evidence to be insufficient (*when in doubt, for the accused*);
- The survivor then has to come to terms not only with the offence, but also with the course and outcome of legal proceedings.

Section 8 of the Austrian Code of Criminal Procedure: *Every person is presumed innocent until convicted by a final adjudication.*

The following legal text outlines the survivor's right to information if a case is being reported (translated version; in case of doubt, please refer to German version).

Section 70 (1) of the Austrian Code of Criminal Procedure: *As soon as investigation proceedings are conducted against a specific accused person, the criminal police or the public prosecutor must inform victims of their essential rights (Sections 66 and 67). This may only be omitted for as long as this would jeopardise the purpose of the investigation. Victims within the meaning of Section 65(1)(a) or (b) must be informed of the prerequisites for assistance with proceedings ["Prozessbegleitung"] before their first questioning at the latest.*

*(2) Victims whose sexual integrity may have been violated must also be informed of the following rights to which they are entitled before their first questioning at the latest:*

1. *Right to request to be interrogated by a person of the same sex during investigation proceedings, if possible;*
2. *Right to refuse to answer questions about circumstances that concern their most personal sphere of life or details of the offence which they consider unreasonable to describe (Section 158(1)(2)),*

3. *Right to request to be interrogated in a sparing manner during investigation proceedings and in the main trial (Sections 165, 250(3));*
4. *Right to request the exclusion of the public from the main trial (Section 229(1)).*

### **8.3 Separate or sparing questioning ("kontradiktorische Einvernahme")**

*Sparing* questioning means that survivors do not have to be in the same room as the accused during the questioning but can testify in another room. The room in which the accused, their legal representative, the public prosecutor and the survivor's legal representative are located is connected via a video system to the room in which the questioning takes place. This allows for the survivor to avoid being in the presence of the accused in person during the entire interrogation. Nevertheless, the accused can assert their right to ask questions to the survivor or have them asked by their legal representative.

Survivors can inform the court during this interrogation that they do not wish to testify at the subsequent main trial, but they will have to expect that their statement will be read out and the recorded video will be shown. The investigative judge must point out this right before the questioning.

**The corresponding legal text is provided below** (translated version; in case of doubt, please refer to German version):

*Section 165 (1) of the Austrian Code of Criminal Procedure: Separate questioning as well as audio or video recording of such interrogation of the accused or a witness is admissible if there is reason to fear that the interrogation will not be possible in a main trial for factual or legal reasons.*

*(2) The court shall conduct the separate questioning at the request of the public prosecutor by applying the provisions of Sections 249 and 250 mutatis mutandis (Section 104). The court must give the public prosecutor, the accused, the victim, private party participants and their representatives the possibility to participate in the interrogation and ask questions.*

*(3) As for witness interrogation, participation shall be restricted upon request of the public prosecutor or ex officio in accordance with the witness' interest, particularly in view of his/her young age or his/her mental or health condition, or in accordance with the interest of establishing the truth in a way that the parties to the proceedings (Subsection 2) and their representatives can follow the interrogation using technical equipment for the transmission of words and images and can exercise their right to ask questions without being present during the questioning. In particular, if the witness has not yet reached the age of fourteen, a certified expert may be tasked with conducting the questioning in this case. In any case, care must be taken to ensure that the witness is not in the presence of the accused or other parties to the proceedings insofar possible.*

*(4) A witness who has not yet reached the age of 14 and whose sexual sphere may have been violated by the offence with which the accused is charged shall in any case be questioned by the court in the manner described in Subsection 3; the same applies to the other witnesses men-*

*tioned in Section 156(1)(1) and (2) if they or the public prosecutor so request*

*(5) Before the interrogation, the court must also inform the witness that the protocol may be read out at the main trial and that audio or video recordings of the interrogation may be presented, even if the victim refuses to testify in further proceedings. If a certified expert has been tasked with carrying out the questioning (Subsection 3), the expert is responsible for providing this information as well as the information outlined in Section 161(1). The age and condition of the witness must be taken into account. The provided information and corresponding remarks must be recorded in a protocol.*

*(6) In all other respects, the provisions of this Section shall apply mutatis mutandis.*



9 Psychosocial & Legal Assistance with  
Proceedings  
(*"Prozessbegleitung"*)

## 9 Psychosocial & Legal Assistance with Proceedings (*"Prozessbegleitung"*)

Psychosocial and legal assistance with proceedings (*"Prozessbegleitung"*; often referred to as *court assistance*) is a comprehensive service free of charge that can be obtained from various institutions:

### **Information is provided on:**

- Possible legal steps;
- The stages and consequences of a report or criminal proceedings;
- Rights and obligations of witnesses (survivors, reference persons);
- Consequences and after-effects of sexualised violence;
- Psychotherapeutic offerings

### **The survivor will be accompanied to:**

- Police interviews;
- Appointments with certified experts;
- Court appointments

### **Help will be given to establish contact with:**

- Lawyers;
- Psychotherapists

**The legal guidelines are as follows** (translated version; in case of doubt, please refer to German version):

Section 66 (2) of the Austrian Code of Criminal Procedure: *Victims within the meaning of Section 65(1)(a) or (b) shall be granted psycho-*

*social and legal assistance with proceedings at their request, insofar as this is necessary to safeguard the procedural rights of the victims, taking into account their personal involvement to the greatest extent possible. Psychosocial assistance with proceedings includes preparing the victim for the proceedings and the associated emotional burden, as well as accompanying the victim during investigation proceedings and the main trial; legal assistance with proceedings includes legal counselling and lawyer representation. The Federal Minister of Justice is authorised to contractually commission suitable proven institutions to provide assistance with proceedings for victims within the meaning of Section 65(1)(a) or (b).*

The entire process, from the decision to report the offence to the criminal or civil proceedings, is usually very burdensome for those affected. The extensive questioning, the confrontation with the offender and a number of other stress factors can lead to secondary traumatisation.

To conclude, we would like to point out that the rights of survivors in criminal proceedings have been continuously strengthened in recent years.







## 10 Aid and Support Services

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Important points of contact are listed below. The emergency hotlines with 24-hour availability are listed first, followed by organisations that specialise in violence against women and girls, sorted by region. Non-specialised women's counselling centres are listed at the end. The following list does not claim to be exhaustive.

### Emergency numbers with 24-hour availability:

**Women's helpline against violence** .....Tel.: +43 800 222 555

**Victim emergency number** .....Tel.: +43 800 112 112

### Rat auf Draht

**helpline for children and adolescents** .....Tel.: +43 147

### Männerinfo

**men's helpline** .....Tel.: +43 800 400 777

### Women's counselling centres for

**sexual violence in Austria** ..... [www.sexuellegewalt.at](http://www.sexuellegewalt.at)

#### **Vienna:**

##### **Emergency helpline for raped women and girls**

Postfach 214  
Röttergasse 13/8  
1170 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 523 22 22  
[notruf@frauenberatung.at](mailto:notruf@frauenberatung.at)

##### **24-hour women helpline (Stadt Wien)**

Tel.: +43 1 71 71 9

##### **TAMAR – counselling centre for abused and sexually abused women, girls and children**

Wexstraße 22/3/1  
1200 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 3340437  
[beratungsstelle@tamar.at](mailto:beratungsstelle@tamar.at)

##### **Counselling centre for sexually abused girls and young women**

Ziegelofengasse 33/2  
1050 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 5871089  
[kontakt@maedchenberatung.at](mailto:kontakt@maedchenberatung.at)

**NINLIL – empowerment and counselling for women with disabilities**

Hauffgasse 3-5  
1110 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 7143939  
[office@ninlil.at](mailto:office@ninlil.at)

**Women's shelter WIEN**

Tel.: Notruf +43 5 7722  
[verein@frauenhaeuser-wien.at](mailto:verein@frauenhaeuser-wien.at)

**Intervention centre for trafficked women**

Lederergasse 35/12-15  
1080 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 7969298  
[ibf@lefoe.at](mailto:ibf@lefoe.at)

**Women's counselling of ABZ Aus-tria**

Fockygasse 14/2/16-18  
1120 Wien  
Tel.: +43 699 166 70 307  
[eva.holder@abz-austria.at](mailto:eva.holder@abz-austria.at)

**Sprungbrett – counselling for girls**

Hütteldorferstraße 81 b, Top 4  
1050 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 7894545  
[sprungbrett@sprungbrett.or.at](mailto:sprungbrett@sprungbrett.or.at)

**PEREGRINA – counselling for migrant women**

Wilhelm-Weber-Weg 1/2  
1110 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 4086119  
[information@peregrina.at](mailto:information@peregrina.at)

**Wien intervention centre against violence in the family**

Neubaugasse 1/3  
1060 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 5853288  
[office@interventionsstelle-wien.at](mailto:office@interventionsstelle-wien.at)

**Women's shelter helpline Wien**

Tel.: +43 5 7722

**LEFÖ – counselling, training and support for migrant women**

Kettenbrückengasse 15/4  
1050 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 581 18 81-14  
[office@lefoe.at](mailto:office@lefoe.at)

**Frauen beraten Frauen**

Seitenstettengasse 5/7  
1010 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 5876750  
[office@frauenberatenfrauen.at](mailto:office@frauenberatenfrauen.at)

**Orient Express**

Schönngasse 15-17/2  
1020 Wien  
Tel.: +43 1 7289725  
[office@orientexpress.wien.com](mailto:office@orientexpress.wien.com)

## **Lower Austria:**

### **Women's counselling Wendepunkt**

Neunkirchnerstraße 65a  
2700 Wiener Neustadt  
Tel.: +43 2622 82596  
[frauenberatung@wendepunkt.or.at](mailto:frauenberatung@wendepunkt.or.at)

### **Women's shelter NEUNKIRCHEN**

2620 Neunkirchen  
Tel.: +43 2635 68971  
[frauenhaus.nk@frauenhaus-neunkirchen.at](mailto:frauenhaus.nk@frauenhaus-neunkirchen.at)

### **Women's shelter MISTELBACH**

Postfach 99  
2130 Mistelbach  
Tel.: +43 2572 5088  
[frauenteam@kolping.at](mailto:frauenteam@kolping.at)

### **Sozialzentrum MÖDLING**

2340 Mödling  
Tel.: +43 2236 46549  
[frh.moedl.@frauenhaus-moedling.at](mailto:frh.moedl.@frauenhaus-moedling.at)

### **Women's counselling Zwettl**

Galgenbergstraße 2  
3910 Zwettl  
Tel.: +43 2822 52271  
[office@fbvv.at](mailto:office@fbvv.at)

### **Kassandra**

Klostergasse 9  
2340 Mödling  
Tel.: +43 2236 42035  
[kassandra-beratung@a1.net](mailto:kassandra-beratung@a1.net)

### **Lilith women's counselling Krems**

Hafnerplatz 12  
3500 Krems  
Tel.: +43 2732 85555  
[beratung@lilith-krems.at](mailto:beratung@lilith-krems.at)

### **Women's shelter**

**WIENER NEUSTADT**  
2700 Wiener Neustadt  
Tel.: +43 2622 88066  
[frauenhaus@wendepunkt.or.at](mailto:frauenhaus@wendepunkt.or.at)

### **Women's shelter AMSTETTEN**

Postfach 4  
3300 Amstetten  
Tel.: +43 7472 66500  
[frauenhaus.amstetten@aon.at](mailto:frauenhaus.amstetten@aon.at)

### **Haus der Frau (Women's shelter) ST. PÖLTEN**

3100 St. Pölten  
Tel.: +43 2742 366514-0  
[office@hdfp.at](mailto:office@hdfp.at)

### **Violence protection centre Niederösterreich**

Riemerplatz 1  
3100 St. Pölten  
Tel.: +43 2742 31966  
[office.st.poelten@gsz-noe.at](mailto:office.st.poelten@gsz-noe.at)

### **Frauen für Frauen**

**Women's counselling**  
Dechant-Pfeifer-Straße 3  
2020 Hollabrunn  
Tel.: +43 2952 2182  
[frauenberatung@frauenfuerfrauen.at](mailto:frauenberatung@frauenfuerfrauen.at)

### **Women's counselling Mostviertel**

Hauptplatz 21  
3300 Amstetten  
Tel.: +43 7472 63297  
[info@frauenberatung.co.at](mailto:info@frauenberatung.co.at)

## ***Upper Austria:***

### **Autonomous women's centre/ helpline Linz**

Starhembergstraße 10/2 · 4020 Linz  
Tel.: +43 732 602200  
[hallo@frauenzentrum.at](mailto:hallo@frauenzentrum.at)

### **Women's shelter WELS**

4600 Wels  
Tel.: +43 7242 67851

### **Women's shelter VÖCKLABRUCK**

4840 Vöcklabruck  
Tel.: +43 7672 22722  
[office@frauenhaus-voecklabruck.at](mailto:office@frauenhaus-voecklabruck.at)

### **Women's shelter INNVIERTEL**

Postfach 43  
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### **Women's counselling**

Rablstraße 16  
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Tel.: +43 7242 45293

### **Women's counselling BABSİ**

Johann-Roithner-Straße 131/ Objekt B  
4050 Traun  
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### **Violence protection centre Oberös- terreich**

Stockhofstraße 40 · 4020 Linz  
Tel.: +43 732 607760  
[ooe@gewaltschutzzentrum.at](mailto:ooe@gewaltschutzzentrum.at)

### **Women's counselling Woman**

Martin-Luther-Platz 3 · 4020 Linz  
Tel.: +43 732 797626-0

### **Women's shelter LINZ**

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4020 Linz  
Tel.: +43 732 606700  
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### **Women's shelter REGAU**

4844 Regau  
Tel.: +43 7672 22722

### **Women's shelter STEYR**

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Tel.: +43 7252 87700  
[office@frauenhaus-steyr.at](mailto:office@frauenhaus-steyr.at)

### **Frau aktiv – immediate help for wo- men in inner Salzkammergut**

Bahnhofstraße 14  
4820 Bad Ischl  
Tel.: +43 6132 21331  
[beratung@frauensicht.at](mailto:beratung@frauensicht.at)

### **Women's counselling Frauennetzwerk3**

Johannesgasse 3 · 4910 Ried im Innkreis  
Tel.: +43 664 5178530

### **Women's counselling BABSİ**

Ledererstraße 5  
4240 Freistadt  
Tel.: +43 7942 72140-0

### **NORA – Women's counselling in Mondseeland**

Schlosshof 6/2 · 5310 Mondsee  
Tel.: +43 664 22244  
[info@nora-beratung.at](mailto:info@nora-beratung.at)

## **Salzburg:**

### **Women's helpline Salzburg**

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5020 Salzburg  
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[beratungsstelle@frauennotruf-salzburg.at](mailto:beratungsstelle@frauennotruf-salzburg.at)

### **Women's shelter SALZBURG**

5020 Salzburg  
Tel.: +43 662 458458-0  
[frauenhaus.salzburg@aon.at](mailto:frauenhaus.salzburg@aon.at)

### **Women's shelter PINZGAU**

Postfach 3  
5760 Saalfelden am Steinernen Meer  
Tel.: +43 6582 74302-1  
[frauenhaus@sbg.at](mailto:frauenhaus@sbg.at)

### **Gewaltschutzzentrum Salzburg**

Strubergasse 26 / 5 Stock  
5020 Salzburg  
Tel.: +43 662 870100  
[office.salzburg@gewaltschutzzentrum.at](mailto:office.salzburg@gewaltschutzzentrum.at)

### **Women's counselling Salzburg**

Paris-Lodron-Straße 32  
5020 Salzburg  
Tel.: +43 662 875498  
[office@frauentreffpunkt.at](mailto:office@frauentreffpunkt.at)

### **KoKon**

Michael-Walchhofer Straße 15  
5541 Altenmarkt  
Tel.: +43 6452 6792

### **KOMPASS girls' counselling**

Südtirolerplatz 11/1  
5020 Salzburg  
Tel.: +43 664 8227213  
[kompass@einstieg.or.at](mailto:kompass@einstieg.or.at)

### **KOMPASS girls' counselling**

Saalfeldnerstraße 28  
5700 Zell am See  
Tel.: ++43 676 75 83 70  
[kompass@einstieg.or.at](mailto:kompass@einstieg.or.at)

## **Tirol:**

### **Frauen gegen VerGEWALTigung**

Sonnenburgstraße 5  
6020 Innsbruck  
Tel.: +43 512 574416  
[office@frauen-gegen-vergewaltigung.at](mailto:office@frauen-gegen-vergewaltigung.at)

### **Women's shelter TIROL**

6020 Innsbruck  
Tel.: +43 512 342112  
[wohnen@frauenhaus-tirol.at](mailto:wohnen@frauenhaus-tirol.at)  
[office@frauenhaus-tirol.at](mailto:office@frauenhaus-tirol.at)

### **Women's counselling**

#### **Frauen helfen Frauen INNSBRUCK**

Museumstraße 10  
6020 Innsbruck  
Tel.: +43 512 580977  
[info@fhf-tirol.at](mailto:info@fhf-tirol.at)

### **Women's centre OSTTIROL**

Schweizergasse 26  
9900 Lienz  
Tel.: +43 4852 67193  
[info@frauenzentrum-osttirol.at](mailto:info@frauenzentrum-osttirol.at)

**Violence protection centre Innsbruck**  
Maria-Theresien-Straße 42a  
6020 Innsbruck  
Tel.: +43 512 571313  
[office@gewaltschutzzentrum-tirol.at](mailto:office@gewaltschutzzentrum-tirol.at)

**lilawohnt**  
Adamgasse 4/3  
6020 Innsbruck  
Tel.: +43 512 562477  
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**EVITA – women’s counselling**  
Oberer Stadtplatz 6  
6330 Kufstein  
Tel.: +43 5372 63616  
[office@evita-frauenberatung.at](mailto:office@evita-frauenberatung.at)

**BASIS centre for women in Außer-fern**  
**Women’s and family counselling**  
Planseestraße 6  
6600 Reutte  
Tel.: +43 5671 72604  
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**Frauen im Brennpunkt**  
**women’s counselling**  
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6020 Innsbruck  
Tel.: +43 512 587608  
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## ***Burgenland:***

**Der Lichtblick**  
Obere Hauptstraße 27/1/12  
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Tel.: +43 2167 3338  
[office@der-lichtblick.at](mailto:office@der-lichtblick.at)

**Violence protection centre**  
**Burgenland**  
Steinamangerer Straße 4/2  
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**Women’s counselling Oberwart**  
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**Women’s shelter BURGENLAND**  
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**Women’s counselling Güssing**  
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**Women’s counselling Oberpullendorf**  
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**Vorarlberg:****Ifs Women's counselling for sexual violence**

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**Women's emergency shelter DORNBIERN**

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**Violence protection Vorarlberg**

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**Femail – information centre for women Vorarlberg**

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**DOWAS – counselling**

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**Styria:****Tara – counselling, therapy and prevention of sexual violence against women and girls**

Haydnngasse 7 · 8010 Graz  
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**Women's shelter GRAZ**

Postfach 30  
8006 Graz  
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**Women's shelter KAPFENBERG**

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**Violence protection centre Steiermark**

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**innova Women's and girls' counselling**

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**Women's counselling Hartberg**

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**Hazissa – prevention of sexualised violence**

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**Women's counselling Fürstenfeld**

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**Carinthia:****BELLADONNA**

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**Women's shelter VILLACH**

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9500 Villach  
Tel.: +43 4242 31031-0  
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**Women's shelter Oberkärnten/  
SPITTAL a. d. DRAU**

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9800 Spittal an der Drau  
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**Women's shelter KLAGENFURT**

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9024 Klagenfurt  
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**Women's shelter LAVANTTAL**

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**Violence protection centre**

Radetzkystraße 9  
9020 Klagenfurt  
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**Women's and family counselling WIFF**

Herzog-Bernhard-Platz 13  
9100 Völkermarkt  
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**Women's counselling Villach**

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**Women's counselling Wolfsberg**

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**Women's and girls' counselling Oberkärnten**

Lutherstraße 3  
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**EqualiZ – centre for women and girls**

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9020 Klagenfurt  
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[office@equaliz.at](mailto:office@equaliz.at)



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Please note that the majority of the references below is in German.

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## Recommended reads

### Sexualised violence

Sanyal, M. (2019). Rape. From Lucretia to #MeToo. London, New York: Verso Books.

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Schwerdtner, Lilian (2021): Sprechen und Schweigen über sexualisierte Gewalt. Ein Plädoyer für Kollektivität und Selbstbestimmung.

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## Visualisation and relaxation exercises

- Croos-Müller, Claudia (2016): „Nur Mut! Das kleine Überlebensbuch.
- Huber, Michaela (2015): „Der geborgene Ort. Sicherheit und Beruhigung bei chronischem Stress.“ Ein Übungsbuch mit CD.
- Croos-Müller, Claudia (2015): „Kraft, der neue Weg zu innerer Stärke. Ein Resilienztraining.“
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## **Women**

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**INNS'  
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**Implications**

**Trauma and coping mechanisms**

**First aid**

**Counselling**

**Prevention**

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