

PRESS RELEASE



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**MADIGAN, LAW ENFORCEMENT, VICTIM ADVOCATES SEEK TO
CHANGE COMMONLY-HELD MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT SEXUAL
ASSAULT**

***MADIGAN RELEASES "RULES TO STOP RAPE" DURING SEXUAL
ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH***

Chicago – Joined by law enforcement officials and victims rights advocates, Attorney General Lisa Madigan today urged the public to rethink common misperceptions about sexual assault and released a “Rules to Stop Rape” handout card created by her office and targeted toward increasing the understanding of sexual assault and improving prevention efforts.

Madigan was expected to be joined at this morning’s news conference at the Kane County Child Advocacy Center by Lori Chassee, Executive Director of the Center; Jan Faulhaber, Sexual Assault Program Director, Mutual Ground; Kim Cecil, Sexual Assault Program Coordinator, Community Crisis Center of Elgin; Joe Pena, East Dundee Police Chief and President of the Illinois Chiefs of Police Association; and Detectives Amy Campbell and Shelley Frangella, Geneva Police Department.

According to the Illinois State Police, there were 5,813 incidents of criminal sexual assault reported in 2004 in the state.

“To effectively help survivors of this devastating crime, we need to understand and be clear about what rape is,” Madigan said. “Far too often, the focus in rape cases shifts to the victim. We need to let victims know that they are not alone and that rape is never their fault. To dismantle the myths about this crime, we developed the ‘Rules to Stop Rape.’”

Madigan’s “Rules to Stop Rape” encourage the community to act together to educate young men and prevent sexual assault. The “Rules” include:

- Drunkenness is not consent;
- A woman is never “asking for it;”
- No means no;
- Only yes means yes; and
- Understand that rape is a violent assault.

April is national Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Earlier this month, Madigan released a public awareness quiz, titled “Sexual Assault Myths: A

Quiz to Separate Fact from Fiction,” to highlight the shocking facts of sexual assault and remind Illinoisans that sexual assault is a crime that can be prevented.

Madigan’s office provides support and funding to agencies that offer critical services to victims of violent crime in Illinois. Annual grants are distributed through the Attorney General’s Violent Crime Victims Assistance (VCVA) Program, which was created in 1984 by the VCVA Act. The grants are funded exclusively by fines collected from persons convicted of violent felonies and misdemeanors.

For 2006, Madigan’s office distributed more than \$142,000 in grants to organizations in Kane County, including almost \$83,000 to the Community Crisis Center of Elgin, Mutual Ground and the Kane County Child Advocacy Center.

In another effort to help victims of sexual assault, Madigan last October appointed Julie Garner-Teno as the first Statewide Coordinator for Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) within her office to organize training programs across the state, encourage certification of Illinois nurses and increase the number of Sexual Assault Response Teams in Illinois. SANEs are specially trained in collecting and handling evidence for use by law enforcement and admission in court. SANEs are trained to ask specific questions that will help gather information about the crime and to provide initial counseling services for victims. In addition, SANEs often serve as expert witnesses during sexual assault trials.

More than 90 medical professionals, law enforcement members and victim rights advocates have been trained during two, week-long training sessions held earlier this year. Garner-Teno has scheduled a third session for May 15-19, in Itasca, and she expects to train and certify another 50 professionals.

In an ongoing effort to assist victims of crime, Madigan’s office continues to work with county circuit court clerks across the state to continue to increase implementation of the Illinois Automated Victim Notification System (IL AVN), which allows victims of crime to access up-to-date information on an offender’s custody or case status. Madigan’s office is working to expand the IL AVN program to include an online component that will provide vital information to victims of crime. In addition, Madigan’s office offers an online Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services Directory at www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov/dvsa.

To download a copies of the “Sexual Assault Myths: A Quiz to Separate Fact from Fiction” and “Rules to Stop Rape,” please visit Madigan’s Web site at www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/women/index.html.