

What is PCAR? What are victim services?

Help. Hope. Healing. Like you, PCAR wants children to feel safe, happy and loved. Like you, PCAR wants all people to live full lives without the fear of being harmed or harassed in their homes, offices or neighborhoods. And like you, PCAR wants to help heal men, women and children who have been abused. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape and the network of rape crisis centers work tirelessly to ensure that all victims and their family members receive the support services they need.

For more than 40 years, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) has worked to bring help, hope, and healing to all residents of Pennsylvania. It is PCAR's mission to eliminate all forms of sexual violence and advocate for the rights and needs of victims of sexual assault. Partnering with a network of 50 rape crisis centers, PCAR assures survivors have access to counseling and advocacy services in all 67 counties across the state. PCAR also works with communities to empower everyone to prevent and respond to sexual violence. PCAR knows a safer, healthier world is possible, and is committed to making it a reality.

Each year, approximately 30,000 men, women, and children receive support services from PCAR's network of rape crisis centers. Victims have a variety needs in the wake of an assault, from dealing with feelings to accompaniment to the hospital or court. Rape crisis centers provide free, confidential counseling and advocacy services for children and adults of all genders. Services are also available for victims' families and significant others. Local rape crisis centers have 24-hour hotlines, available 7 days per week, for emergency and support services. PCAR also has a statewide, toll-free hotline number to route callers to their local rape crisis programs (1-888-772-7227).

Trained staff and volunteers are available at all local centers to accompany victims to medical facilities, police stations, and legal proceedings; they are able to advocate on behalf of the victim for their needs with human service, medical, and criminal justice systems. Centers also provide free short-term individual and group counseling. Counseling for children is available, including play therapy and trauma-informed therapy. Some centers may also serve other crime victims, like domestic violence.

Local rape crisis centers are actively involved in their communities, providing education about sexual violence and prevention programming in schools and for other community groups. Center staff also do trainings for allied professionals, organizations, civic groups, and clergy on topics like recognizing signs of abuse, and understanding and complying with mandated reporting laws. Rape crisis centers also serve as a valuable link to other community resources.

These direct services change lives, help survivors heal, and build stronger communities.