

Why have a Parents group?

The people close to a survivor play an important role in the survivor's healing process. Parents, with their special connection to survivors, often benefit from a supportive connection with each other.

What is the Parents of Survivors Group?

The goal of the group is to share knowledge and experience, to help you to feel less isolated and better able to support your child. It is a place to find someone like you that truly understands issues parents face in the aftermath of the sexual assault of their child. Past group members have said that the group "normalizes your situation and creates a safe, nurturing environment to deal with family issues, the criminal justice system, and society generally". This group utilizes education, discussion, and activities to achieve these goals.

What does the group do each week?

Each week we will discuss a different topic. Topics include:

- Identifying healthy support strategies.
- Developing active listening skills.
- Identifying your own pain and suffering during this process.
- Addressing concerns of possible blaming (self blame and/or blaming the survivor)

The group provides an opportunity for you as parents to understand and discuss trauma (rape, sexual assault, incest, child sexual abuse) its large impact on your child's life, on your life (as a couple or as a single parent) and on your relationships with your children. In addition the group will explore effective coping strategies to help you as the parent cope with your own emotions as well as those of the survivor.

Who is going to be there? When is the group? Where do I go?

It is for parents of children of all ages, including adolescent and adult children, that have experienced rape, sexual assault, or child sexual abuse whether as children or adults.

This group is an ongoing group that meets for 1 and 1/2hrs once a month. It will be made up of couples, single parents, and guardians of all genders. The group is open and welcoming to GLBT parents. Meetings take place at the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center office in Cambridge.

What do I have to do to be a part of the group?

Call our offices at (617) 492-8306 and let the person who answers the phone know that you are interested in the group. One of the group leaders will call you back and discuss the group with you. Each new group member starts by attending 2 educational sessions. These sessions present information about sexual violence and normal responses through a video and group discussion. The group members also share a little about why they are there and what they hope to get out of the group. These sessions are run on a Saturday and last 90 minutes. Once the 2 sessions are done the new members then join an on-going parent's group that meets once per month.

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