



# Stop Sexual Violence Collaboration

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## 90% of sexual assaults do not lead to justice - a new guide aims to change that.

A new [Sexual Assault Response Guide](#) launched today aims to increase the likelihood that perpetrators of sexual violence are held accountable for their actions.

Currently, 90 percent of sexual assault cases don't lead to convictions and this is often due to a lack of evidence, particularly in cases where traumatised victims delay reporting an assault to police.

Co-developed by [Stop Sexual Violence Collaboration](#) founder Lucretia Ackfield and former Queensland Police detective, Erin Cash, the Sexual Assault Response Guide provides victims with practical steps for collecting evidence following a sexual assault and encourages them to seek early support from medical professionals and people they trust.

SSV Collab founder, Lucretia Ackfield said her motivation for developing the guide came in the wake of supporting a friend after a sexual assault.

"Supporting my friend left a significant impression on me and for many years afterwards I wished I had been aware of more practical ways to offer her support," Ms Ackfield said.

"After talking to Erin, a former police detective, we put our heads and hearts together to develop the Sexual Assault Response Guide to educate victims and their supporters about the steps to take if they decide to delay reporting.

"In an ideal world, victims of sexual violence should report to police immediately following their assault, but we know this doesn't happen in real life for a variety of reasons - victims are traumatised and many feel shame, guilt, fear of retribution, or that they won't be believed."

Sexual Assault Response Guide co-developer Erin Cash is a former police officer who now works as a personal protection educator in Queensland schools. She says, in her experience, few people who experience sexual assault are emotionally prepared to report straight away and victims are more likely to want to wash, sleep and forget.

"This is a normal process in compartmentalising a traumatic situation that is associated with feelings of shame, guilt, disgust, repulsion and hopelessness – a myriad of emotions that negate immediate action and highlight that reporting assault is not a priority for a person in trauma," Ms Cash said.

"Queensland Police are not obligated to collect and keep evidence without a formal complaint and we know many victims will delay reporting. With only 10 percent of sexual assault cases resulting in a conviction, it is likely many perpetrators walk free due to a lack of physical evidence.

"I want to stress that victims can still report a sexual assault in the absence of physical evidence and I have worked with exceptional detectives who are well versed in innovative investigative techniques.

"However, knowledge is power, and our purpose in putting together the Sexual Assault Response Guide was to formulate a simple, non-invasive process that allows victims to collect and store physical evidence without the need to report immediately to police.

"In so doing, we hope to demystify the evidence collection process and make it clear that self-collection is not only practical but possible, particularly with advances in forensic science and our ability to extract DNA."

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To download the guide or learn more about the Stop Sexual Violence Collaboration, visit: [ssvcollab.com](https://ssvcollab.com)  
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