

## **TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION DATE RAPE**

**DATE RAPE:**      **Sexual intercourse by force on a date; an act of violence.**

Date or acquaintance rapists come in all colors, shapes, sizes and from all backgrounds. Contrary to popular myth, all rapists are not sociopaths with glazed looks. Generally they are not strangers, but someone you know very well and trust. No matter how similar or different each date rapist is, they all share certain characteristics that we need to be aware of--MAINLY, THEY ARE NOT RATIONAL THINKERS!

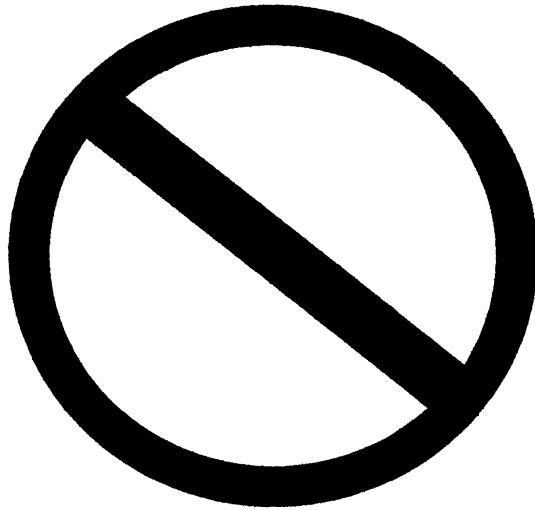
**Pay attention to your date's actions. If you are uncomfortable, don't ignore this feeling! If any of these characteristics appear in a dating or social situation, get out of the situation as quickly as possible.**

### **Date Rape Danger Signals:**

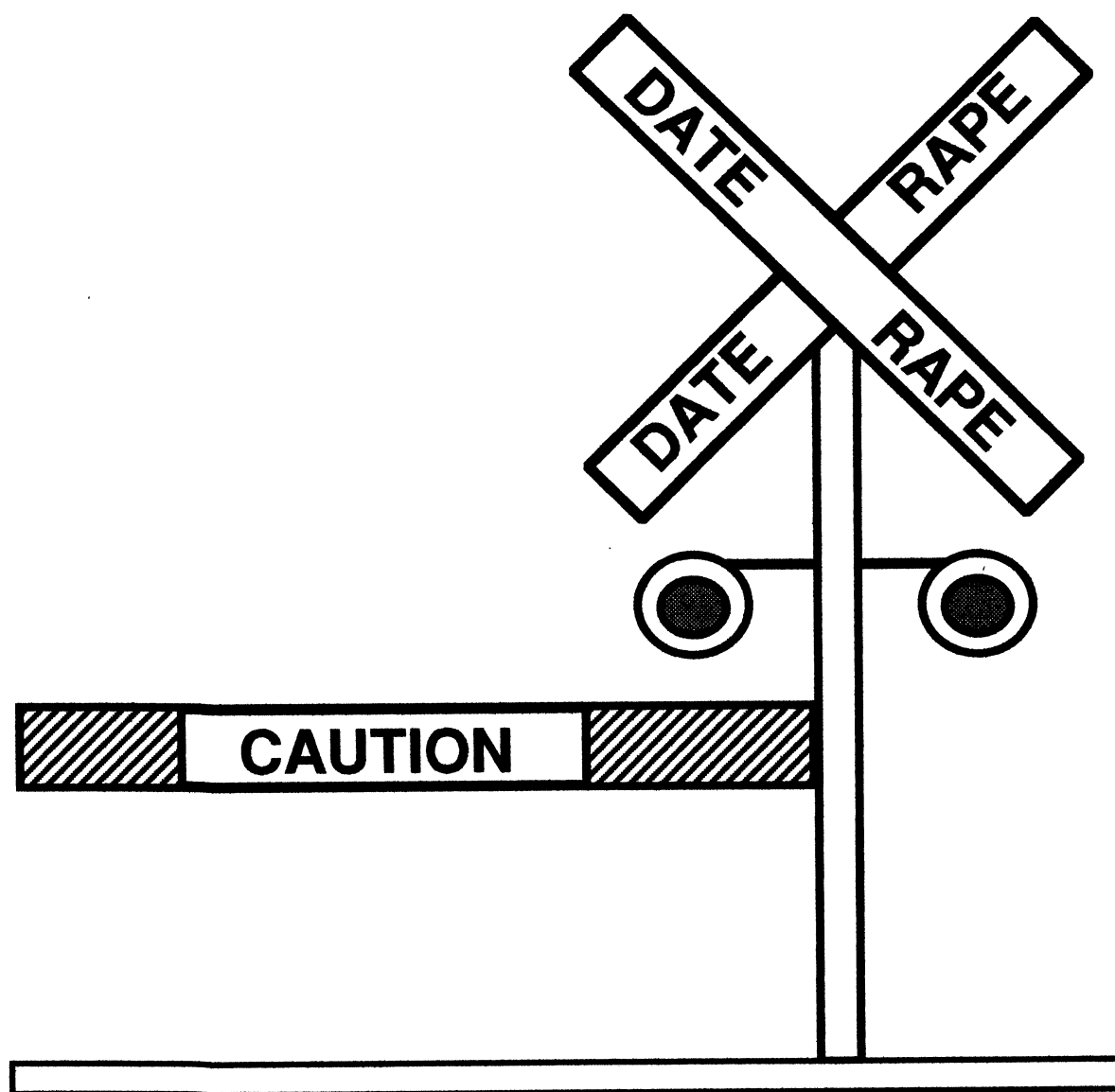
- \* Puts you down, even subtly, ignores your opinion or acts angry when you express an idea or when you take some action your date does not agree with.
- \* Tries to intimidate you with body language: sits too close, touches too familiarly, attempts to restrict your movements, grabs you or grabs someone else.
- \* Suddenly appears hostile or jealous without apparent cause.
- \* Uses alcohol or drugs and puts you down for refusing to do so, or deliberately tries to get you drunk or high with drugs.
- \* Makes jokes or statements that put down men/women as a group.
- \* Shows meanness or cruelty toward animals, children or people who can be verbally or physically pushed around.
- \* Exhibits knowledge of or appears to know a lot about weapons.
- \* Acts as if he/she is socially or intellectually better than you.
- \* Gets angry when you attempt to pay for any portion of the date.
- \* Repeatedly suggests that the two of you go somewhere to be alone throughout the date or plans a sudden emergency stop at an apartment or a friend's place.
- \* Challenges you when you make a suggestion and you say "no" or ignores your wishes altogether.

Remember, few date rapists actually believe what they've done is rape, regardless of the law. Most date rapists think of rape as sex or seduction, and refuse to see that this is not the truth. Date rapists rape more than once.

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## **TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION REDUCING THE RISK OF DATE RAPE**

**A victim of date rape does not cause the attack and is not responsible for the attitude and behavior of the attacker.** For your own safety, there are some actions and behaviors you can use to limit the risk of rape. Although none of these actions or behaviors are guaranteed to prevent date or acquaintance rape, they may reduce the chances of you or someone you know being victimized. Increasing awareness of date rape as a problem and a possibility and learning everything you can about it, can give you and others the power to avoid being a victim.

### **Steps you can take:**

- \* Know your limits for a date or social event and be willing to communicate these to someone who pushes the limits.
- \* Be aware that alcohol consumption lowers your ability to protect yourself. It reduces your sense of awareness and makes it more difficult to recognize dangerous situations.
- \* Communicate your values to the person you are with and be clear. NO means NO! If your date does something you don't like, get mad, leave, or do whatever it takes because your safety may be on the line.
- \* Don't let your date make all the decisions regarding the date. Go prepared with suggestions in the event your date wants to go somewhere that you don't feel comfortable going.
- \* Be clear about what you expect and the messages you may be sending. Awareness about your own posture, speech, tone of voice, eye contact, curfew time, or dress is just as important as awareness of your date. Non-verbal or unintentional messages may be easily misinterpreted. (A curfew time can serve as a protection mechanism!)
- \* Be prepared to pay your own way on a date and have your own transportation or money with you in case you need to leave quickly. There is still some erroneous belief that you "owe" your date intimacy in return for money spent. This is not true! There is absolutely no return obligation!
- \* Avoid secluded or isolated places and don't meet an acquaintance at either one of your homes when your parents/guardians aren't there. Agree to meet and date in public at a more crowded place such as a restaurant.
- \* If your date does something you do not want done, let it be known immediately. Tell your date exactly what you don't like and why. If you are being ignored, make a scene, get mad, leave if you can. Do not worry about being sensitive or polite. Do not worry what others will think. If your date does not respect your wishes, your date doesn't deserve your company. Your safety could be on the line.