



Junior Kyra Bugg said after she was raped, she had long term effects on her mental health. "I was disgusted with myself and the way I looked," Bugg said. I felt guilty and did not want to tell anyone. I thought I was trapped and alone." Sexual Assault Awareness is represented by the color teal. The teal blue handprints represent the places Bugg said she was touched.

LIVING THROUGH FEAR

Survivors of sexual assault and those who support them share their experiences with trauma and recovery, highlighting the need for awareness in the BVNW community.

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Editors Note: The following story depicts rape and sexual assault. Reader discretion is advised. The name Jane Smith is a pseudonym for a sophomore at BVNW who requested to have her real name left out of the story due to her concerns for privacy. The Express corroborated her story through third parties.

Junior Kyra Bugg said she was sexually assaulted and raped her freshman and sophomore year by someone from her friend group.

Her freshman year, Bugg said she was forced to perform oral sex on her alleged abuser in a separate room, away from everyone else at a homecoming after-party.

"After homecoming, I went to an after-party. I went to lay down in a back room area and the music was very loud, so I was trying to rest 'cause I had a bad headache," Bugg said. "The person that assaulted me comes over, and he's asking me if I'm OK, and I was half asleep, so I was like, 'Yeah, I'm fine.' He then dragged me by my arms when I was lying down on the floor, pulled down his shorts..., and forced me to [perform] oral sex."

In her sophomore year, Bugg said she went to a party to get over her

ex-boyfriend and met up with the same alleged abuser to talk about the breakup.

"The day before [I was raped], I broke up with my boyfriend who I was dating for about a year and six months. Trying to get over him, I went to a party at this girl's house," Bugg said. "The guy who assaulted me, he wanted to make sure I was OK and wanted to talk about the breakup, which ended up to be a lie. I ended up getting in [his] car."

Later on, Bugg said her alleged abuser proceeded to touch and then rape her.

"He started to touch my thigh and I got really uncomfortable. Things moved pretty fast," Bugg said. "He pushed me to the back of his truck and tried to take off my shorts, but my shorts were really tight, so he couldn't take them off. He pulled them [to] the inside of my inner thigh and he grabbed a condom."

Bugg said she was forcefully vaginally penetrated.

"I told him to stop, and he didn't stop," Bugg said.

To make him stop, Bugg said that she told him she had to throw up. Afterward, Bugg said her alleged rapist attempted to apologize for his actions.

"He gave me a long apology, and that's the

part that really confused me. I realized that he was trying to manipulate me into thinking that it was my fault or that he didn't mean to, which is a total

lie now, but at the time, I believed him," Bugg said.

After her traumatic experiences, Bugg said she now struggles with forms of PTSD, anxiety and body image issues.

"I have flashbacks and people see that. They might think I'm weird, even though I can't help that. It's something that I can't stop necessarily," Bugg said. "[After what happened], I started wearing sweatpants and sweatshirts all the time; I didn't want anybody to see my body. I just felt like he took a part of me and I couldn't get it back."

Similar to Bugg, sophomore Jane Smith* said she was raped this past July.

"I was talking to this guy and we had hung out a few times," Smith said. "Sex hadn't happened yet, but... I had gone into a bathroom with him. We were doing stuff and I said I felt uncomfortable."

Smith said the guy knew she was uncomfortable, but told her that sex would happen no matter what. Smith said he forced her to nonconsensually perform oral sex and then penetrative vaginal sex.

When describing the healing process, Smith said she had a hard time hanging out with friends and that she was in denial about calling the experience rape.

"[Healing] definitely comes with a lot of denial for me and hanging out with people outside of that has been a challenge," she said. "I used to be a really social person before the incident, and I keep to myself a little bit more now because I want to be extra cautious. If I hang out with guys, I'm very cautious with that now. It definitely has put into perspective all

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-KYRA BUGG

the problems people have said about sexual assault.”

Two weeks after she was allegedly raped, Bugg attended Marillac Campus at KU Med, where she said she had to discuss and learn to cope with the aftermath of being raped. Now, Bugg said she does EDMR, or Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing therapy, to help her cope with her PTSD and anxiety.

After learning of the commonality of sexual assault in the BVNW area, junior Henry Burvee said that as a male, his point of view on the topic is extremely different.

“It really opens my eyes to me being a male and not having to worry about getting gas or walking alone at night,” Burvee said. “I can remember when one of my female friends showed me her pepper spray, rape whistle and other things she carried around to protect her from sexual assault. I was absolutely stunned to realize how a

male like me has never had to worry about anything like that.”

Myra Beckford, Bugg’s mom, said that the possible reason sexual assault isn’t talked about enough is because the topic is “taboo” to discuss. Due to this lack of awareness, Beckford said she believes that many victims shift the blame of what happened to themselves instead of their abusers.

According to health teacher Molly Haggerty, sexual assault is covered in the Health and Wellness class, a graduation requirement. Haggerty said the curriculum for the class allows a week to talk about sexual harassment, assault and rape. Additional topics that are covered are healthy relationships, consent and the resources victims can use to get help.

While she believes the current curriculum is essential, Haggerty said she wishes that more time was devoted to this topic.

“You could spend a whole month on

it, and we get a week to fit everything in,” Haggerty said. “I feel like my role is just skimming the surface, introducing them to topics, giving them that surface level information so they know how to recognize it and some common vocabulary terminology and maybe access to some resources.”

Jane Smith said she believes that the Blue Valley School District should do more with raising awareness about sexual assault, especially the mental aspects of recovery.

“Everyone knows what rape and sexual assault is but I feel like they could focus more on how it affects people, because it does affect people differently, and everyone has different stories with it,” Smith said.

After reflecting over his minimal learning in health class about sexual assault, Burvee said that Blue Valley should highlight the legal punishments for committing sexual assault in their curriculum.

“I think Blue Valley implementing educational approaches for sexual-related misdemeanors and felonies would be a great idea,” Burvee said.

According to public records from 2017-2019, in the Overland Park area, 95 victims had filed police reports after being raped. Out of the 95 cases filed, only 21 arrests were processed and made.

After deciding to press charges against her alleged rapist, Bugg said she followed through with the legal procedures to get him prosecuted.

“I gave my statement. I talked to the detective and he was like, ‘You did good, thank you. I’ll let you know. Keep in touch.’ stuff like that,” Bugg said.

Months later, Bugg said she asked her mom if the detective got back to them regarding her case. She said her mom told her there is not a lot of evidence and the courts are backed up.

“I still haven’t heard anything, and that’s been over a year now. I’m pretty sure that they closed my case,” Bugg said.

Smith expressed concern for how her case would be handled legally if she decided she wanted to take legal action against her alleged rapist.

“I know a lot of people would probably want me to take legal action, but I just don’t really want to,” Smith said. “I feel like my case wouldn’t be taken seriously.”



April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month in the United States. Females ages 16-19 are four times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape or sexual assault, according to RAINN, (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network).

Upon seeing her alleged rapist unexpectedly after the incident, Smith said she felt drained and didn't know how to react to the situation.

"It was very scary, I was not expecting to see him at all. You feel stunned because you realize that they're an actual person and they did this to you," Smith said. "You definitely feel small in that situation. You feel deteriorated after seeing them."

After she was promised by school personnel she would not share any classes with her alleged rapist, Bugg said she blames Blue Valley's disorganization for placing him in one of her classes.

"[After I saw him in my class], my teacher had to take me to the bathroom and then down to the office because I was hyperventilating," Bugg said. "[School personnel] said that there was some kind of switch with [my alleged rapist's] schedule and he somehow ended up in that class."

Head counselor Beth Ricke said that if counselors are made aware of the situation, an abuser and victim will be separated and put in different sections for the current and all future semesters.

"If students are inadvertently scheduled together, the counselor works with the involved students to resolve the scheduling issue as quickly as possible. It is always our goal to help students feel safe at BVNW," Ricke said.

After watching her daughter blossom in recovery after her experiences, Beckford said she advises that any sexual assault victim find someone they trust and seek help.

"You have to find somebody you can trust, whether it's a parent, counselor or therapist. Keeping it in will eat away at you," Beckford said. "The moment Kyra told me, I could tell a weight got lifted off her shoulders and we started working on an action plan to get her better to build a stronger future for herself. Find somebody that you can trust, whoever that is, and seek help because it truly does make a difference."



Kyra Bugg poses next to the clothes she wore on the night she said she was raped. "I never thought it would happen to me," Bugg said. "I was only wearing shorts and a green top when I was raped. What you're wearing is not the problem; it is the people."

According to
RAINN, (*Rape,
Abuse, and
Incest National
Network*)

1 OUT OF EVERY 6
WOMEN IN THE U.S. ARE
VICTIMS OF ATTEMPTED OR
COMPLETED RAPE

3% OF U.S. MEN
ARE VICTIMS OF ATTEMPTED OR
COMPLETED RAPE

NONCONSENSUAL SEX IS:

- WHEN THE VICTIM IS OVERCOME BY FORCE OR FEAR
- WHEN THE VICTIM IS UNCONSCIOUS OR PHYSICALLY POWERLESS
- WHEN THE VICTIM IS UNABLE TO GIVE CONSENT DUE TO THE EFFECTS OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL, ETC.

According to
BVNW School
Resource Officer
Anthony Garcia

IMPORTANT HOTLINES:

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE

CALL 800-656-4673

CHAT AT [ONLINE.RAINN.ORG](https://online.rainn.org)

NATIONAL STREET HARASSMENT HOTLINE

CALL 855-897-5910

CHAT AT [HOTLINE.RAINN.ORG/SSH-EN](https://hotline.rainn.org/ssh-en)

NATIONAL HELPLINE FOR MALE SURVIVORS

CHAT AT [1IN6.ORG](https://1in6.org)