

If You're Ready: Talking to the Media

Choosing to go public when the offender is in the public eye

It can be hard to speak publicly about your experience, and maybe harder when the offender is well-known in your community. And yet at a time when many survivors are speaking publicly, sharing your story and naming the offender may feel like the right thing to do.

It is always your decision what to share and how much of your story you want to tell. Here are some tips.

Know why you're sharing

Get clear about what your goals are in sharing your story.

Will sharing help your healing process?

Will sharing feel like justice to you?

Is sharing part of meeting your goals or could you do it another way?



Have a plan

Find 2-3 people who can be your allies, including an advocate from your local sexual assault support center.

Practice telling your story to these people and ask them to support you as you come forward.

Only share what you are comfortable having as public record. Using statements such as "sexually charged text messages" or "non-consensual sexual contact" is enough.

Decide how and when you want to share. Are you willing to have your name as part of the public record of the story? This will help you decide if social media, a blog post, or news/television outlets are your best next step.

If you talk to the media first, choose a trustworthy source. Think about print vs. television.

Other things to think about

Your posts on public social media sites are public domain. Posts can be used by any media outlet. Media outlets do not need in person interviews or photos to publish your story.

You can share your story with trustworthy news outlets without going "on the record" and you can work with them so your name is not used.

You may get repeat calls from news outlets. It is helpful to have a plan to deal with repeat calls.

You can stop talking any time.

Some survivors worry about legal issues. If you have questions or concerns, we can connect you to legal help.

You may be asked hard questions, such as: *Why did it take you so long to come forward? Why are you coming forward now? Can you share details about what happened?*

A good reporter will also try to interview the offender because they need to interview both parties.

An advocate can help you with anything listed here.

Help is free & private.

Call or text 1-800-871-7741 or go to mecasa.org to chat.

You can text & chat Mon-Fri 8am-5pm.

You can call 24/7.