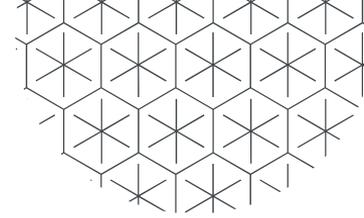




Raising Awareness About Sexual Assault

By: Isabella Saballos

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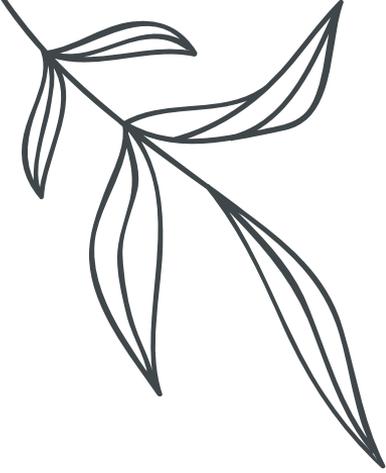
What is rape culture and how it affects victims from coming forward.

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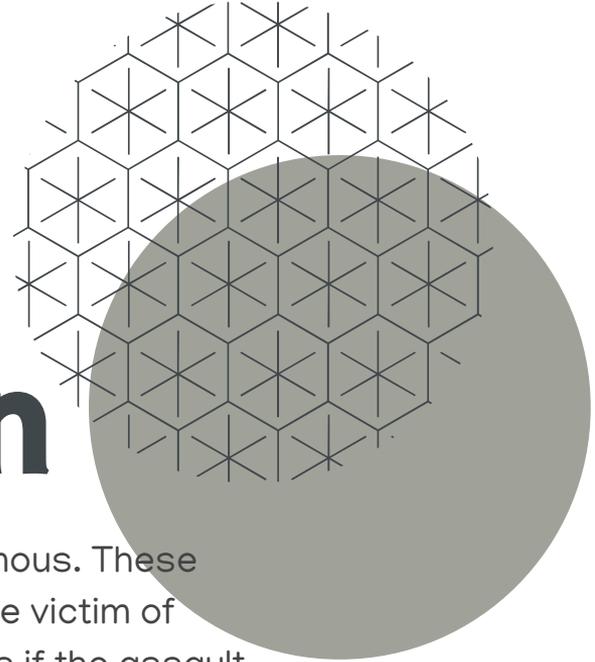
The sources that I used and more for further learning





01

Introduction



“Did you fight back?” “She was asking for it.” –Anonymous. These statements are incredibly false. Nobody is *asking* to be the victim of nonconsensual sexual violence. These statements are said as if the assault was under the victims' control.



But what even constitutes as sexual assault

According to RAINN “sexual assault refers to sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the victim.”

- Some forms of sexual assault include attempted rape, fondling, or unwanted sexual touching.
- Numerous behaviors including non-consensual kissing, groping, and/or penetration might be considered sexual assault.
- Depending on the situation and the region, different definitions of sexual assault apply.
- Any sexual contact without consent constitutes sexual assault.



Facts

1. Statistics show that between 15 to 25 percent of women and 5 to 15 percent of men report having experienced sexual abuse as a child.
2. Due to the incestuous nature of the assault, studies have demonstrated that psychological harm is particularly severe and has the greatest potential for damage when it is by parents against children.
3. Most people just assume that sexual assault only or mostly happens when you're walking around alone. But that's that's not even close to the truth, in fact in most cases of sexual assault the victim knew or was familiar with their attacker beforehand.

Important note: Sexual assault can even happen in loving relationships and it's more common than you might think. Consent is the only way to have a safe and respectful sexual encounter with anyone. Even if you are in a loving relationship and have consented to it before does not mean you have consented to do anything again. And never forget that consent can be revoked at any moment. It's not a one time statement, it is a certain ongoing agreement.



02

Rape Culture

For a number of reasons, either a kid or an adult who has experienced sexual assault frequently chooses not to come forward. Hostility, power, and control are the driving forces behind sexual assault.

What is rape culture?

Sexual desire is not the driving force behind sexual attacks. Humans have the ability to control how they choose to act on or express their sexual urges, in contrast to animals.

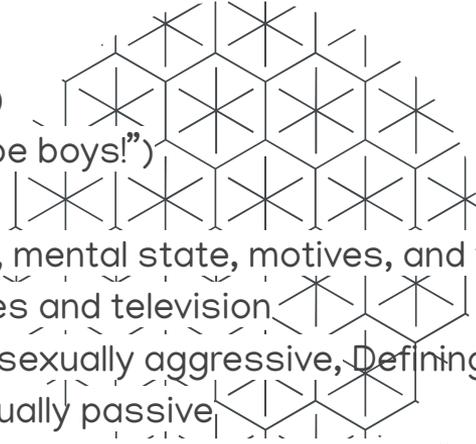
That being said the truth is that sadly most of the time when a victim of sexual assault chooses to speak up about their experience very few people usually believe them especially when the person is young.

Rape culture is the main reason for victims not telling their stories.

1. Rape Culture refers to an atmosphere where rape is common and where sexual violence is rationalized and accepted in the media.
2. With the use of misogynistic, objectification of women's bodies, and glamorization of sexual violence, rape culture is sustained, resulting in a society that disregards the rights and safety of women.
3. Rape culture also focuses more on protecting the perpetrator from consequences and false accusations than from protecting the victim.

Rape Culture Behaviours

- a. Blaming the victim (“She asked for it!”)
- b. Trivializing sexual assault (“Boys will be boys!”)
- c. Tolerance of sexual harassment
- d. Publicly scrutinizing a victim’s clothes, mental state, motives, and history
- e. Gratuitous gendered violence in movies and television
- f. Defining “manhood” as dominant and sexually aggressive, Defining “womanhood” as submissive and sexually passive
- g. Pressure on men to “score”, Pressure on women to not appear “cold”
- h. Assuming only promiscuous women get raped, Assuming that men don’t get raped or that only “weak” men get raped
- i. Refusing to take rape accusations seriously
- j. Teaching women to just *avoid* getting raped

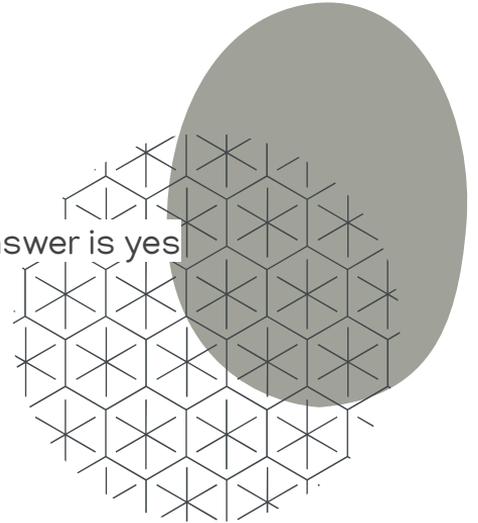


Menu

03

Impacts

But does this have any actual long-term effects? The answer is yes



Long term effects of sexual assault

Sexual assault in a minor typically results in low self-esteem a sense of worthlessness, and an unnatural or distorted perception of sex.

1. Having experienced any type of trauma in your life causes chemical reactions in your brain that can include epinephrine(adrenaline), norepinephrine, and cortisol also known as the fight, flight, or freeze response.
2. When left unsettled or unfinished, especially in children and teenagers, trauma can change the structure of your brain which can contribute to long-term mental, physical, and emotional problems.
3. According to Understanding How Trauma Affects Health and Health Care – CHCS Blog “Experiencing trauma, especially in childhood, can actually change a person’s brain structure, contributing to long-term physical and behavioral health problems.”

Other Effects

Other impacts of minor sexual abuse include,

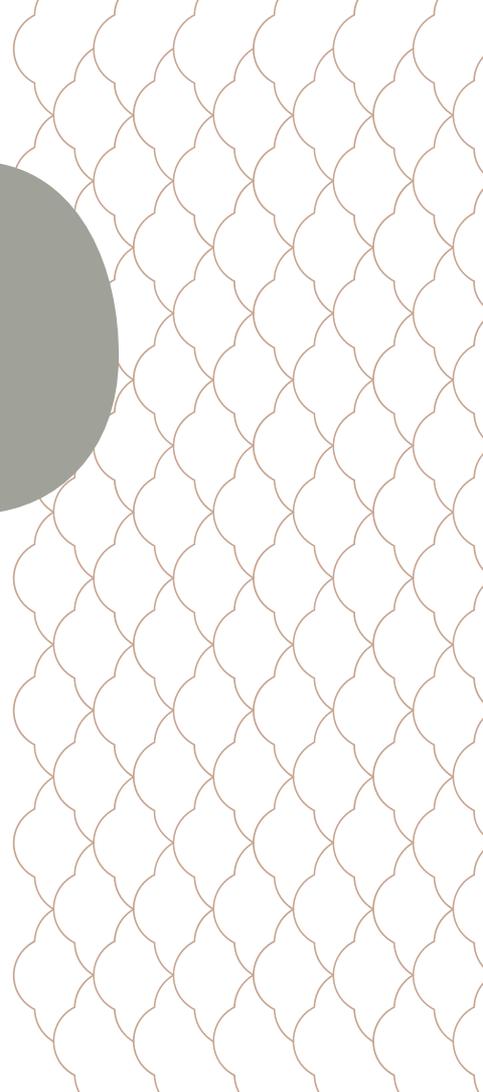
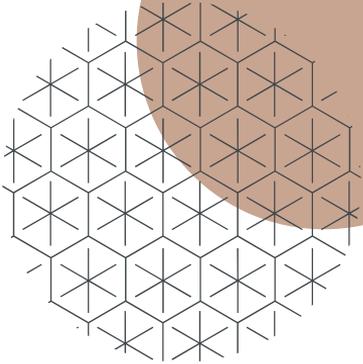
1. among other things, physical harm to the kid,
2. Depression,
3. post-traumatic stress disorder,
4. anxiety,

A tendency to become a victim again as an adult. It has also been demonstrated that teenage sexual assault causes worse academic performance, an increase in mental health issues, and social marginalization.

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04

Resources



MLA9 Citations

Smith, S. G., Zhang, X., Basile, K. C., Merrick, M. T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., & Chen, J. (2018). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 data brief - updated release*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<https://www.nsvrc.org/resource/2500/national-intimate-partner-and-sexual-violence-survey-2015-data-brief-updated-release> accessed February 16th, 2023

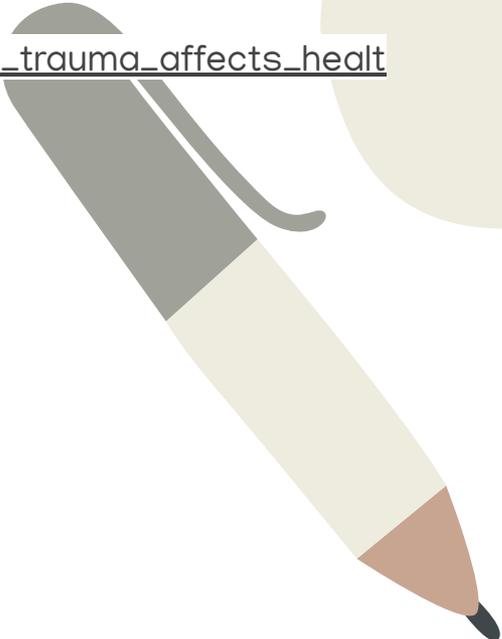
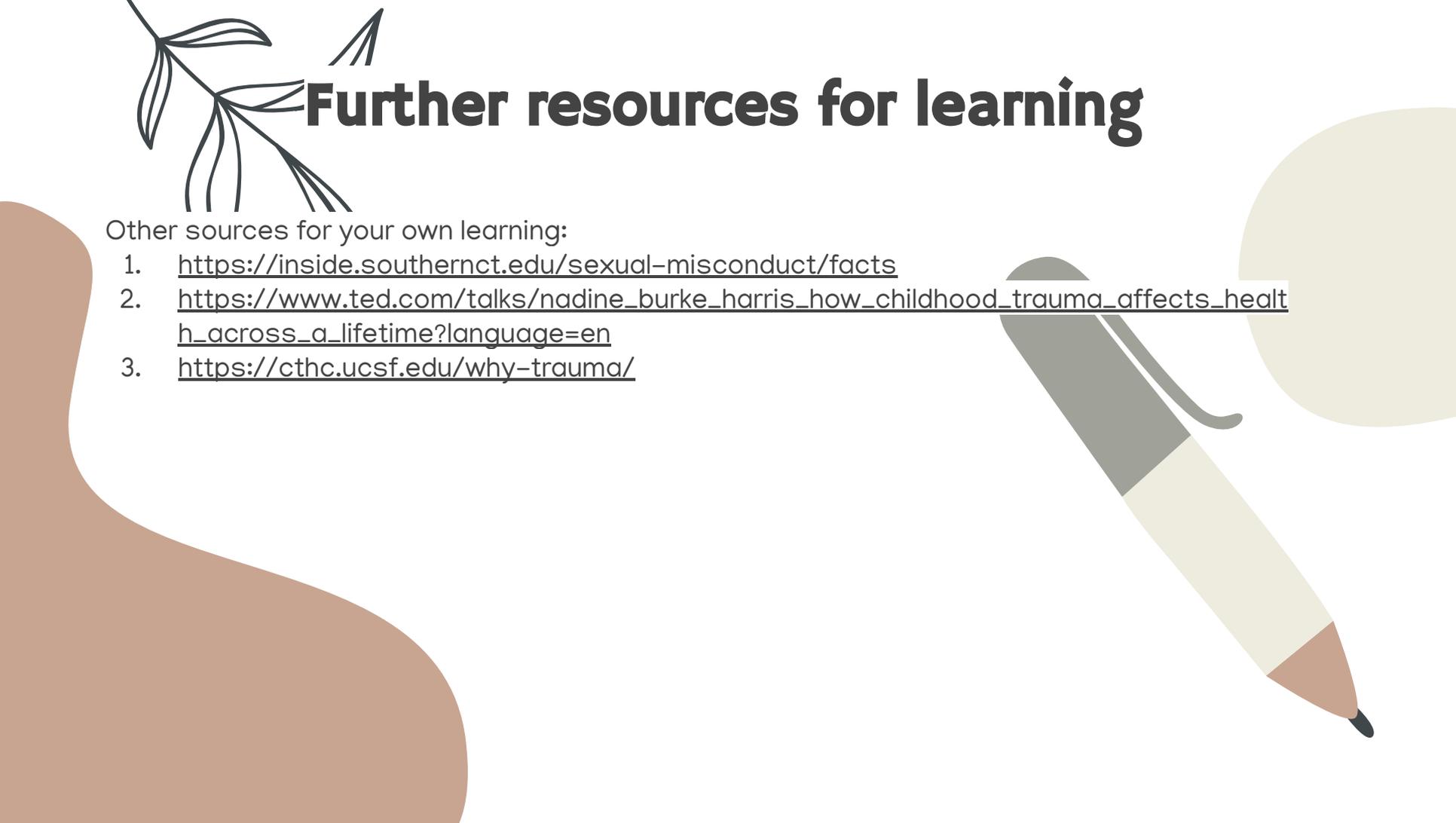
Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Walters, M. L., Merrick, M. T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M. R. (2011). *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 summary report*. Retrieved from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010.pdf accessed February 4th, 2023

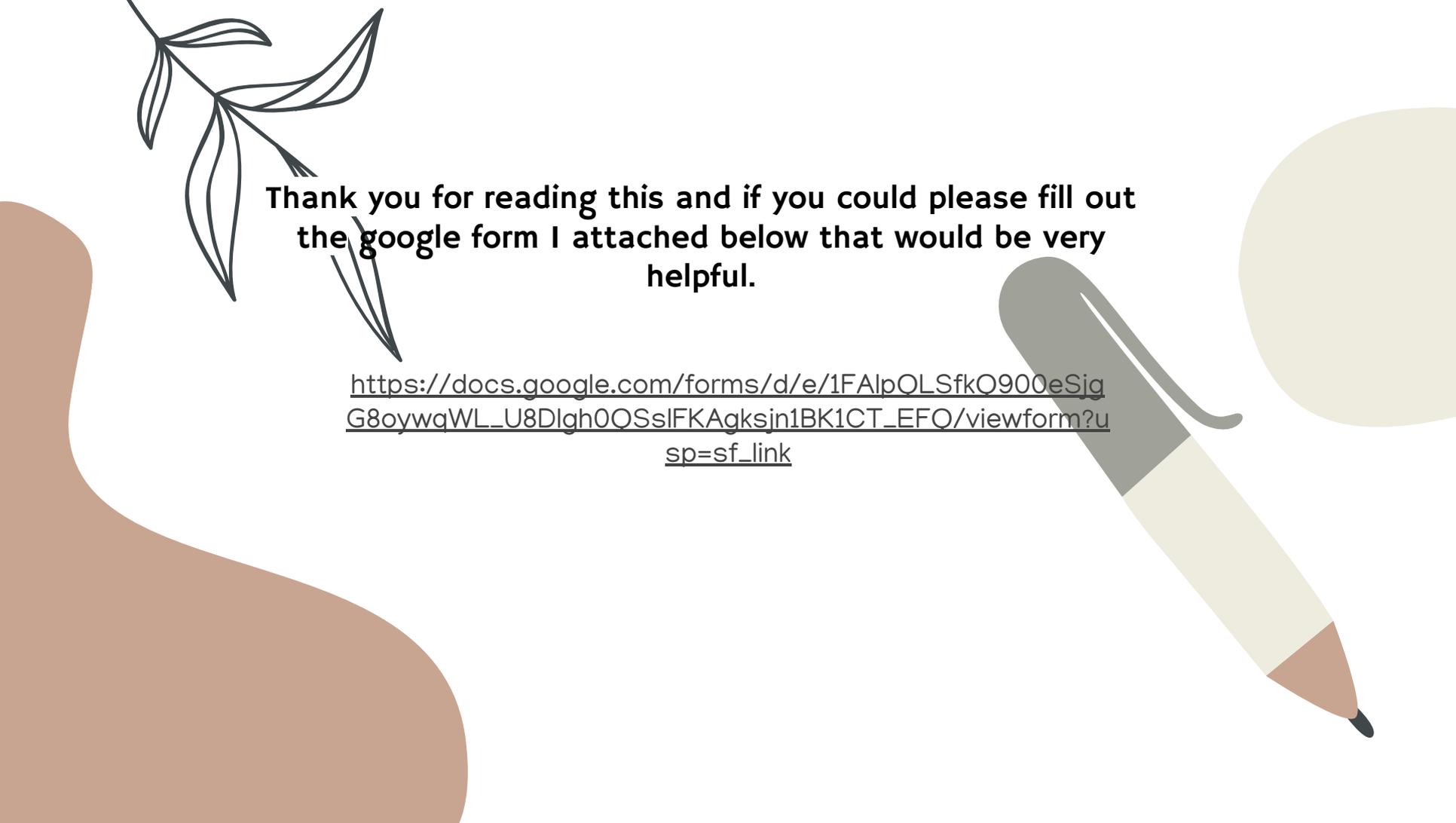
Kilpatrick, D. G., Saunders, B. E., & Smith, D. W. (2003). Youth victimization: Prevalence and implications (NIJ Research Brief NCJ 194972). Retrieved from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/194972.pdf> accessed February 2nd, 2023



Further resources for learning

Other sources for your own learning:

1. <https://inside.southernct.edu/sexual-misconduct/facts>
 2. https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_childhood_trauma_affects_health_across_a_lifetime?language=en
 3. <https://cthc.ucsf.edu/why-trauma/>
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Thank you for reading this and if you could please fill out the google form I attached below that would be very helpful.

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