

REAL-TIME NEWS FROM BIRMINGHAM

# Sexual assault calls double in Birmingham after Kavanaugh hearing

Updated Oct 4, 8:24 AM;

Posted Oct 4, 6:30 AM



The Crisis Center serves Central Alabama and provides free services for those experiencing a personal crisis or mental health issues. (Ivana Hrynkiw | [ihrynkiw@al.com](mailto:ihrynkiw@al.com))



**By Abbey Crain, [acrain@al.com](mailto:acrain@al.com)**

Calls to the Rape Response line at the Crisis Center in Birmingham more than doubled in the month of September, due in part to the saturation of sexual assault stories in the news cycle and the Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court confirmation hearings.

The Crisis Center serves Central Alabama and provides free services for those experiencing a personal crisis or mental health issues. Rhiannon Reese, clinical director of crisis programs, said the Crisis Center received 214 calls in the month of September, 114 more calls than the center usually receives.

The calls are made up of people who call the Crisis Center's Rape Response hotline (205-323-7273) and calls to the National Sexual Assault Hotline through RAINN, Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, (800-656-4673) which are routed to crisis centers across the country.

"History shows us that when high-profile allegations such as [Kavanaugh] are in the news it often causes others to reach out too. This story has clearly resonated with survivors, and has led thousands to reach out for help for the first time," Scott Berkowitz RAINN president said in a release. "Over this past year, following the cases of Weinstein and Cosby and the explosion of #MeToo, our numbers have been growing pretty rapidly, but we've never<sup>1</sup> seen anything like this before.



---

[Learn More](#)



---

According to RAINN between Sept. 28, the day of the Kavanaugh hearing and Sept. 30, RAINN saw a 338 percent increase in hotline traffic. Sept. 28, was the busiest day in the 24-year history of the National Sexual Assault Hotline.

Reese said many the callers to the Rape Response line were survivors of sexual assault who did not report their assault when it happened, but were looking for someone to talk to or a place to receive counseling services.

"We recommend supporting each other and reaching out for help. You can come in to talk to a counselor or attend a support group," Reese said.

There is no statute of limitations for sexual assault in Alabama. Survivors can also use the Crisis Center to aid in reporting assaults to authorities.

Zara Greene, of Birmingham, said that she was raped 20 years ago when she was a freshman in college by a senior. She told AL.com she decided not to report the incident because she thought no one would believe her.



"I just knew that fingers would get pointed at me over him. I decided it was better for me not to report it. I did not want that to follow me around," Greene said. Greene posted about her sexual assault on Facebook in 2016 after a video was released showing Donald Trump bragging to Access Hollywood's Billy Bush that he could "grab [women] by the p-----."

---

[Learn More](#)



Greene said it was therapeutic to speak out about her experience and was instrumental in her healing process.

"[Sexual assault survivors] have to do what's best for them. There have been times in the 20 years since [she was raped] when I thought I didn't make the right decision. But I made the right decision for me," Greene said. "If it's something [survivors] feel they can come forward with, that's great and I encourage them to come forward. But I do understand their struggles with why they wouldn't and I encourage them to reach out to places like the Crisis Center and there are people that will listen to them."



Survivors of sexual assault can call RAINN at 00-656-4673 to be directed to a crisis center in their area. [Click here for a list of sexual assault response centers across the state.](#)

**SPONSOR CONTENT**

## **Are You 65 Years of Age or Older?** **Here's What You Need to Know About** **Flu Season**



**By Sanofi Pasteur**

In addition to getting the flu shot, there are other ways to help protect yourself and others from the flu. Here are a few ideas to help you get started.



[Learn More](#)



---

Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our **User Agreement** (updated 5/25/18) and **Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement** (updated 5/25/18).

© 2018 Advance Local Media LLC. All rights reserved (**About Us**).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Advance Local.

**Community Rules** apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

**Your California Privacy Rights**

[▶ Ad Choices](#)

