



---

## What Can I do if I or Someone I know is Experiencing Sexual or Domestic Violence?

**If there is immediate danger, consider calling 911.**

**Don't be afraid to let her or him know that you are concerned for their safety.** Help your friend or family member recognize the abuse. Tell her or him you see what is going on and you want to help. Help them recognize what is happening is not "normal" and they deserve a healthy, non-violent relationship.

**Acknowledge she or he is in a very difficult and scary situation.** Let your friend or family member know the abuse is not their fault. Reassure her or him that they are not alone and there is help and support out there.

**Be supportive.** Listen to your friend or family member. Remember it may be difficult for her or him to talk about the abuse. Let her or him know you are available to help whenever they may need it. What they need most is someone who will believe and listen to them.

**Be non-judgmental.** Respect your friend or family member's decisions. There are many reasons why victims stay in abusive relationships. He or she may leave and return to the relationship many times. Do not criticize her or his decisions or try to make them feel guilty. She or he will need your support even more during those times.

**If she or he ends the relationship, continue to be supportive of them.** Even though the relationship was abusive, your friend or family member may still feel sad and lonely once it is over. She or he will need time to mourn the loss of the relationship and will especially need your support at that time.

**Encourage her or him to talk to people who can provide help and guidance.** Find a local sexual or domestic violence agency that provides counseling or support groups. Offer to go with her or him to talk to family and friends. If she or he has to go to the police, court or a lawyer, offer to go along for moral support.

**Remember that you cannot "rescue" her or him.** Although it is difficult to see someone you care about get hurt, ultimately, the person getting hurt has to be the one to decide what they need to do and when. It's important for you to support her or him and help them find a way to safety and peace.

**Discuss their safety concerns with them.** Remember a survivor knows her or his situation and her/his abuser best. It is important to talk with them about how to access resources for identifying safety plans. Not all victims choose to leave and it is important to support their choice. They may feel this is their safest option for now.

**Call the ACESDV Legal Advocacy Hotline at 800-782-6400, the 24-HR National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224, or the 24-HR RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) to discuss your concerns and questions.**

**The following are six things you can say to a sexual or domestic violence survivor:**

I am here for you if you need me.

You are not alone.

I am concerned for your safety.

I am concerned for the safety of your children.

There is help available.

It's not your fault.

To lead, to advocate, to educate, to collaborate, to prevent and end sexual and domestic violence in Arizona