



How to Help Someone You Care About

Every person reacts differently to trauma. There is no "right" way to react to sexual violence.

Some people might completely shut down and seem blank; some might cry; some might want to act like nothing happened and go back to "normal." How a person feels one minute, one hour, one day, isn't how they'll always feel as they continue to process what has happened.



It's not always easy to know what to say when someone tells you they've been sexually assaulted, especially when that person is a family member, friend, or loved one. Consider the following ways of showing support:

Stay Calm. It's natural to feel upset when something bad happens to someone you care about but remaining calm will show that you are a safe person to share with and are capable of providing assistance.

Believe Them. Validate their feelings and offer words of affirmation such as "I believe you," "It was not your fault," "How can I support you?" "I'm really glad you told me," "Would you like to find some resources together?"

Listen and Hold your Questions. Allow them to tell their story in their own way. Avoid asking questions about what happened.

Offer Support. Encourage the survivor to get support. Share resources, like CMVSS, CAPS, or NOFJC (24 Hr Crisis Line, 504-866-9554), but realize that only they can make the decision to get help.

Empower Them. Sexual violence is never a survivor's fault. However, survivors often feel shame or guilt associated with an assault. Unpacking shame and offering information about resources can help combat stigma.

Be Patient. Remember, there is no timetable for recovering from trauma. Avoid putting pressure on them to engage in activities they aren't ready to do yet.

Encourage Self-Care. Following an assault, it is important for both you and your loved one to practice self-care.

SAPHE Special Feature

How do I know if my partner is able to consent to hooking up after a night out?

Good sex is enthusiastic, informed, consensual, and feels great! In order to have great consensual sex, you need to know if your partner(s) is able to consent after consuming alcohol/drugs. Some signs that someone might be incapacitated and therefore, too intoxicated to consent include:

- Slurred speech
- Unsteady on their feet
- Smell like alcohol
- Vomiting/incontinence
- Emotional volatility/combativeness
- Unresponsiveness
- Impaired consciousness

If you suspect your partner(s) is incapacitated, stop what you're doing and take care of them.

Sex Positivity [seks pāzə'tivədē]

The decoupling of stigma from all safe, healthy consensual sexual experiences; Embracing the sexual diversity, desires, choices, and experiences of both yourself and others

Applications: communicating openly, exploring yourself and determining your desires and boundaries, maintaining your sexual health, removing judgement

live well Highlights



Teal Out

Apr. 7

Join advocates around the world in wearing teal to support sexual violence survivors. Share your picture on social media and tag us!



Denim Day

Apr. 29

Join advocates around the world in wearing jeans to take a stand against victim blaming. Share your picture on social media and tag us!