

# Responding to disclosures of sexual violence

## LISTEN

Be attentive and listen. Let the victim-survivor take their time.

*"Are you okay? I'm here for you."*



## ACKNOWLEDGE

Validate the victim-survivor's experience and their feelings. Acknowledge their courage and strength for disclosing.

*"I know this may be difficult to talk about. What happened to you is not your fault."*

## BELIEVE

Tell the victim-survivor that you believe them. Make sure the victim-survivor does not feel judged.

*"Thank you for telling me. I believe you."*

## ESTABLISH SAFETY

Ask the victim-survivor if they feel safe or are worried. They may still be at risk of immediate and/or future harm.

*"Do you feel safe right now? Are you safe where you live/work/travel?"*



## OFFER SUPPORT

Ask the victim-survivor if they need more support. If they say no, that is OK. Remind them that they can change their mind, and that support is always available.

*"What would you like to do? What kind of support do you need?"*

## REFER

You are not expected to be the victim-survivor's main source of support. Refer them on to the appropriate services with their consent.

*"Have you considered speaking to a professional about this? Here are some support services that can help victim-survivors."*



## DEBRIEF

Talking about violence can be difficult. Talk to someone you trust if you are upset or worried.

*Always keep the identity of the victim-survivor confidential.*