

How to Support a Survivor of Sexual Violence Video Transcript

Person 2

When someone experiences sexual violence, seeking support can be difficult. It's ok to ask for help.

Person 3

Some people may feel unsafe asking for help, because they know the person that harmed them or because they don't want to re-live what happened.

Person 2

Cultural barriers and power dynamics can also be a barrier to disclosing sexual violence.

Person 1

Sometimes survivors of sexual violence don't think anyone will believe them. They may feel embarrassed or think the violence is their fault. The survivor is never at fault.

Person 4

Some survivors of sexual violence may be worried that their story could reflect negatively on their community, which may already be facing discrimination.

Person 2

And, sexual violence can happen to anyone and anyone can cause harm.

It's our job to support each other, that's community care and caring communities thrive.

Person 3

Sexual violence can impact people in many ways - physically, emotionally, financially or spiritually. Sometimes it's a combination of all of these, its different for everyone.

Person 1

You may feel unsure how to support a friend who has experienced harm. Here are some simple ways that you can show support:

Person 2

Listen and tell them you believe them

Person 4

Tell them you're glad they told you

Person 3

Tell them it's not their fault

Person 1

Popular media may blame survivors but it doesn't matter what they were wearing or if they were drinking or using drugs - a survivor of sexual violence is never at fault.

Person 3

Empathize with them by letting them know that their feelings and responses are ok. There is no 'normal' way to feel.

Person 4

Respect their personal space and privacy

Person 2

Use the language they use, don't label their experience for them.

Person 1

Connect them to resources if they want and follow their lead: the person disclosing controls the next step

Person 2

When someone discloses to you they have placed trust in you. It's important to maintain that trust.

Person 4

When someone has experienced sexual violence they may be in a vulnerable position. Respect their needs and boundaries

Person 3

Be patient and don't press for details.

Person 1

A supportive response can improve a survivor of sexual violence's healing process

Person 2, Person 4, Person 1, Person 3

Let's support each other, we are all in this together.