

# Let's Talk – How You Can Offer Support

## *Offer these Supportive Words*

1. “I’m afraid for your safety.”
2. “I’m afraid for your children’s safety.”
3. “It will only get worse.”
4. “I’m here for you.”
5. “No one deserves to be abused.”

## *Approach, Acknowledge, Ask and Listen*

1. **Approach** the subject in a non-blaming way. Tell her she is not alone and that she is courageous to talk about her experience.
2. **Acknowledge** that it is scary and difficult to talk about domestic violence.
3. **Ask** instead of telling and don’t tell her what to do.
  - ▶ “I have plenty of time, whatever you want to talk about I’m here for you.”
  - ▶ “What would you like to happen?”
  - ▶ “What is it like for you?”
  - ▶ “What do you need?”
4. **Listen** instead of talking.
  - ▶ “I won’t tell anybody what you tell me, unless you want me to or we decide it would be helpful.”
  - ▶ Be an active listener by responding to her – but avoid anger, disappointment or judgments.

## *Things to Keep in Mind When Talking with a Victim*

1. **Believe** the victim.
2. **Respect** her choices.
3. **Empathize** with her emotional strain, stress and disappointment.
4. **Acknowledge** the difficulty of her situation.
5. **React** to what she tells you with compassion.
6. **Be prepared** for anything – a short, unrevealing answer or the flood gates opening. She could deny she needs help or recite a full-blown list of immediate needs.
7. **Take it slow** and break it down into manageable steps.
8. **Try again** if she's reluctant to or won't confide in you.

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