

What you can do to help someone who is being abused

Give them clear messages.

- Violence is never okay or justifiable.
- Their safety is always the most important issue.
- Assault is a crime.
- They did not cause the abuse.
- They are not to blame for the other person's behaviour.
- They cannot change the other person's behaviour.
- Apologies and promises will not end the violence.
- They are not alone.
- Abuse is not a loss of control; it is a means of control.

Help them make a safety plan.

- Talk with them about planning for their safety.
- Help them identify a wide range of choices for dealing with the violence.
- Encourage and support them to make their own decisions.

Find out about the resources in your community.

- Look in the front pages of your telephone book for emergency numbers of police, crisis or distress lines, shelters.
- Prepare a list of names and numbers of the emergency resources in your community so you can give it to a person if you think they are being abused.

An abused person needs your support and encouragement to make choices that are right for themselves. However, there are some forms of advice that are not useful and even dangerous for them to hear.

Don't tell them what to do; for example, when to leave or when not to leave.

Don't tell them to go back to the situation and try a little harder or ignore it.

Don't rescue them by trying to find quick solutions.

Don't suggest you try to talk to the other person to straighten things out.

Don't tell them they should do something for the sake of family or other person.

If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, report your concerns to Child, Youth and Family Services authorities or police in your community.

Victims of partner violence can go to their local police station or provincial court to apply for an Emergency Protection Order.

Adapted from: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence website.