

How to Help a Friend who has been Sexually Harassed

If someone tells you that they have been sexually harassed, remember the following:

DO	DO NOT
Believe what they are telling you. It may be difficult for them to talk to you and trust you.	Do not be judgmental.
Listen and pay attention to what they are saying. Let them know that they can talk to you.	Do not tell them what they should do or rush to provide solutions.
Tell them that it is not their fault and that everyone deserves a healthy relationship.	Do not blame them or tell them that what happened to them is their fault. No one ever deserves or asks to be harassed.
Use empathy. Tell the person that you are very sorry this happened to them.	Do not avoid your friend. If you do not know what to do, reach out to someone who can help you.
Ask them what they want to do.	Do not ask too many questions or look for too many details. Let your friend guide the conversation.
Suggest that your friend talk to someone. You can be supportive by helping your friend identify all the available options for getting help.	Do not tell them that you know exactly how they are feeling. Each person's experience is unique.
Know your limits. Recognize when you do not know how to help. Find support to help you.	Do not break your friend's trust by sharing private information with others. Let your friend decide whom they will tell.