

Don't Blame Yourself

The responsibility lies solely with those who committed the assault not because you weren't there to protect them.

Don't Speak for them

Unless they want you to. It is important they express how they feel and what they want.

Do Encourage a Medical check up

Whether or not they choose to report the assault, it is important to have pregnancy and STI tests for their safety.

Don't expect too much of yourself

They made need support from different people. Counselors may be able to help in ways those closest can't.

You won't be able to magically make everything better, but by showing them that you believe them, that you don't blame them, and that you want to help them regain control of their life by listening, respecting their feelings and views, and showing you care, you can make a great difference and help them begin to heal.

We believe all people have a right to a life free of physical violence, sexual assault, verbal/emotional abuse, and restriction of personal liberties.

We believe that violence is a societal problem, a learned behavior, and with intervention and education, the cycle of violence can be broken.

We believe in the worth, dignity, and uniqueness of the individual, and we support these values through education, personal growth, self-reliance, and self-determination.

This pamphlet is sponsored in part by the Office of the Attorney General: Division of Victim Services.

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Supporting Someone Who Has Been Sexually Assaulted

Toll Free 24-Hour Crisis Line
1-877-864-9688

Cody Office
1220 13th St.
Cody, WY
307-272-4754

Powell Office*
335 N. Gilbert Street
Powell, WY
307-754-7959
Fax: 307-754-4448

*Powell office is ADA accessible



Sexual assault is a violent act carried out by someone seeking power and control without permission or consent from the victim.

- When someone has been sexually assaulted, they need support from friends, counselors, police, and doctors.
- Every person responds differently, but some common feelings are fear, distress, humiliation, anger, confusion, numbness, and guilt.
- Feelings may vary from day to day and it is important to allow a survivor to experience these feelings without feeling dismissed.
- They should be believed and allowed to rebuild feelings of safety, trust, control, and self-worth at their own pace.
- It is important to remember as a secondary survivor you will need support too.
- Don't make the survivor do anything they do not want to do.

DOs and DON'Ts

Don't Criticize

For where they were, not resisting more, or the way they dressed. Anyone can be a victim and they may already experience guilt. The

blame should always be on the one who committed the assault.

Do Understand

Why they were unable to prevent it. They have been frozen by fear, unsuspecting and trusting, threatened or physically attacked, or feared worse if they resisted.

Do Listen

To why they may have waited to tell you. They may have been scared of your reaction, trying to protect you, felt ashamed or embarrassed, were trying to think it through, or talk to people less personally involved.

Do Help Distinguish

Between wishing it had never happened, wishing they hadn't been there, said something, and the guilt of thinking it was their fault. Everyone has a basic human right to be free from threat, harassment or attack.

Don't Minimize

What has happened by saying it isn't very bad, forget it, or get over it. Let them say how they feel and experience their emotions.

Do Reassure

Them that you are there to support, to trust, and to give them time.

Don't Take Control

Of the situation. Listen to what they want. It is crucial they make their own decisions and regain influence over their life to rebuild. It is common to be too protective or treat them different. Ask how they want to be helped.

Do Help them to Feel Safe

By letting them know they can talk to you about feeling unsafe and can ask for companionship when needed. This will be reassuring as they tackle difficult things.

Don't Frighten them

By coming up behind them or touching them. Unexpected touch could remind them of the assault. It may be difficult for them to be close emotionally or sexually because they may recall their feelings of violation or fear. Don't blame or put pressure if there is emotional distance. Feelings of guilt will make it harder for them to work through the experience.

Don't Direct Anger at Them

Let them know that your anger is directed towards those who committed the assault and not them. Threatening to take the law into your own hands could add to their distress, make them feel out of control of the situation and that their needs are ignored. Seek support for your frustration.