

Talking with Victims: *Remember that your attitude and what you say may have more of an impact on the victim than you realize.*

DO:

- Ask if medical services are needed
- Ask if weapons were involved or present
- Stay on the phone with the victim for as long as possible
- Identify the abuser and location
- Ask if children are present
- Ask who else was there
- Ask if alcohol / drugs were involved
- Prioritize the victim's needs
- Express a concern for the victim's safety
- Be aware of your own attitudes, experiences and reactions to abuse
- Help the victim understand the danger and repetitiveness of violence
- Take into consideration cultural values and beliefs
- Convey fears for the victim's safety and respect their reasons for staying
- Be patient and honest with the victim
- Emphasize the abuser is responsible for their own choices and behavior
- Expect a "honeymoon" period to follow an abusive incident
- Ask a victim about their explanation of the incident and openly ask if their partner is hurting them

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DON'T:

- Ask a victim why they stay
- Impose your own values or make quick judgments
- Group all victim's into one category
- Ignore the religious or cultural beliefs of the victim
- Tell the victim they need to leave or stay with an abuser
- Convey disappointment if the victim returns or stays with the abuser
- Expect quick decisions by the victim
- Let the victim blame themselves for the abuse
- Belittle or condemn the abuser
- Make the victim feel guilty
- Attack the victim as a parent
- Tell the victim you know how they feel
- Ask leading questions
- Talk over the victims spontaneous statements
- Don't get discouraged with the victim