WE ARE ALL WORTHY OF LOVE DIGNITY & RESPECT

SUPPORTING FRIENDS WHO ARE SURVIVORS

Survivors of dating abuse and sexual violence usually seek support from their friends, loved ones, and community first, before reaching out to formal support systems like an advocate or counselor. Each of us can play an important role in believing, validating, and supporting those who are closest to us. Use the information and resources offered here to best support your friends if they are not feeling safe in a relationship and/or experienced violence.

REPORTING OPTIONS

Deciding to formally report an experience of violence, abuse and/or harassment is a deeply personal decision. Justice means different things to people and there are many reasons why a survivor may choose to report or not report, including personal safety. No one should feel pressured into the reporting process. You can support by sharing options and suggesting they connect with an advocate who can talk through the reporting options and process.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

If a friend does not feel safe or needs an emergency option or medical care, you can find support options to share with them by visiting the FAQ section of the Survivor Advocacy Services web page at **cwc.wwu.edu/survivorservices#faqs**. Survivor Advocacy Services, offered through the Counseling and Wellness Center, is a ***confidential*** survivor-centered, trauma-informed resource for Western students.

DO'S OF SUPPORTING

- Start by believing
- Listen and communicate without judgment
- Know and refer friends to support resources
- Respect the survivor's choices
- Encourage self-care and take care of yourself

VALIDATING STATEMENTS

- "I believe you."
- "This is not your fault."
- "You are not alone."
- "I'm here for your support."
- "You are in control of what happens next."
- "I support what you choose to do."

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Is it okay to talk now?
- What is your biggest concern right now?
- How can I help? What do you need from your community?
- Can I tell you about support resources?
- Do you need an emergency option or medical care?
- Do you want to call a helpline and speak with an advocate?

24-HOUR RESOURCES

The reverse side of this handout lists support resources, including many available 24/7. These are also listed on the Survivor Advocacy Services web page at **cwc.wwu.edu/survivorservices#24hour**.

ACTIONS TO AVOID

- Asking for details about the experience of violence/abuse
- Minimizing or labeling the experience for them
- Having all the answers
- Making promises you can't keep
- Pressuring them to make certain choices or making choices for them

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Hearing about someone else's trauma can be distressing or even triggering. Remember to take time to breathe, process your own emotions, and practice self-care. Grounding your own emotions will also help you maintain a more calming presence when supporting others. Respect your own health by only performing tasks that you are comfortable with.

SURVIVOR SUPPORT RESOURCES

WWU SUPPORT

Survivor Advocacy Services
Note: This is not a 24-hour resource
360-650-7982 | cwc.wwu.edu/survivorservices
A ***confidential*** survivor-centered and trauma-informed resource for Western students. Survivor Advocacy Services also offers training for faculty and staff.

Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance
Note: This is not a 24-hour resource
360-650-3307 | crtc.wwu.edu
Investigates reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment involving two or more WWU students, faculty, or staff. Western employees must promptly report incidents to the Title IX Coordinator.

LOCAL SUPPORT

DVSAS: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services
1–877-715-1563 | www.dvsas.org
Whatcom County resource with advocates who provide safety planning, emotional support, crisis intervention, and referrals through their 24/7/365 helpline.

Lummi Victims of Crime
360-312-2015
Provides culturally specific help for Native survivors and friends and family members who have been affected by violence or abuse.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988 (call or text)

Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

Community Crisis Line: 1-800-584-3578

WWU Counseling and Wellness Center
360-650-3164 (choose option 1 after hours)

NATIONAL SUPPORT

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233 | Text START to 88788
Chat at thehotline.org
Confidential support 24/7/365 for anyone experiencing domestic violence, seeking resources, or questioning aspects of their relationship.

StrongHearts Native Helpline
1-844-7NATIVE (762-8483)
Chat at strongheartshelpline.org
Anonymous, confidential domestic violence and dating violence helpline for Native Americans and Alaska Natives, offering culturally appropriate support/advocacy.

Love Is Respect
1-866-331-9474 | Text LOVEIS to 22522
Chat at loveisrespect.org
Offers 24/7 information, support, and advocacy to people between the ages of 13 and 26 who have questions or concerns about their romantic relationships.

RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-656-4673 (HOPE)
Chat at rainn.org
Callers are routed to a local RAINN affiliate based on the first six digits of their phone number, but they can enter the ZIP code of their current location to connect with the nearest sexual assault service provider.

National Deaf Domestic Violence Hotline
855-812-1001
Chat at thedeafhotline.org
Deaf advocates answer videophone calls and emails 24/7. If using a voice phone, you will be connected to an interpreter during your phone call.

The Network/La Red
800-832-1901
A 24-hour domestic violence hotline providing confidential emotional support, information, referrals, safety planning, and crisis intervention for LGBTQ+ folks.

HEALTH PROMOTION AND RESILIENCE

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
MAKE WAVES.

Information courtesy of Survivor Advocacy Services in the Counseling and Wellness Center at WWU. To request this handout in an alternate format, call 360-650-3164 or email cwc@wwu.edu. Learn more at cwc.wwu.edu/survivorservices. AA/EO. Rev. 9/26.