

Quick tips when helping a survivor

Supportive Measures

Practice self-care

Believe the survivor

Acknowledge their bravery in disclosing/sharing

Actively listen, support and express care

Offer/remind survivor of options, resources

Be honest about how you can help, including mandated reporting

Allow moments of silence. Be patient.

Validated their feelings and experiences

Remember trauma informed response, STE-CCC: safety, trust, empowerment, choice, collaboration & cultural relevance

Consider these phrases (RAINN, 2016):

“I’m sorry this happened to you.”

“It’s not your fault.”

“I believe you.”

“You are not alone.”

Common Harmful Mishaps

Judgement and asking a lot of questions, especially, “Why...”

“Is that what really happened?”

“Why didn’t you tell me earlier”

“Are you okay?”

“Why did (or didn’t) you...?”

Explicit and implicit blame

Cold or doubtful demeanor

Making excuses for the perpetrator or the harmful incident(s)

Physical contact (hugs, shoulder touch/rub) without consent

Minimizing the survivor’s feelings and experiences

Telling the survivor what they must or should do, or what you would do

Reference citations: RAINN, 2016; NRCJIW, 2014; SAMHSA, 2014