

Listening to a disclosure from a Survivor/Victim **over 18**

If you or someone you know are currently being abused,

find the **ChildHelp** hotline in your country [HERE](#), find help near you [HERE](#).
or speak to someone you trust.

If a survivor of sexual violence comes to you, what should you do?

Do's

- Accept survivors as they are and treat them with respect.
- Show them love, care and understanding by being an empathetic listener.
- Believe them.
- Remind them that what was done to them was not their fault.
- Ensure confidentiality of your conversation.
- Create a safe, supportive and distraction-free environment for your conversation.
- Remind them that this can also be an opportunity to collect evidence - and that they can decide on legal action later.
- Help them access services when they are ready. Offer to accompany them if helpful. Offer to support them if they choose to document and follow up on their case with legal authorities.
- Reach out periodically after they disclose to you and remind them that you are there for them.
- Where appropriate, share that they can prevent HIV and unintended pregnancy if they take post-exposure prophylaxis within 72 hours and emergency contraception within 120 hours of the incident (though sooner is always better).

Don'ts

- Do not overreact or panic.
- Do not pressure for details.
- Do not confront the offender.
- Do not doubt their testimony.
- Do not pass judgment.
- Do not tell them how to feel about the situation.
- Do not lecture them about what to do, or force them to go to the police or prosecute.
- Do not ask why they did (or did not) say no or fight back.
- Do not tell the survivors to "forget about it" or "keep quiet" and "move on"
- Do not make light of the situation or compare their experiences to others.
- Do not criticize them or blame them for the situation, by saying things such as, "You shouldn't have been out alone at night."
- Do not avoid them.
- Do not make them feel guilty for having burdened you with this information.