

SOME DOS AND DON'TS OF TALKING TO VICTIMS

DO

- 1) Provide support, express empathy and willingness to help
- 2) Convey that you believe him or her
- 3) Reinforce that he/she did the right thing by telling you
- 4) Listen, Listen, Listen
- 5) Speak clearly and patiently
- 6) Find a private place to talk
- 7) Just sit and be with him/her...sitting in silence is O.K.

DO SAY

- 1) I am so sorry this happened to you
- 2) I can't imagine how difficult this must be for you
- 3) What can I do to help you?
- 4) This is not your fault

DON'T

- 1) Interrogate or ask too many questions
- 2) Force someone to talk
- 3) Ask "Why" questions as it sounds blaming
- 4) Make negative statements about what the victim did or did not do.
- 5) If the perpetrator is a family member or loved one, be cautious about saying anything negative about him/her.
- 6) Make promises that you can not keep
- 7) Judge or second guess the victim's actions or inaction

DON'T SAY

- 1) Don't say something you don't know to be true
- 2) Everything is alright
- 3) I know how you feel
- 4) You'll get over this
- 5) You're lucky it was not worse

