

Responding to Disclosures of Violence

A disclosure of violence is when an individual shares information about experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual harm. It is important to respond with empathy, support, and professionalism, ensuring the person's safety and well-being. A thoughtful response can empower, validate their experience, and promote healing and necessary action.

Unsupportive Response	Supportive Response
Victim blaming	Provide and communicate emotional support (e.g., comfort, active listening, understanding, non-judgmental, warmth, respect, dignity)
Failing to take a disclosure seriously	Express concern for the person's safety
Reinforcing myths around sexual harassment and sexual assault	Believe the person
Violating trust and disrespecting the person's right to confidentiality	Name the criminal behaviour (e.g., harassment, sexual assault)
Creating an atmosphere of interrogation, judgment and control	Reassure the person they are not to be blamed and normalize reluctance to report
Failing to provide information, options, or support	Provide tangible aid/support (e.g., information, medical care, criminal charges, resources)
write your own response:	write your own response: