

Do you love someone who's experiencing violence or abuse?

Here are 10 powerful ways to support them.


**Promising
Futures**

FUTURES
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

SUPPORT WITH BASIC NECESSITIES

If your loved ones need food, transportation, or supplies, ask what they need and provide help when you can. You could offer to:

- drop off food, medications, or cleaning supplies
- send takeout/grocery gift cards or money through cash apps
- give care packages of books, toys, and learning supplies
- drive them to an appointment or the grocery store

Visit findhelp.org to locate food banks and other free resources in their area. Offer to connect your loved one to neighborhood, faith, or community groups, or ask for support on their behalf.

REACH OUT OFTEN

People living with violence are often isolated from friends and extended family. They may be afraid to ask for help or feel ashamed. Let your loved ones know that it's not their fault! Tell them you are there to listen and help however you can, but don't push them to talk about the situation. Use the power of your relationship to create a safe and non-judgmental space for them.

GIVE PARENTS A BREAK

If you have time or space to offer your loved one, consider things like babysitting or offering a place to stay. Even a 30-minute break could help. Look into library storytimes, virtual theater, or other kids' entertainment options. You could read to children over a video call or teach them how to cook a favorite meal.

HELP THEM TEND TO THEIR HEALTH

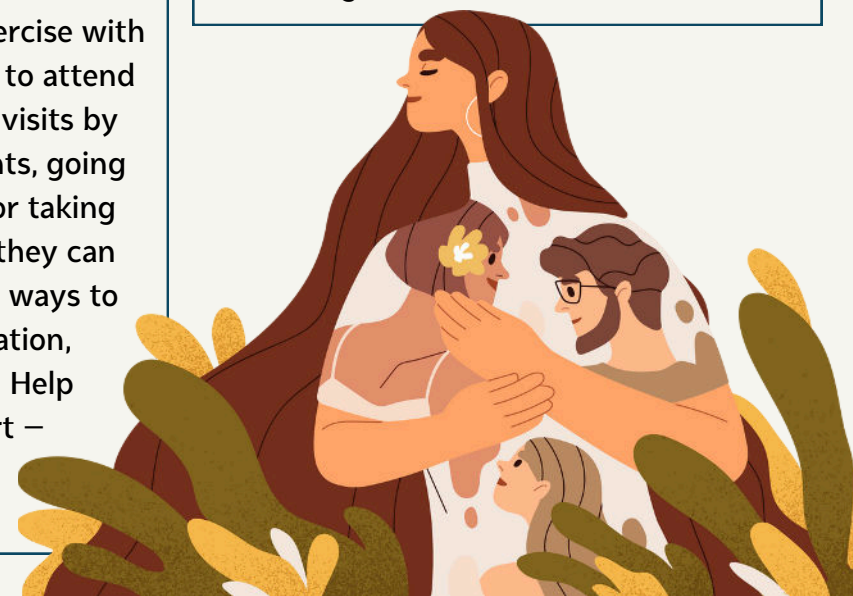
It can be hard for people living with violence or abuse to focus on their own health. You can help by providing gentle encouragement, connecting them to resources and information, and modeling self-care. It's important to respect their decisions about what they want to do. You can help them to remember to drink water regularly and invite them to exercise with you. Or make it easier for them to attend regular health or mental health visits by helping them make appointments, going with them, giving them a ride, or taking care of their kids for a while so they can go. You can also help them find ways to cope with stress, such as meditation, breathing exercises, or hobbies. Help them find mental health support – samhsa.gov/find-support may be a good place to start.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Worrying about a loved one who is experiencing violence or abuse can take a toll on your well-being, and feeling imbalanced can make it harder to support them. Taking care of yourself is essential.

Notice, name, and respect your own boundaries, and remember that you are not responsible if your loved one cannot leave a painful situation. The difficult feelings that come up when someone you love is hurting can be even more intense if you are a survivor too. But remember that everyone's experience is unique, and the most valuable thing you can offer your loved one is closeness and connection.

What would help you tend to your own physical, mental, emotional and social well-being?



Resources

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
TTY 1-800-787-3224
or Text "START" to 88788

National Sexual Assault Hotline:
1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or rainn.org

Childhelp Hotline:
Call or text 1-800-422-4453
Live chat online at childhelphotline.org

Casa de Esperanza: 713-529-0639
or casadeesperanza.org

StrongHearts Native Helpline:
Call or text 1-844-7NATIVE (1-844-762-8483) or strongheartshelpline.org

Anti-Violence Project: 212-714-1141
or avp.org/get-help

A Call For Change helpline (supports people to be safe partners):
1-877-898-3411 or
acallforchangehelpline.org

Teen Dating Abuse Resources:
Call 1-866-331-9474
or text LOVEIS to 22522
Live chat online at loveisrespect.org

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline:
Call or text 1-833-TLC-MAMA
(1-833-852-6262)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
National Helpline (samhsa.gov):
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

HELP THEM CONNECT TO A LOCAL PROGRAM OR COMMUNITY GROUP

Many communities have programs to help people experiencing violence. Free counseling, legal help, and safe shelter may be available. Sometimes people need help making appointments or difficult phone calls. Offer to be there when they make the call or to drive them to a program or center. Research programs that might be easily accessible for them. The hotlines listed on the panel to the left will provide information on local programs and shelters.

USE THE POWER OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Your instinct to talk to the person using harm may be strong, but don't rush. To avoid negative consequences for your loved one, ask their permission before addressing the violence with their partner. However, if you have a strong and trusting relationship with a person abusing their partner or child, you can reach out to them. Let them know that you see what is happening and can support them in getting help. Try to speak to them about planning to change their behavior. You can provide contact information for local and national helplines (see panel at left).

INTERRUPT OR INTERVENE

You and your loved one could agree on two code words. These are simple words that they can use to alert you when they need an interruption from you or are in danger and need you to call for help. One code word could mean "call me or come over so I can move to another room or leave this situation." The other code word could mean "this is an emergency" or "send for help."

SEND LOVE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Keep in mind that technology can be used by abusers to observe and track people, so be mindful about what you send over text or email. However, it's great to send notes that remind loved ones how much they matter and that they are worthy of love and support. Remind them that they are strong and courageous. Share one of your favorite quotes, proverbs, verses, or affirmations. Draw a picture. Small acts of encouragement can go a long way.

HELP THEM MAP THEIR CONNECTIONS

Help your loved one identify their safe people. These are people they trust and can call on when they need support. Using the worksheet at bit.ly/talk-podmap can make the conversation easier. Or, help them download a phone app like [Life 360](#), [SOS Family](#) or [Panic Button](#) that can alert their chosen contacts if they need help.



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