

If you have a friend who you think may be in an unhealthy relationship, the first step is to talk to him/her about it. There are also many resources, both online and in person, that can give in-depth advice about how you can help a friend who is being victimized - some of which are listed on the back. **Neither you nor your friend needs to go through this alone. Please use these resources at any or every stage of this process.** Your safety is important. If you do not feel comfortable or like it is safe to speak with your friend please notify one of our on campus resources.

IF YOUR FRIEND IS EXPERIENCING RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

If you feel that your friend is in imminent danger of physical or sexual harm, please contact Public Safety, (203) 371-7911, or call 911.

Stay Calm. If your friend is not in imminent harm you can be a steady and stable supporter. Your friend most likely feels that his or her life is already overwhelmingly chaotic. By creating a feeling of safety and calm during discussions your friend will continue to seek your friendship. On the other hand, if you panic, freak out, yell, ask your friend if they are crazy, tell other people, or make demands of your friend, your friend may turn away from you. The last thing they need is for you to start acting like their controlling dating partner. Using “I” statements is helpful. For example: I feel concerned when you text your partner what you’re doing all the time because I care about you.

Don’t expect anything in particular from your friend the first time you talk. The first time you have a discussion with a friend about an unhealthy relationship, he or she may admit a few things that have happened and then suddenly retreat or take it back. You do not have to get your friend to admit that they are a victim or that anything that has taken place is bad. The goal of a first conversation should be to establish that you care, you are available, and that you are a safe person with whom they can talk. The situation is unlikely to neatly wrap up overnight, so emphasize that you are there for them whenever they might need help.

Slowly move toward solutions that feel right to your friend. The best way to help a friend is to offer options but not push any one of them in particular. You might suggest that they call or visit one of the resources listed on the back of this sheet, visit the counseling center on campus, or speak to the Title IX Coordinator, residence life, or some other campus administrator. With the exception of the counseling center, if your friend does decide to speak to someone on campus there is a chance that person will be required to let those who can help the situation know. If your friend decides to call or utilize any of the resources it may be helpful to use a library computer or a different phone as sometimes the abuser is monitoring his or her personal items.

Remember. Use a calm approach, remain open to hearing your friend retract or try to cover up the abuse/unhealthy behavior, and reassure your friend that they are the expert on their own life. It’s very important that your friend knows you respect them. Enable them to feel that they are in charge and that you are not pushing solutions on them. The exception to this rule is when or if you suspect that your friend is in imminent danger of bodily harm – either from themselves or others. In that case, call 911 or Public Safety. Your friend may feel betrayed and be angry that you have taken that step, and you may lose the friendship for a while, but you may have saved them from a bad situation.

You and/or your friend do not need to go through this alone. Please check the back of this page for some FREE resources.

RESOURCES

There are many **FREE** resources with highly trained individuals to help people in these types of relationships get out of them safely. Here are a few.

National

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-SAFE (7233)

Provides tools and immediate support. Call for resources/information, or if you are questioning unhealthy aspects of the relationship

National Sexual Assault Hotline

800-656-HOPE

Provides information for victims/friends/family for short-term crisis intervention and support and resources to assist with the reporting process

Center for Relationship Abuse Awareness

stoprelationshipabuse.org/help/

800-799-7233

Provides resources regarding seeking help, basic information, help in your area, legal, etc.

LGBT National Help Center

glbthotline.org

800-246-PRID (7743) for youth through age 25
888-843-4564 for all ages

Provides peer counseling, information, and local resources

myPlan App

myplanapp.org/colleges

Can be accessed via an app or browser.
Provides information on myths/types of abuse, a quiz to help assess risk level, resources, and suggestions for a safety plan

Love is Respect

loveisrespect.org/

Provides information, several online quizzes, access to advocates, and info on safety plans

State/Local

Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

888-774-2900 | 844-831-9200 en español

Provides critical support including counseling, support groups, shelters, safety planning, etc.

Center for Family Justice

centerforfamilyjustice.org

(203) 384-959 for the domestic violence hotline
(203) 333-2233 for the sexual assault hotline

Provides crisis intervention, safety plans, individual/group counseling, etc. for both domestic and sexual violence

SHU

Counseling Services (Confidential)

sacredheart.edu/officesservices/wellnesscenter/counseling/

(203) 371-7955 (for appointments)

Campus Ministry (Chaplains Confidential)

sacredheart.edu/faithservice/campusministry/

(203) 371-7840, HC-109

Campus Advocate (Confidential)

Dominica Hill, Thursday 9AM-1PM

(203) 258-3702, Melady Hall 232

SHU Title IX Coordinator

Leonora Campbell, Mon-Fri 9AM-5PM

(203) 396-8386, Melady Hall 229

SHU Public Safety

<http://www.sacredheart.edu/officesservices/publicsafety/>

(203) 371-7995 for routine calls

(203) 371-7911 for emergencies