RESOURCES

ON CAMPUS

University Counseling Services, Gasson 001
617-552-3310

The Women’s Center, Maloney 441
617-552-3489

Sexual Assault Network (SANet) Hotline
617-552-2211

CARE Team walk in hours, Maloney 441
Mon-Fri 3-4pm

Melinda Stoops, Title IX coordinator,
Maloney 412
617-552-3280

OFF CAMPUS

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC)
617-492-8306

BARCC Hotline
1-800-841-8371

The Center for Trauma and Embodiment
at the Justice Resource Institute
781-559-4900

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
A Guide for Friends and Family

Boston College
University Counseling Services
SEXUAL VIOLENCE

WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE
An umbrella term, encompassing any forced sexual contact or attention without consent.

A survivor can define their own experience in their own terms, in their own time.

THE IMPACT
Each survivor reacts in their own unique way and there are a wide range of emotions and responses to trauma. Some common reactions include...

Shame  Numbness  Changes in Sleep
Guilt    Depression  Unhealthy Coping
Denial   Panic Attacks  Isolation
Distrust Flashbacks  Minimizing

DISCLOSURES

RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE
- Your response to a disclosure can impact the survivor's well-being and how they make sense of what happened to them
- Listen to, believe, and validate the survivor
- Having your own reactions (shock, anger, sadness, etc...) is normal
- Check in on your own emotional well-being and get support from someone other than the survivor if you need it

THINGS TO AVOID
- Don't try to fix the problem or try to make their feelings go away.
- Don't assume you know what the survivor needs.
- Don't make decisions for them.
- Don't ask for details about what happened.
- Don't challenge their experience or language.
- Don't be judgmental or engage in victim blaming.
- Don't get upset with them for not telling you sooner.

WHAT DO I SAY?

WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
- "I believe you."
- "Thank you for sharing this with me."
- "It took a lot of courage to share this with me."
- "I'm so glad you told me."
- "This shouldn't have happened to you."
- "This is not your fault."
- "I'm here to listen and help in any way I can."

THINGS TO REMEMBER
- Let the survivor express themselves
- Believe the survivor
- Acknowledge their pain
- Ask them how you can be helpful
- Provide suggestions and offer to assist but don't push, let the survivor choose what resources they will utilize
- Maintain connection and check in but also offer normalcy
- Be patient, healing takes time
- Take care of yourself

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