



Speaking Truth in Love Ministries

***Providing Loving,
Biblical Guidance in the
Prevention of and
Response to
Sexual Abuse and
Domestic Violence***

*Speaking
Truth in Love
Ministries*



Matthew 18:10
See that you do not despise one of these little ones.
For I tell you that their angels in heaven
always see the face of my Father in heaven

How to Help Victims of Abuse

Ecclesiastes 3:7...A time to keep
silence,
And a time to speak;



Things you should know

- It is very difficult for a victim or survivor of sexual abuse to share their abuse with someone.
- If you have been chosen by a victim do not violate the trust they have in you. They must think of you as a safe supporter
- Don't think you have to solve their problems for them but be there for them. Genuinely care for them.

Things that are
Helpful

Things that are Helpful

- People who validate that the abuse is real and has impacted my life
 - “It’s not your fault”
 - “I believe you”
 - “It’s ok to feel that way”
 - “I’m sorry for what you’ve been through”

Things that are Helpful

- Don't leave me alone

Someone who is there for me

Give a hug or hold me when I'm crying

Listen

Caring, Compassion, Understanding

Encourage

Call to check in

Help me set boundaries

Help me build a support system

Things that are Helpful

- People who help me regain my self-worth
 - “I care about you”
 - “God loves you”
 - “You are beautiful”
 - “You can do this”
 - “You have much to offer”
- Help me feel safe
 - Don't judge
 - Don't criticize
 - Don't take advantage of me

Things that are
Hurtful

Things that are Hurtful

- **Sympathy for sex offenders**
 - Were they victims of abuse?
 - Excusing or minimizing their behavior
- **Head in the sand attitudes and behaviors**
 - Your offender would never do such a thing
 - I don't believe that can happen here
 - We can't talk about things like that
- **Shaming messages or bible verses**
 - God will use this to make you a better person
 - You need to forgive
 - Ask God to deal with your offender.
 - Bible verses given as aspirins

Proverbs 28:17

¹⁷ A man burdened with bloodshed will flee into a pit; Let no one help him.

Things that are Hurtful

- You should see a counselor or Have you gotten counseling
- Forgive and forget; Put it behind you, leave it in the past.
- Victim Blaming
 - What did you do to make him or her do that
 - What were you wearing
 - You should pray more
- Being ignored or turned away because people don't believe me.

What to Say and What Not to Say to a Victim of Sexual Assault

This is excerpted by the Holcombs' book, Rid of My Disgrace

Hurtful reactions toward a victim may be intentional (victim blaming), or they may arise from ineffective attempts to show compassion by people who mean well but are uninformed. Below is a list of things not to say because they shame, blame or doubt the victim:

What Not to Say

- “I know how you feel”
- “I understand”
- “You’re lucky that _____ didn’t happen.”
- “It’ll take some time, but you’ll get over it.”
- “Why don’t you tell me more details about what happened?”
- “Don’t worry, it’s going to be all right”
- “Try to be strong.”
- “Out of tragedies good things happen.”
- “Time heals all wounds.”
- “It was God’s will.”
- “You need to forgive and move on.”
- “Calm down and try to relax.”
- “You should get on with your life.”

What to Say

- “I’m sorry this happened to you.”
- “I believe you.”
- “Thank you for telling me.”
- “How can I help.”
- “I’m glad you’re talking to me.”
- “I’m glad you’re safe now.”
- “It wasn’t your fault.”
- “Your reaction is not an uncommon response.”
- “It’s understandable you’re feeling this way.”
- “You are not going crazy. These are normal reactions following an assault.”
- “Things may not ever be the same, but they can get better.”
- “It’s OK to cry.”