



What YOU CAN DO to HELP A FRIEND

In an abusive relationship

Program Near You:

loveisrespect.org

National Dating
Abuse Helpline

Text: loveis to 77054

Phone: 866-331-9474

TTY: 866-331-8453

Compiled by the Wisconsin Coalition
Against Domestic Violence
www.wcadv.org

- **Say something.** Tell your friend you care and are worried about them. Let them know they don't deserve to be treated this way.
- **Listen and be patient.** Let them know you are willing to listen if and when they are ready to talk. Don't make your friend do anything they don't want to do. Empower your friend to make their own decisions!
- **Believe your friend.** Let them know that you do.
- **Tell your friend it's not their fault.** Don't blame them for the abuse.
- **Support, don't judge.** Try to understand if your friend goes back to their abusive partner. Know that leaving an abusive relationship is hard and can take a long time. Let your friend know you'll be there no matter what they decide.
- **Learn more.** Get information on dating violence for yourself and offer it to your friend. Go online, call the national hotline, call your local crisis line, or go to your local domestic violence agency.
- **Encourage your friend to build a wide support system.** Suggest talking to other friends and family or going to a support group. Consider talking to a trusted adult especially if the situation is getting worse. Offer to go with for support.
- **Don't spread gossip.** Gossiping could put your friend in danger.
- **Tell your friend they aren't crazy** – many people in abusive relationships can feel that way.
- **Point out your friend's strengths** – many people in abusive relationships have a hard time remembering their own abilities and gifts.
- **Don't get in a dangerous situation with your friend's partner.** Don't be a mediator. Tell a trusted adult or consider calling the police or 911 if you witness an assault or feel in danger.
- **Work out a safety plan.** Help your friend think of ways to increase their safety. Offer to stay nearby if that's helpful.
- **Take care of yourself.** Supporting a friend in a tough situation can be hard. Take care of your needs and ask for help too if you need it.