

# HOW DO I HELP A FRIEND?

## DO:

- Believe the person.
- Listen – get rid of all distractions.
- Be empathetic, honest, and open.
- Let them know you're always there to listen and help out.
- Explain your concerns using specific situations you have witnessed.
- Offer to get information for your friend.
- Contact the Riverview Center, Inc. or the Domestic Violence Program.
- Be patient with your friend.

## DON'T:

- Give advice.
- Be judgmental.
- Tell them what to do.
- Try to be the hero.
- Spread rumors.
- Give ultimatums.
- Blame your friend.

## IF YOUR FRIEND IS THE ABUSER:

- Take a stand. "I'm not going to sit here as your friend and not say something about it."
- Be specific about what you saw, and how it made you feel. "I didn't like it when you told your girlfriend she was stupid in front of all of us, and I can only imagine how it made her feel."
- Give your friend a reality check. These violent actions have consequences. "This is a crime, and you could be arrested."
- Urge your friend to seek help. Talk to a counselor, mentor, coach, parent, sibling, or any other trusted adult.
- Let your friend know you care about them, and you want their behavior to change.

## AND IF THE RELATIONSHIP ENDS...

It doesn't necessarily mean the violence ends.

Some recommendations to stay safe:

- Talk with your friends about what you are going through, so they can support you and look out for you.
- If you can, tell your parents what's going on, especially if your ex might come by your home.
- Talk to your school counselor. Together you might alert school security or the proper authorities, adjust your class schedule to feel safer, or come up with other ways to provide peace of mind for you while at school.
- Avoid isolated areas, and don't walk home alone.
- Stick with friends at social events.
- Call the Domestic Violence Program 24-hour hotline: 1-800-332-5899.
- Call the Riverview Center, Inc. 24-hour hotline: 1-888-557-0310.