

What to do, and not do, with Sexual Assault Survivors.

- Many acts of sexual assault go unreported. If a person is telling you about sexual assault or abuse, **DO** give them your complete attention.
- **DO** tell the survivor you believe him/her and that the rape is not his/her fault.
- **DO** tell them they are not alone, that other people of all ages and genders have been raped.
- **DO** tell the survivor that resources are available to help them, and you'll get that information to them. Then make sure you follow through.
- With men, **DO** tell him he has legal rights and sexual assault law also protects him.
- **DO** prepare yourself for helping survivors by having a variety of resources identified.
- Whenever you talk about the services you offer, **DO** make sure you say that you're a resource for ANY person experiencing sexual violence.
- **DO** make sure you take care of yourself after dealing with a rape survivor... take a walk, read a book, listen to music you like, etc. Get support if you need it.
- **DO NOT** tell the survivor you know what they are going through.
- **DO NOT** ask them any questions that suggest they are to blame such as (why didn't you run? Or: What were you doing out at that time? In that place? etc.)
- **DO NOT** question whether they are telling the truth or show doubt about their story.
- **DO NOT** touch the survivor's leg, shoulder, hand, etc. when talking with them, unless they've explicitly said it's ok.
- **DO NOT** talk about your issues, history or personality when working with a rape survivor. It's about them and what happened to them.
- **DO NOT** panic. Take a deep breath and focus on listening to the survivor.

- **DO NOT** think you're alone in helping the survivor. If you need information or support, call RVA at 312 663-6303 or the Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline at 888 293-2080.