

How to Support Someone Who Has Been Accused

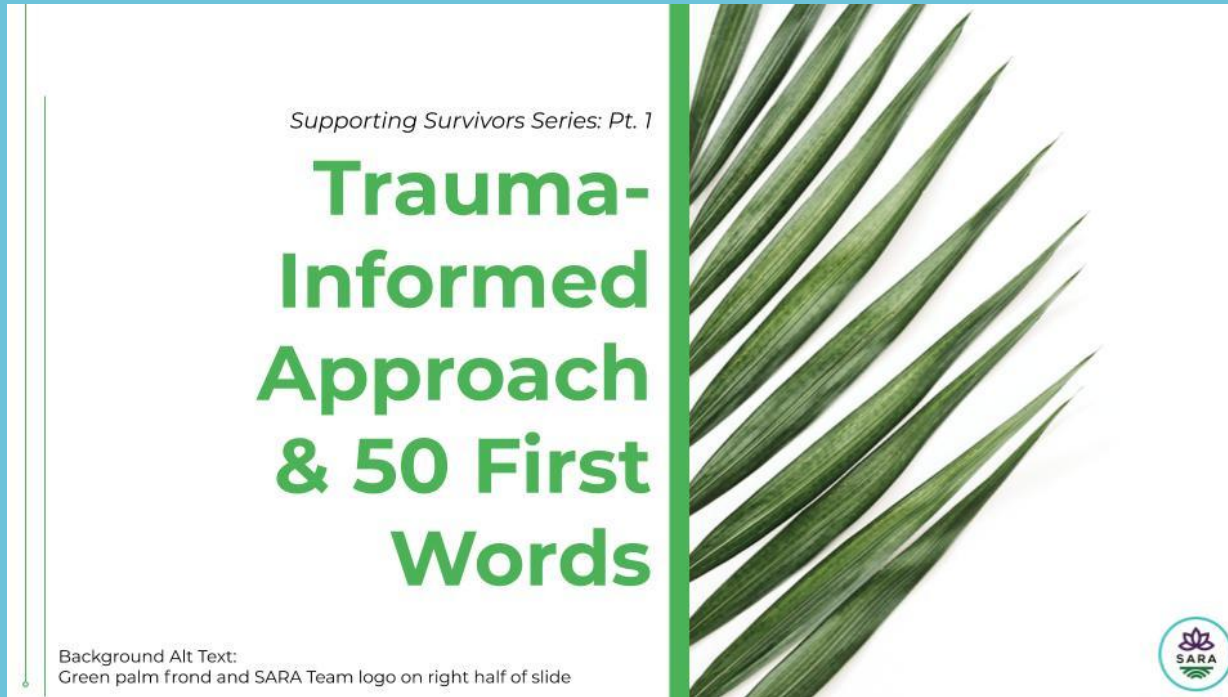
Of Sexual or Relationship Violence, Stalking,
Sexual Harassment, or Other Gender-Based
Discrimination

Focus

HEALTHY WAYS TO SUPPORT
SOMEONE AND YOURSELF



Supporting Survivors Series: Pt.1



Background Alt Text:
Green palm frond and SARA Team logo on right half of slide



sara.stanford.edu



Introductions



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01

THEIR EXPERIENCE

What they might be feeling
or experiencing



Your Friend May Be Experiencing a Wide Range of Emotional Reactions

1. **Distress or shame** at having potentially caused harm
2. **Confusion or disbelief** if they thought the experience was consensual
3. **Denial, defensiveness, or shifting blame** onto the other person as a method of self-protection

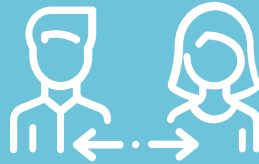


Factors to Consider:



Your Physical and Emotional Safety

If you don't feel safe, ask for help (RF, RD, CST, SARA)



Social Ostracization/ Intracultural Betrayal¹

Can impede efforts to ask for/ receive help and learn to prevent harm in the future



Your Capacity To Support

Check-in with yourself about your capacity and boundaries as a support person



Helpful Phrases When Discussing Boundaries

- Thank you for sharing this with me. **I am willing to help you with X, but I am not comfortable with Y.**
- I know it took courage to share this with me, but **I am not in a position where I can be your primary support person.**
- You've been leaning on me a lot and I want to see you get the support you need. **Can we identify some other friends or resources you might turn to?**



02

SUPPORT

Healthy ways to support



**You may be experiencing
a range of emotions such
as helplessness, anger,
confusion, concern, or
betrayal.**

What Can You Do?



Refer to Resources

CST, CAPS, SARA
Team, RFs, RDs



Get Educated

On relevant issues
through
sara.stanford.edu



Listen to Them

In a non-judgmental
manner



Familiarize Yourself With Policies

Stanford Admin Guide
1.7.1 Sexual Harassment
(covers all forms of sexual
misconduct)

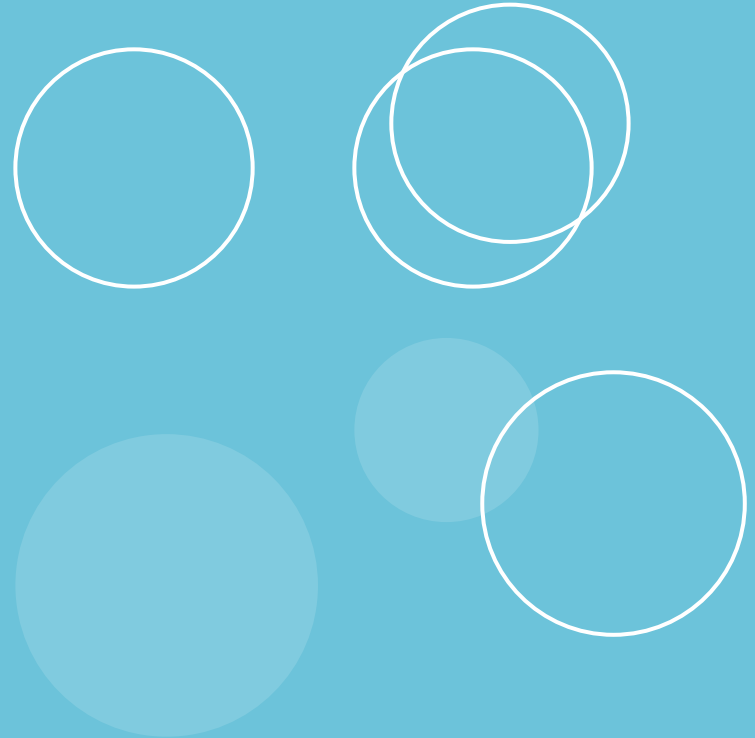


Consider Counseling

To help you process
any emotions and
trauma

HELPFUL PHRASES TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO TALK

- What would be helpful for us to talk about?
- How do you feel about that?
- Tell me more about _____
- What do you want to do?
- Thank you for sharing this with me. I can tell this is hard to talk about.
- Let's talk about how you can get the support you might need moving forward.



03

WHAT NOT TO DO

Behaviors to avoid when supporting





Navigating your response can be difficult and confusing

There are some actions that should be **avoided** when providing support

REMEMBER, BEING A FRIEND DOES NOT MEAN:

Approving all of
your friend's
actions or choices

Taking action into
your own hands
against involved
parties

Being the right
person to offer
them support

If you have reporting responsibilities,

Be sure to review your requirements and disclose your **non-confidential role** to your friend prior to any conversation that could require reporting

TITLE IX



AVOID SHARING YOUR FRIEND'S STORY WITH OTHERS

Respect the privacy and confidentiality of everyone involved

If you are struggling with the disclosure, please contact your Residential Education Deans (RDs) or confidential resources such as the Confidential Support Team (CST)



04

Advice on “Advice”

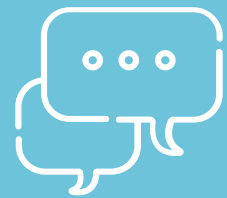
Why you shouldn't give
advice

Avoid giving advice!

Advice can be *unhelpful* and *harmful* because it gives less agency to your friend and tends to be uninformed about:

- **The entirety of the situation. Remember, you've only heard one side.**
- **Processes or changes in policies within the criminal justice or Title IX systems**
- **Your friend's background and any cultural or institutional barriers they are facing**
- **What your friend might be concerned about**





**IF ANY ADVICE IS
GIVEN, MAKE SURE
YOU KNOW WHY
YOU ARE GIVING
THE ADVICE.**

Ask Yourself:

- Are you aiming for specific outcomes?
- Are they *your* intended outcomes or *your friend's* intended outcomes?
- Could this advice cause anyone additional harm?
 - Be mindful of how your actions could impact the survivor, others involved, or the community at large



05

Self-Care

Why self-care for
supporters is important



You need to prioritize *taking care of yourself* when supporting someone who has been accused of causing harm!

SELF-CARE CONSIDERATIONS TO BE MINDFUL OF AS A SUPPORT PERSON



**Give yourself time
and space to
process and reflect**



**Know your
limitations and
share these clearly
with your friend**



**Seek support
yourself**



**Engage in self-care
and self-soothing
activities**



Conclusion

Providing support to a friend who has been accused can be a difficult process to navigate, but **getting educated is a critical step** in becoming a better support person.



To continue your learning, there are a variety of SARA videos you can watch on our website or visit **sara.stanford.edu/learn-more**.

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Confidential Support Team

CST 24/7 Hotline:
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vaden.stanford.edu/cst

Residence Education Deans

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Thank You!

