

Talking to People who Abuse their Partners

If you notice a friend, a family member, or someone you know exhibiting abusive behavior, start a conversation with them. Below are some tips.

- Choose the right time and place.
- Approach them when they are calm and offer support.
- Be clear about what you saw and what worries you.
- Remind them you care for them.
- Do not fight with them or force them into any action. This can worsen the situation for victims.
- Tell them their behaviour is their responsibility, especially if they blame the victim.
- Remind them that they can change.
- Do not judge or shame them.
- Do not overlook or minimize the behaviour. This can worsen the abuse.
- Tell them violence needs to stop.
- Remind them that violence and control risk their family safety.
- Approach the situation carefully. Prioritize the safety of the victim and children.
- Keep yourself safe. Do not get into the middle of an assault. Call the police in an emergency.

If the person denies the abuse or denies your help:

- Tell them about your concern for their safety and the safety of their partner and children.
- Do not argue with the person about their abusive behaviour. This can make the situation more dangerous.
- Call the police if someone is in danger.
- Keep communication open.
- Offer to go with the abuser if they need more information or support.
- If they have kids, tell them you are concerned about their kids' well-being. They may be willing to change to be a good parent. Child Protection staff are trained to address children's safety. If you know a child exposed to violence, you must, by law, report it.

You may worry about speaking out. Common worries/concerns include – it's none of your business, you don't know what to say, they could hurt you or your family, you could make the situation worse, etc. But doing nothing could also make things worse. You can speak to the person you are concerned about privately, politely letting them know you are worried about them, and encourage them to seek professional support as needed.