

HYDE COUNTY HOTLINE, INC.

We are committed to promoting dignity, respect and safety at home resulting in safer community.

Visit us at: Website: HydeCounty-Hotline.org Facebook: [Hyde County Hotline](https://www.facebook.com/HydeCountyHotline)

March 2020

How to Help Support a Domestic Violence Victim

Use these tips to help you support someone in this vulnerable situation.

Make Time for Them

If you decide to reach out to an abuse victim, do so during a time of calm. Getting involved when tempers are flaring can put you in danger. Also, make sure to set aside plenty of time in case the victim decides to open up. If the person decides to disclose years of pent-up fear and frustration, you will not want to end the conversation because you have another commitment.

Start a Conversation

You can bring up the subject of domestic violence by saying "I'm worried about you because" or "I'm concerned about your safety..." or "I have noticed some changes that concern me..." Maybe you've seen the person wearing clothing to cover up bruises or noticed that the person has suddenly become unusually quiet

Let the person know that you will be discreet about any information disclosed. Do not try to force the person to open up; let the conversation unfold at a comfortable pace.

You can ask clarifying questions, but mainly just let the person vent their feelings and fears. You may be the first person in which the victim has confided.

Listen Without Judgment

If the person does decide to talk, [listen to the story](#) without being judgmental, offering advice, or suggesting solutions. Chances are if you actively listen, the person will tell you exactly what they need. Just give the person the full opportunity to talk. Cont'd





Believe the Victim

Because domestic violence is [more about control than anger](#), often the victim is the only one who sees the dark side of the perpetrator. Many times, others are shocked to learn that a person they know could commit violence. Consequently, victims often feel that no one would believe them if they told people about the violence. Believe the victim's story and say so. For a victim, finally having someone who knows the truth about their struggles can bring a sense of hope and relief.

Offer the victim these assurances:

- I believe you
- This is not your fault
- You don't deserve this.

Validate the Victim's Feelings

It's not unusual for victims to express conflicting feelings about their partner and their situation. These feelings can range from:

- Guilt and anger
- Hope and despair
- Love and fear

If you want to help, it is important that you validate her feelings by letting her know that having these conflicting thoughts is normal. But it is also important that you confirm that violence is not okay, and it isn't normal to live in fear of being physically attacked. Some victims may not realize that their situation is abnormal because they have no other models for relationships and have gradually become accustomed to the cycle of violence. Tell the victim that violence and abuse aren't part of healthy relationships. Without judging, confirm to her that her situation is dangerous, and you are concerned for her safety. Cont'd

What Not to Do or Say to a Domestic Violence Victim

Although there is no right or wrong way to help a victim of domestic violence, you want to avoid doing anything that will make the situation worse. Here are some "don'ts" the experts suggest you avoid:

Don't...

- Bash the abuser. Focus on the behavior, not the personality.
- Blame the victim. That's what the abuser does.
- Underestimate the potential danger for the victim and yourself.
- Promise any help that you can't follow through with.
- Give conditional support.
- Do anything that might [provoke the abuser](#).
- Pressure the victim.
- Give up. If she is not willing to open up at first, be patient.
- Do anything to make it more difficult for the victim.

When to Call the Police

If you know that violence is actively occurring, call 9-1-1 immediately. If you hear or see physical abuse taking place, call the police. The police are the most effective way to remove the immediate danger to the victim and their children.

There are no situations in which children should be left in a violent situation. Do whatever is necessary to ensure their safety, even if it means going against the wishes of your victim friend or the wishes of the abuser.

Reasons Why Victims Stay

It can be hard to understand why someone you care about would seemingly choose to stay in an abusive or unhealthy relationship. Here are a few reasons why it's not easy to part ways.

- Fear of harm if they leave
- They still love their partner and believe they will change
- Their partner promised to change
- A strong belief that marriage is "for better or worse"
- Thinking the abuse is their fault
- Staying for the children
- Lack of self-confidence
- Fear of isolation or loneliness
- Pressure from family, community, or church
- Lack of means (job, money, transportation) to survive on their own [Source:](#)

Let the person know they are not alone and help is available.

Call

Hyde County Hotline 24-Hour Crisis Line at 252-925-2500
for immediate assistance, counseling and/or support groups.

The Pathway

*Pain and terror,
Destruction and loss,
Grief and anguish.*

*Time and courage,
Tears and ablution,
Courage and solace.*

*Forgiving, but not forgetting,
Faith and trust rebuild...
The pathway of healing.*

By Lori A. Sriver



Poetry by Domestic Violence and Rape Survivors

Hyde County Hotline

offers

Crisis Intervention, Advocacy and Prevention

Confidential Emergency Shelter

24 Hour Crisis Line 252-925-2500

PO Box 335

Engelhard, NC 27824

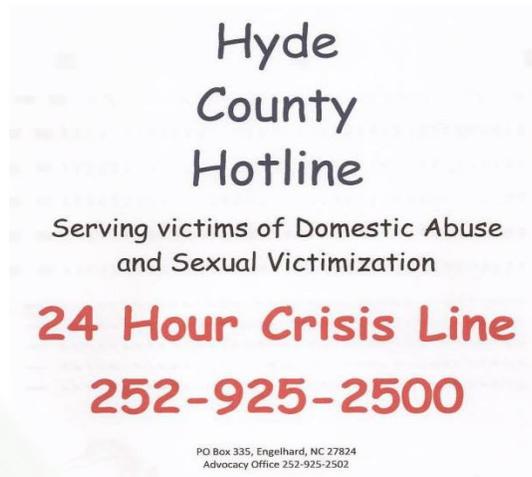
Tel: (252-)925-2502

WHAT WE DO

- Crisis Intervention
- Domestic and Sexual Advocacy
- Human Trafficking Advocacy
 - Survivor Services
 - Safe Shelter
 - Support Groups
 - Referrals
- Programs and Presentations
- Participates with DSS Work First Program
 - And Whole Lot More

OUR MISSION

The purpose of Hyde County Hotline, Inc. is to work to eliminate domestic abuse, sexual victimization and Human Trafficking and provide safe shelter in Hyde County, North Carolina through the collaborative efforts of a compassionate community. We promote dignity, respect and safety at home resulting in safer communities.



Support Hyde County Hotline.

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**Family Violence Prevention
& Services Program**

**Thank you to the family Violence Prevention Services Program
US DHHS, and NC Council for Women for financial support.**