How to Help a Friend Who is a Victim of Abuse
If a friend tells you things that sound like his or her relationship is abusive, here are some suggestions on ways to help:

~ Don’t ignore signs of abuse. Talk to your friend about your concerns.
~ Don’t pressure your friend to do what you think they should do.
~ Listen non-judgmentally and provide support.
~ Point out your friend’s strengths.
~ Many people in abusive relationships are no longer capable of seeing their own abilities and gifts.
~ Encourage your friend to confide in a counselor or victim advocate. Offer to go with your friend for professional help.
~ Never put yourself in a dangerous situation with the victim’s partner.
~ Don’t try to mediate or otherwise get involved directly.
~ Talk with a victim advocate or counselor to get advice and information on options for your friend.
~ Call the police if you witness violence.

RESOURCES

Campus Resources:
University of Florida Police Department (352) 392-1111
UF Police Department Office of Victim Services (352) 392-5648
UF Police Department’s Community Services Division Rape Aggression Defense Course (352) 392-1409
SNAP (352) 392-7627
Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575
Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (352) 392-2161 x207
Student Health Care Center (352) 392-1161
Student Legal Services (352) 392-5297

Community Resources:
Alachua County Crisis Center (352) 264-6789
Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center (352) 264-6760
Alachua County Sheriff’s Office (352) 367-4000
Gainesville Police Department (352) 334-2400
Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network (352) 377-8255
Shands at AGH Emergency Room (352) 338-2111

For more information, please contact
University of Florida Police Department
Office of Victim Services (352) 392-5648
Community Services Division (352) 392-1409
Staying Safe

If you are in a violent relationship and are considering getting out, remember that your safety is of the utmost importance. Unfortunately, the most dangerous time for people in violent relationships is after they have left and the abuser realizes s/he has lost control of his/her partner. The following are steps you can take to protect yourself:

Do not meet your partner alone or allow your partner into your car or home when you are alone.

Avoid being alone at school, work, and/or on the way to and from places when possible.

Vary your daily routines, such as when you leave for school/work, the routes you take to and from school/work, etc.

Always tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back.

Keep your cell phone charged and readily accessible.

Getting Help

Leaving a violent relationship is a difficult step to take. You do not have to take this step alone. These are some of your options for getting help:

Talk with your friends, family, faith or spiritual leader, or someone else you trust. Ask for their support as you leave the relationship.

Consult a victim advocate, domestic violence center, counselor, and/or other mental health professional to develop a safety plan and a strategy for leaving the relationship.