

HOW CAN I HELP A FRIEND WHO IS EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Here are some basic steps you can take.

- **Most importantly, make sure they are safe. This is the number one priority. Be understanding.** Explain that there are many people in this situation. Acknowledge that it takes strength to trust someone enough to talk about the abuse. Allow them time to talk, and don't push them to give too much detail if they don't want to.
- **Do not criticise the abuser** as it will put the person off telling you any more.
- **Be supportive.** Be a good listener, and encourage them to express their hurt and anger.
- **Let them make their own decisions.** If they aren't ready to leave the relationship, this is their decision.
- **Ask if they have suffered physical harm.** Offer to go with them to hospital if they need to go. If they want to report the assault to the police, help them to do this.
- **Give them information on the help which is available.** Look at the options together. Go with them to visit a solicitor if they are ready to take this step.
- **Help them work out safe plans for leaving the relationship.** Let them decide what is safe and what is not. Don't encourage them to follow any plans they are not sure about.
- **Offer to let them use your address and phone number for receiving information and messages.**
- **Above all, do not put yourself in a dangerous position.** For example, do not offer to talk to the abuser about your friend, or let the abuser see you as a threat to their relationship.
- **If you do not want to get involved** but suspect someone is suffering from Domestic Violence, you can call the charity Crimestoppers anonymously on

0800 555 111.

Just tell us what you know, not who you are

