Supporting someone who opens up about childhood abuse



Step 1: Listen without judgment

- **Affirm their trust:** Say, "Thank you for trusting me."
- **Stay calm:** Avoid reacting with shock, anger, or disbelief.
- **Give them space:** Let them share at their own pace without interrupting.



Step 2: Offer support

Question 1: "Have you ever told anyone before? Do you have support already?"
Question 2: "Would you like to talk to someone trained to support you?" *
Question 3: "Would you like to explore your legal options?" *

*For support resources and legal resources, share the "Survivor Resource" page.



Step 3: Stay connected

- **Offer follow-up:** "Would it be okay if I checked in with you tomorrow?"
- **Remember:** This might be their first time sharing their story. Your ongoing care can be a vital source of comfort and support.



Step 4: Take notes (if it is safe)

Taking notes after you've had the initial conversation can help if the survivor reports the abuse in future. Don't share these notes without their consent (unless you're legally required).

Record the date, time, location, what was shared and your response. Use the person's own words where possible.



Step 5: Self-care

Hearing about child abuse, especially unexpectedly, can be overwhelming. Being there for someone is important, but it is equally important to care for your emotional health, too. Talk to someone you trust, and seek help for yourself if you need it:

- **Lifeline** – 13 11 14
- **SANE** – 1800 187 263
- **Blue Knot Helpline** – 1300 657 380

For more information visit knowmore.org.au

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