

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN WITNESSING SEXUALLY TRANSGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

PRACTICAL TIPS

Following unwanted sexually transgressive behaviour, it is crucial to keep an eye on the victim. If a person decides to reveal their story, it is important that they receive the best possible response. The first reaction is crucial to the recovery process. The first step is to listen to the person carefully and give them space to tell their story and express their emotions. (However, if you don't immediately have the necessary time, it is better to say so and tell them that you will make time for it later).

THE FOLLOWING 5 TIPS CAN HELP YOU WITH THIS:

- 1 TAKE THE PERSON SERIOUSLY**
Take the person and their story seriously and don't trivialise it. It is important that the person feels they are being listened to and acknowledged.
- 2 POINT OUT THAT IT'S NOT THE PERSON'S FAULT**
Victims often feel partially responsible for the incident. You can help to remove some of that feeling of guilt by explicitly stating that it is not the person's fault.
- 3 IT'S GOOD THAT YOU'RE TELLING ME THIS**
It can take a long time for someone to feel they can share their experience. This takes a lot of courage. It is helpful to acknowledge this courage and thank the person for their trust.
- 4 YOU'RE NOT ALONE**
This is how you tell the person that they are not alone in the situation.
- 5 I'M GOING TO HELP YOU AS BEST I CAN**
This is how you tell the person that you will do what you can to support them as much as possible. Check with the person what steps they wish to take (contact the hotline, confidential counsellor, etc.).



By talking to victims about their experience with unwanted sexually transgressive behaviour in an understanding manner, you indirectly convey the message that they don't need to feel ashamed. At the same time, you show them the necessary respect through this approach and allow them to experience the warmth and security needed to share their story openly.