RESOURCES

CARES
non-judgmental peer listening service; available 24/7
call the CRC (x7333) & ask to speak to the CARES listener

SART
trained team of VC administrators & faculty that provide advocacy for students affected by issues of interpersonal violation;
available 24/7
call the CRC (x7333) & ask to speak to the SART volunteer

VC SECURITY
trained to respond to sexual assault; can provide walk-bys periodically to ensure students’ safety
dial x5221

SAVP COORDINATOR
(Charlotte Strauss Swanson) provides support, information, and advocacy for persons who may have experienced interpersonal violation;
available by phone at x7863 or email savp@vassar.edu

METCALF
VC’s counseling service; appointments are free & confidential
dial x5700 or stop in to make an appointment

BALDWIN
on-campus health center
dial x5800 or stop in to make an appointment

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND

Your reaction can play a pivotal role.
You can either help or hurt someone by the way you respond to them.
DO NOT:

question your friend
it is not important for you to know more than your friend wants to tell you

judge or blame your friend
victims and survivors of abuse are never at fault for what happened; even if you disapprove of your friend’s actions, that does not make them responsible for being violated

label your friend’s experience
acts of abuse take power and control away from the people who endure them; labelling exacerbates this loss of power; your goal as a supporter should be to re-empower your friend rather than define their experience

tell your friend what to do
you can offer them resources, but it is ultimately up to them what they want to do; do not pressure them to do anything they do not want to do

HOW YOU CAN HELP

when a friend who has been violated comes to you for help, it can be difficult to determine the best way to help them—here are some tips on how to effectively assist your friend

listen to your friend
first and foremost, let them speak

set aside your personal feelings
as they speak, focus on them; you may experience your own reactions and responses, but it is important to recognize that this is about them & their feelings

trust yourself
your friend has come to you for a reason; you care & want to be there for your friend

validate your friend’s feelings
they are the masters of their own experience, allow them to respond naturally and express their feelings; avoid imposing your own feelings onto your friend

be aware of your friend’s body language
sit on the same level as your friend; respect their personal space; ask what you can do to make them most comfortable

stay calm
keep the amount of stress (for both of you!) to a minimum

be an active listener
mirror your friend’s language to let them know you are listening & understanding their emotions

allow pauses in the conversation
silence is okay; your friend may need time to process their thoughts & emotions; be patient

give your friend options
let your friend know that they can get in touch with many different resources if they would like further support

go one step at a time
don’t overwhelm your friend with information; help them with specific things as they come up

don’t forget to take care of yourself
self-care! do something to relax; seek your own support through CARES if you’d like to talk