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## What do I do if a friend, relative or coworker tells me that she is in an abusive relationship?

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### Recognise, Respond, Refer

Family and friends are the most important first line of help when a person is struggling to deal with an abusive relationship. As a friend you can make an important difference to the ability and willingness of your friend to seek help. By adopting the three "R"s you can help and support a friend in need.

#### Recognise

Recognise the signs that someone may be suffering from domestic violence.

These may include:

- Regularly absent from work
- Wears inappropriate clothing
- Experiences frequent physical injuries
- Exhibits emotional distress
- Cries easily and exhibits mood swings
- Is often distracted and not attentive
- Appears obsessed with time
- Receives frequent personal phone calls
- Seems tired and sleep deprived

#### Respond

You might approach by asking questions that demonstrate your concern for their wellbeing. It could be as simple as "Is everything ok? Can I help in any way?".

Encourage, but do not pressure them to discuss the abuse. Respect their privacy and maintain confidentiality. Do not break their trust. Believe their story and listen without making judgments. Acknowledge their fears and take their concerns seriously. Let them know that they are not alone, not at fault and do not deserve to be treated in an abusive manner. Do not tell them what to do or offer to speak to their partner. Don't tell them to work harder within the relationship or stay because of the children. Give them time to make their own decisions.

#### Refer

Provide them with information on where they can access help.



INTIMO AWARE

INTIMO Aware. We believe that every woman has the right to live and work in an environment that is respectful and free from abuse, violence and fear. Everyday. Always.