

# Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Assault & Relationship Violence: What to do?

Your initial response is critical and can promote trauma recovery!

- ◆ Call **911** if assault is in progress
- ◆ Check for injuries or medical needs
- ◆ Ensure safety
- ◆ Believe the victim/survivor
- ◆ **Don't judge** victim/survivor and her/his behavior, choice, etc.
- ◆ Be supportive, empathic, and sensitive
- ◆ Expect different behavior/reactions (anger, tearful/crying, laughing, calm, collected, detached/numbness) Trauma or shock can present in many ways
- ◆ There is **no "normal response"** to violence, abuse or trauma
- ◆ Respect personal space (don't initiate touching or hugging)
- ◆ **Don't pry.** Remember you are NOT the investigator
- ◆ Avoid asking unnecessary questions. Instead ask **"What do you need?"** or **"How can I help?"**
- ◆ Contact service providers for consultation and support
- ◆ **Guide to appropriate resources**
- ◆ Follow **the university mandatory report protocols**  
[www.oie.msu.edu](http://www.oie.msu.edu)
- ◆ Respect privacy (tell only those who need to know for reporting purposes)



## Resources & Service Providers

- ◆ Emergency (assault in progress) → 911
- ◆ MSU Police Department (on-campus incidents) → (517) 355-2221  
[www.police.msu.edu](http://www.police.msu.edu)
- ◆ East Lansing Police Department (off-campus incidents) → (517) 351-4220  
[www.cityofeastlansing.com/police](http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/police)
- ◆ Sparrow Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Unit → (517) 364-3641  
[www.sparrow.org/sane](http://www.sparrow.org/sane)
- ◆ MSU Safe Place (confidential program) → (517) 355-1100  
[www.safeplace.msu.edu](http://www.safeplace.msu.edu)
- ◆ MSU Sexual Assault Program (confidential program) → (517) 355-3551  
[www.endrape.msu.edu](http://www.endrape.msu.edu)
- ◆ MSU Office of Institutional Equity → (517) 353-3922  
[www.oie.msu.edu](http://www.oie.msu.edu)
- ◆ Olin Center for Sexual Health Promotion → (517) 353-4660  
[www.olin.msu.edu/healthed](http://www.olin.msu.edu/healthed)