

Who Do I Tell? How Do I Tell?

I am so glad you have found this page. If you are here, it means you or someone you know has experienced sexual abuse or sexual violence. The first thing I want you to know before you read further is that what happened is not your fault! The other thing I want you to know is that we are not here to judge; we only want to provide you with information that will help.



I know you may have so many questions and are confused about which way to turn. Deciding to tell what happened can be one of the hardest things to do. This info sheet will help guide you through the process.

Who can I tell?

No matter who you tell, you have the right to be listened to and believed! If you are not sure who you should tell first, ask yourself these questions:

- Is there someone in your life you feel comfortable talking to?
- Is there someone you can talk to about a lot of different things?
- Can this person react calmly in stressful situations?
- Have you shared with this person before and felt understood and supported?
- Is there someone who will believe your story?

If, for some reason, you cannot think of someone safe to talk to, or you don't think anyone will believe you, please know that it is not your fault!

If there is no one you can talk to right now there are still things you can do:

- You can call a hotline (metoomvmt.org/explore-healing/hotlines-chats).
- You can contact your local rape crisis [program](#).
- You can contact [Planned Parenthood](#) or another local medical clinic, or urgent care center, your doctor, or emergency room.
- You can go to the school nurse or school health center.
- You can go to a school counselor, social worker, or school counseling center.

If I'm ready to tell what am I supposed to say?

It is so hard to decide what to say when you are ready to share your story. Below is a list of questions survivors are often asked:

- Is anything happening now? If not how long ago?
- If you don't remember how long ago using days or dates do you remember the month, the season, your age or grade in school, or any special events or holidays around the assault or abuse?
- Where did the abuse or assault take place?
- If someone has abused or assaulted you, do you know who the person is?
- If it is someone you know when is the last time you saw or spoke to that person?
- Does that person live with you, near you, or do you visit them?
- Based on what happened to you, do you think you need an exam by a doctor, need to go to the emergency room, or have a rape exam?
- Are you being threatened by someone?
- If you are being threatened do you have any saved messages, pictures, or notes (it is ok if you don't).
- Have you shared your story with anyone else?

If you can provide any of this information, it will help the person you tell know how best to help you. If you are worried you might be nervous or might forget what to say; you can write your story out on a piece of paper, type some notes into a phone or take a video of yourself talking, and share.

You don't have to share specific details of the abuse or assault if you are not ready. Don't feel bad if you don't remember all the details. Memories of abuse and assault can be hard to remember. The immediate priority is making sure you are safe and prevent anything else from happening.