

# As Residence Life Staff Working with Survivors of Sexual Assault ...

## your role is:

- to listen to the survivor.
- to believe what the survivor says.
- to refer the survivor to appropriate resources.
- to offer choices – help the survivor to make an informed decision.
- to offer emotional support in the short term.
- to assist the survivor in negotiating College procedures. (For example, if the survivor wants to pursue disciplinary action through the Dean's office, or needs an urgent housing change, or wants to request medical leave, you can help the survivor figure out who to talk to.)
- to set clear boundaries about your availability.
- to take care of yourself.
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## your role is NOT:

- to provide long-term counseling or therapy.
- to diagnose the survivor or the perpetrator – even if you're a Psych major.
- to politicize the survivor – even if you're a Women's Studies major.
- to decide whether or not what happened was “really” a sexual assault.
- to provide legal or medical advice (although you can explain the benefits of medical attention in the case of a recent assault).
- to convince the survivor to report the assault.
- to help the survivor “get over” the assault.
- to be the only source of support for the survivor.
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Colleges and Universities have different protocols for responding to survivors of sexual assault. Ask your supervisor if there's anything about your role that's different than what's outlined here. You can also use the blank bullet points to add any points that your or your supervisors come up with.