WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE?

You can help someone who is experiencing relationship violence:

- **Listen to them and believe them.**
  Recognize that disclosing to you took great strength and courage.

- **Understand what they are saying and validate their feelings and strength.**
  Devote your effort to understanding the thoughts, feelings, and experiences they have chosen to share with you.

- **Talk with them about their safety.**
  It is essential to talk about the person’s physical safety. One way to open the dialogue is to say, “I am concerned about your physical safety.”

- **Help the person understand that the violence is not their fault.**
  The person may feel guilty about being abused. You can help by saying, “It is not your fault” or “You have done nothing to deserve this type of treatment.”

- **Support the person’s right to control their own life.**
  Don’t expect the survivor of violence to follow your advice. Remember that ultimately the survivor must be making the decisions regarding their own life.

- **Provide helpful resource information.**
  Give the person numbers to local shelters and/or crisis lines. Encourage them to call.

- **Protect the survivor’s right to confidentiality.**
  Recognize the person’s choice to disclose to you. Respect their right to tell whomever they choose.

- **Contact MSU Safe Place at (517) 355-1100.**
  Even if you aren’t experiencing relationship violence personally, MSU Safe Place can be a resource for you too. Safe Place staff can provide support, options and resources and help you to figure out how you can best help.

You can help someone who is abusive:

- **Call the police if you witness an assault.**

- **Be a role model for healthy relationships**
  Treat your friends and partners with respect.

- **If you feel safe to do so, tell the person that controlling and violent behavior is not OK.**
  This behavior is a sign that the person has a problem and needs help.

- **Take a stand against abusive behavior.**
  Confront jokes about physical, sexual or emotional violence. Don’t reinforce abusive behavior by laughing, minimizing, or ignoring an act of violence or a threat.

- **Contact MSU Safe Place at (517) 355-1100 for information and referrals**