How to support someone experiencing domestic violence.

Abuse includes more than hitting: threats, control, stalking, isolation and pressure. Your support can be the safest connection a person has.

In danger now? Call 911. National Domestic Violence Hotline: **1-800-799-7233** or text **START to 88788**. **Free, confidential, 24/7.**

Know the signs

- Injuries with unlikely explanations
- A partner who controls money, phone, car or who they see
- Fear of a partner's temper
- Pulling away from friends, family or work
- Constant check-ins and anxiety about being late
- Changes in mood, sleep or confidence
- High-risk signs: threats to kill, choking, weapons, stalking, escalating violence

What to do

1. **Believe them.** "I believe you. This is not your fault." Do not question or blame.
2. **Listen without pressure.** Let them decide. Leaving can be the most dangerous time, so do not push them before they are ready.
3. **Help them plan for safety.** Think through a safe place, key documents, money, a bag, a code word with trusted people and ways to leave quickly. Call the hotline together. Advocates are free and confidential.
4. **Protect their privacy.** Phones, email and browsers can be watched. Use a safe device. On thebrproject.org the Quick exit button leaves the site at once. Do not text plans if the abuser can see the phone.
5. **Stay connected.** Keep checking in, even if they stay or go back. Isolation is part of abuse. You are a lifeline.

Helpful words

SAY "I am worried about you."

SAY "It is not your fault."

SAY "You deserve to be safe."

SAY "I am here for whatever you decide."

Please avoid

AVOID "Why don't you just leave?"

AVOID Confronting the abuser. It can raise the danger.

AVOID Giving ultimatums.

AVOID Posting about it or sharing their story.

AVOID Judging if they go back.

Numbers to share

Emergency	**911**	DV hotline	**1-800-799-7233 or text START to 88788**
Birmingham Crisis Center	**205-323-7777**	Childhelp (child abuse)	**1-800-422-4453**
Free legal help (Alabama)	**1-866-456-4995**	Human trafficking hotline	**1-888-373-7888**

Take care of yourself too. If you are worried about your own safety after helping, call the hotline for guidance. Do not confront the abuser.

Find local help in all 67 Alabama counties

Scan for shelter, food, rent and power help, recovery, veterans, legal aid and Spanish-language help, plus guides on how to help.

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Information last reviewed November 2026. This sheet is general guidance, not medical, legal or mental health advice. In an emergency, call 911. Numbers change, so confirm before you share. Free to print and share. the br project, Birmingham, Alabama.