



I said, *Thank you for trusting me with this.*

# Keep it REAL

## Four simple ways to support survivors of family violence

The Keep it REAL campaign was built off Sagesse's REAL Talk program, which teaches people how to talk about abuse.

Supporting survivors is one of the best ways to stop the cycle:



- Effective support leads to increased safety, including fewer suicide attempts and fewer repeat incidents
- It increases self-worth and improves quality of life
- It reduces distress, depression, anxiety and PTSD
- It makes people more likely to get formal help

**Friends and family want to help, but aren't sure how.  
The acronym REAL makes helping easier.**



### Recognize the signs

People experience abuse on a spectrum. Look for a pattern of behaviours that doesn't seem usual. Notice if people are acting differently or seem afraid. If something feels off, there's a chance something is going on.

*Is everything ok?  
You don't seem like yourself.*



### Empathize

Empathy means taking someone else's perspective. Try not to sugar coat things or put a silver lining around what they're going through. Validate how painful and difficult the situation is for them.

*I'm sorry you're going through this.  
That must be so difficult.  
My heart hurts for you.*



### Ask

Ask questions to get a better sense of the situation and how best to support. Be curious and seek to understand their perspective. Asking questions is about the other person's perspective, not what you think or believe.

*Do you want to get help?  
What do you need most right now?*



### Listen

When someone is sharing their experience, acknowledge the abuse and the impact it's having. Remove judgment and respect their choices and leaving or staying. Honour what the person has done to resist violence, to try and protect themselves and/or their children.

*You're not alone.  
You are strong.*