

Sexual Abuse: It is helpful to keep in mind these guidelines:

DO

- **be a good listener**
- **assist the client in getting the help she or he needs and wants, which may mean providing phone numbers, information, transportation, referrals**

DON'T

- **give advice or make decisions for the client, remembering that it is important for the person who has been sexually assaulted to make her/his decisions as a step in regaining control and overcoming feelings of helplessness**

DO

- **if the client feels guilty because she or he didn't fight back, tell her or him that fear often inhibits people, and that cooperation does not mean consent**

DON'T

- **ask why she or he didn't scream, fight, run**
- **make suggestions about what could or should have been done**

DO

- **try to minimize the number of times the client must tell the story of the assault**

DON'T

- **prevent the client from talking about the assault if she or he wants to**

DO

- **assure the client that it was not her or his fault, that no one asks to be sexually assaulted, and that no one deserves to be sexually assaulted**

DON'T

- **ask the client if she or he did anything to "lead the perpetrator on"**
- **ask the client what she or he was wearing**
- **ask the client any questions that begin with the word "why"**

DO

- **help the client to know that this experience will cause a disruption in her or his life but that recovery is possible**
- **ask permission before standing close to the client or touching her or him**

DON'T

- **stare**
- **blame the client for what happened**

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault 1-800-871-7741
(MeCASA) Connects to local area center 1-888-458-5599
(TTY)

Adult Protective Services Intake
Bureau of Elder and Adult Services 1-800-624-8404
(V/TTY)

Department of Behavioral & Developmental Services (BDS)
Region I Director 822-0270 828-0272 (TTY)
Region II Director 287-8118 287-4238 (TTY)
Region III Director 941-4360 941-4392 (TTY)

Information regarding Training for staff and/or residents is available through the numbers listed above.