

CRIME VICTIM ADVISORS

AT VERMONT CCVS

Victim/Survivor Listening Guidelines

Show support by:

- Setting your cell phone to silent and putting away food.
- Warning in advance if you need to be on your cell phone or laptop.
- Listening respectfully and attentively.
- Making eye contact and keeping body language friendly.
- When speaking, mirroring the presenter's words to describe themselves and their experience (i.e.: victim/survivor; assault/rape, mugging/theft...)
- Validating the presenter's experience and acknowledging that what happened to them was wrong.
- Believing what the victim/survivor says as their truth.
- Recognizing that questions are welcomed, but not all will be answered. This doesn't necessarily mean they are offensive, but it could mean that the presenter may want more time to process the question, or that they may feel uncomfortable answering it.

Try to avoid:

- Checking watch/clock/phone or focusing on papers.
- Offering advice or sharing your own experience.
- Minimizing the presenter's experience (especially by comparing their experience to other crimes.)
- Questioning why the presenter did or did not do something (this can imply blame.)
- Becoming defensive about an agency's role.
- Sharing details about the experiences presented with others in your personal or professional lives.