

Supporting Fellow Zips

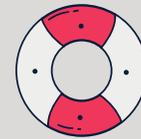
Supporting Respondents and Witnesses

Being part of the Gender-Based Misconduct or Title IX Process can be difficult for everyone, including witnesses, respondents, and complainants. If a friend or someone you know confides in you that they have been accused of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and/or sexual harassment, it may be hard to know how to respond or what to do next. It is natural for you to feel conflicted, confused, or upset regarding your response. However you may be feeling, your friend will appreciate emotional support and listening ear, which represents a simple act of compassion and care for your friend.



Actively Listen

Students who are part of the Gender-Based Misconduct or Title IX process may turn to their friends and peers for support. Provide a non-judgmental listening ear. Affirm that you will provide a compassionate ear as they attempt to work through this difficult experience. Determining if a crime or Code of Student Conduct violation took place is the responsibility of the legal system and/or campus administrators. Respect your friend's privacy and do not share their story with others. Being judgmental or bullying is not the answer to helping your friend.



Provide Resources

Encourage your friend to consult with professionals in the Dean of Students Office and in the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. These offices provide fair and equitable support to any student accused of sexual misconduct. Connecting your friend with these resources will help provide the support and information they need to better understand and work through the process ahead. Your friend may also find it helpful to process the emotions and difficulties they are experiencing. The Counseling and Testing Center can be of assistance in providing this vital support to students going through this experience.

Self-Care

Supporting a friend can be a difficult and emotional experience. Care for yourself and seek help and support when you need it. Be mindful of your own health and well-being. The Dean of Students Office can be reached at 330-972-6048 and is here to provide support to you as well.