



Vesta Resource Guide

Durham Region

Document Now: Report If She
Wants To



V E S T A

www.VestaSIT.com

Reporting is Her Decision

Reporting is her decision. You may want her to report. You may really want to see him get arrested. You may be excited to see him go to court.

But, it's up to her.

She doesn't have to report. But if she wants to, now or later, she needs a record of what happened. As her friend, the most important thing you can do **right now** is help her document her experience.



Why You Should Document

Trauma impacts our capacity to remember events, actions, and details. It can make real events feel fuzzy. She may begin to question her memory, wonder if she made it all up, or think that she over-reacted.

Being able to recall details, create timelines, and show evidence is just the kind of information the police will want to know. They will ask for specifics that are hard to remember for anyone, let alone someone dealing with trauma.

Gently encourage her to document her experience(s) now. Offer to help her by recording her stories – write them down or record them on your phone. Keep them in a safe and secure location.



Grounding Exercises

Help her get ready to document by doing some simple grounding exercises. Grounding will help her stay present in the moment and prevent her from becoming overwhelmed by her memories.

Can you count the number of books on the shelf?

Can you count the number of trees you see?

Can you feel your feet in your shoes?

Can you notice your breath?

What sounds can you hear?

Remember, that she makes the decision on when to stop documenting. Tell her she can stop anytime. Reassure her that it's normal not to remember everything. Be non-judgemental in your words and your body language.

Learn more about grounding techniques:

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/grounding-techniques#alternatives>

And try these grounding exercises:

<https://www.livingwell.org.au/well-being/mental-health/grounding-exercises/>

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How to document her experience:

1. Before you start, make sure she is in a safe place. Ask her to start wherever she wants to. Your job is to record or write whatever she is able to remember.

2. Ask her to do a mental scan of the physical environment(s) where the incidents happened. Record details like the colour of clothing or the layout of interior spaces.

3. Don't interrupt her. If she stops talking, wait 3-8 seconds before you say anything. If you want to ask questions, start with the last thing she talked about. For example, if she says "he pinned me to the door", your question could be "tell me more about being pinned to the door", "tell me what your thoughts were when that happened", or "tell me what being pinned felt like."

4. Name anyone else who was there and/or witnessed any of what happened.

5. Gather any evidence. Take screen shots of texts and messages, save emails, take photos of any physical marks on her body.

Documenting comes from the field of forensic interviewing and helps survivors recall their experiences. It's important to reassure her that it's normal to have blank spots in her memory and not remember everything in order.

The point is to record whatever she can remember in a safe place. This will be valuable information if she decides to report in the future. It's also important for her own well-being.



We're here to end GBV. Now.

We believe in the power of women to end gender-based violence and rape culture now. Not tomorrow. Not eventually. Not someday. We can end this now.

Why? Because women who have experienced GBV are strong. They will fight to prevent other women from living through what they endured.

If that woman is you, thank you.

At VESTA, we're building an online reporting platform to help women in your community document their experiences and make anonymous reports of gender-based violence to the police.

Easy, online reporting means more women documenting their experiences no matter how far away they are from local police detachment.

The more data we have, the easier it is for the service providers and police to target hotspots, identify perpetrators, and support survivors.



Ready to do something about GBV right NOW?

Here are 3 easy steps you can take to help make online reporting a reality.

#1

Share this Guide with Your Girlfriends.

Give your friends the info they need to support each other.

#2

Share this Guide on Social Media.

Find easy shareables on our Facebook and Instagram.

#3

Ask for Online Reporting.

Tell your local police you want online reporting.

For more information on gender-based violence and how you can join the fight, visit VestaSIT.com



**BE READY WHEN SHE
NEEDS YOU.**

#AskingForAFriend



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