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A Sexual Violence Survivor's Handbook

Chapter 4: How Do I Tell Family, Friends or My Employer?



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How Do I Tell My Family, Friends & Place of Employment That I Have Been a Victim of a Crime?

What Should I Say to My Employer or Family and Friends?

Your story is always up to you. You decide how much detail you want to give about your story. Just because someone asks questions doesn't mean you have to answer them.

For an Employer

You might say:

- “I would like to disclose some personal information, can you confirm it will be kept confidential? I have been sexually assaulted and may be called to testified in court during work hours. I would rather not go into details at this time. Can I count on your support?”
- Or, “I have been sexually assaulted”. . . *choose what you want to disclose* . . . “Can I count on your support and discretion?”

For Family & Friends

You may want to tell all of your family at the same time or choose the person you feel most comfortable with and tell them first to get their support. You may want to disclose everything or only some details.

You might say:

- “This is hard for me to say, and it might be difficult for you to hear, but I want you to know that I've been sexually assaulted, and I need your support.” *Tell your story*
- Or, “I don't feel comfortable telling you all the details right now, but I want you to know I've been sexually assaulted and can really use your support right now.”

Who Might You Tell if You Don't Have or Don't Want to Talk to Family or Friends?

Before disclosing a sexual assault to someone, it is important to consider if you can trust the person. Here are some ways you can tell:

- They're easy to talk to.
- You feel safe with them.
- They treat you respectfully.
- They do what they say they are going to do.
- They have helped you in the past.
- They show they care for you.

Also, think about whether this individual is likely to respond in a supportive way. Are they likely to believe you? Can they be someone who provides you with emotional support?

Do they know the perpetrator? That may impact how they respond to your disclosure.

Some Helpful Videos

- [Signal for Help](#)
- [Telling Your Partner of Your Sexual Assault](#)
- [When to Tell a New Relationship About Your Abuse, Assault](#)

