

What to do if your friend is using violence or abuse:

Rainbow communities have the power to help one another be safe, by supporting each other. If you're worried about a friend who you think is using violence and abuse in their relationship, there are lots of things you can do, while still making sure to keep yourself safe. To out violence, we need to talk to each other when we have worries.

The hardest thing for people using violence is often admitting they have a problem in the first place.

You might like to consider:

- Starting a conversation about what you're noticing – “I'm worried about how you're behaving – there has got to be a better way.”
- Challenging behaviour, not the person - “It's not ok to put your partner down like that, what's going on?”
- Naming the impacts – “I know you care about your partner, but when you yell at them they seem scared of you – that can't be what you want?”
- Not excusing violence and abuse, and letting your friend know that they can get help to change their behaviour and have violence-free relationships.
- Getting informed. Call a helpline and ask questions about what support is available for your friend. Tell them or show them what you find out, but let them make up their own mind. There are programmes and support agencies all over New Zealand.
- Asking them if there are particular times and situations which are more likely to be triggers for them. Support them make plans about how to do something different, and encourage them to get help from other people to do this too.
- Giving practical help – ask them what they need to help stop them using violence and abuse.
- Offer to go with them to find out about programmes which could help them stop using violence and abuse. Support them to attend and keep attending until they have learnt new ways to deal with their emotions and new forms of behaviour.



Remember, being a good friend means challenging behaviour that is not ok. These conversations can be uncomfortable but in the long-term, your friend will be much happier if they learn to treat partners with respect.

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