



INDEPENDENCE HOUSE, INC.

Cape Cod's leading resource, counseling and advocacy center to address and prevent domestic and sexual violence.

Promoting safe and healthy relationships

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10 WAYS TO BE SUPPORTIVE TO A HOMICIDE SURVIVOR

1. Allow survivors the time and space to heal; there is no 'typical' grief time frame.
2. Offer encouragement and support as the survivor discusses their feelings.
3. Never place the blame on the victim and/or the survivor.
4. Avoid making comments such as: "I know how you are feeling", "things will be OK" and "this is God's will".
5. It is normal for some survivors to express strong feelings; so it is important to listen without judgment.
6. Listening to the survivor is very important. Remember, though to not offer advice as you are not their therapist.
7. Offer to help the survivor around the house with house work, baby-sitting, bringing over a meal or even helping with pet care. The survivor may be low on energy from the grieving process.
8. Offer to find resources in the community that could provide additional support to the survivor. For example, Grief support groups, victim service advocates and/or legal resources.
9. Holidays and anniversaries can be quite difficult for being survivors; being available to talk during these times may be especially important. Remember, checking in with the survivor along the way is important in addition to being an initial support.
10. A note of caution: Look out for signs that the survivor may be having suicidal thoughts or contemplating suicide. Please refer the survivor to a mental health professional if needed or the suicide hotline at 1.800.273.TALK.

Independence House, Inc., offers specialized services throughout Cape Cod to non-offending survivors of homicide victims. Survivors of homicide victims include a spouse, significant other/partner, children, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles.