



Stepping In

If you have a friend who is in a relationship that includes one of the four kinds of violence, you might be wondering how or when to step in. Below are suggestions on how a good friend might intervene:

- Educate yourself with the information at www.LoveIsRespect.org so that you can more deeply understand your friend's situation and know where and how to reach out for help. As a friend, you can also reach out to Love Is Respect.
- Tell your friend you are worried about them. Be sure to let them know that you are worried because you care about them.
- Listen to your friend's feelings. Let them share what and how they want to.
- If your friend ends their relationship, let them know that you are there for them as they move through their emotions, whatever they are.
- If you are concerned that your friend is in physical danger, reach out to a trusted adult. You may decide to do this even without your friend's permission.
- If your friend wants to leave, but doesn't know how to, help them create an exit plan. They will likely need physical and emotional support during that time, and having it lined up will be helpful. If they have moved in with the other person, they may need substantially more help to move out.
- Help your friend create a safety plan. Find out how to do that here:
<https://www.loveisrespect.org/for-yourself/safety-planning/>
- If your friend ends the relationship, they may change their mind and return to it. This can be really hard to understand from the outside. Be patient and continue to be present for your friend.
- Even if your friend is not ready to end the relationship, continue to be their friend. The abuser will count on people not waiting to maintain close contact as a way of increasing the abuse.
- Do not let your own mental health suffer because of your friend's choices. You may decide to pull away from them because you need more distance to be balanced and healthy. That is okay.