

# How do I ask someone if they are safe at home?

It can be hard to know what to do if you're worried someone in your life is unsafe. Simply asking, listening to, and believing them can have a big impact.

This resource is a guide. Approach the conversation in a way that feels right.

## 1. Ask

If you are worried someone in your life is unsafe, you can ask:

- "Are you safe at home?" or
- "I'm worried about you. Is everything okay?" or
- "Are things okay in your relationship?".

If you're thinking of asking someone if they are safe, there are some things to remember:

- Ask the question, this can make a real difference
- Wait for a moment alone together
- Be patient, understanding and kind
- Don't make them talk if they're not ready to
- Try to talk to them in person
- Avoid asking over text or email, as this may not be safe
- Walking or sitting side by side can make talking easier.

**If someone is in immediate danger ask if they want you to call triple zero (000)**

## 2. Listen

Once you have asked the question, listen. They may respond by saying:

- "I'm fine" or
- "I don't want to talk about it" or
- "No, I'm not safe" or "I'm scared".

However they choose to respond, don't interrupt, and don't judge.

### 3. Believe

It's critical that you believe what they are telling you. You don't need to be an expert. You can connect them with support.

**If they tell you "I'm fine",** you could say "Okay. You can talk to me if anything changes". Remember, it's okay to ask again later, if you're still worried.

**If they say, "I don't want to talk about it" you could say:**

- "That's okay, I'm here if you change your mind" or
- "Is there anything I can do to support you?" or
- "You can talk to me anytime".

**If they don't want to talk about it:**

- Letting them know you are there for them can be really helpful
- They may not be ready to talk about it yet
- They may prefer to talk to someone else
- Offer to help them find a support service
- Respect their choices
- It's okay to ask again later, if you're still worried.

**If they respond with "No, I'm not safe" or "I'm scared" you could say:**

- "Do you feel comfortable to talk about it?" or
- "Are you in danger right now?" or
- "I believe you. Thank you for trusting me".

You can also say:

- "That behaviour is not okay" and
- "You don't deserve to be treated that way" and
- "Let's find some information and look at your options".

**If someone tells you they are not safe, it's important to remember the following:**

- Believe what they are telling you
- Abuse is never their fault

- Tell them they have choices and offer to help them figure out what to do next
- They might not be ready to take action, don't pressure them
- Don't judge if they decide to stay, it can take time to leave safely
- Help them find and connect with support services safely, such as offering your phone to make a call.

## Accessing support

**If someone is in immediate danger ask if they want you to call triple zero (000).**

**Learn more** about the signs of family violence and what to do if you are worried about someone you know.

There are **support services** available, find one in your area.

Supporting someone who is being abused can be difficult. Remember to look after yourself and get help if you need it.

Visit [areyousafeathome.org.au](http://areyousafeathome.org.au) or call 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732).