



What Happens When You Call the Line?

created December 2018

SACHA 24 Hour Support Line offers confidential and anonymous 24-hour non-judgmental telephone support. The Support Line is for adults, 16 years of age or older, who have experienced sexual violence at any point in their lives and to folks supporting survivors.

But what actually happens when you call the line?

How to call...

- If you can, find a private place to make a call.
- Dial 905.525.4162.
- An operator will answer and say, “Answering for SACHA, Sexual Assault Centre”. This isn’t a SACHA worker. They are there to connect you to a SACHA support worker, and will ask you for a name and a phone number.
- When the worker asks for a name you can give them your given name, one that you have made up, or even say “I’d rather not”.
- When the worker asks you for a phone number you can either give your real phone number so you can get a call back from a volunteer or say “I’d rather not”. If you have a block on your phone, please tell the operator about it.
- A trained SACHA volunteer will call you back within 10 minutes or as soon as she finishes any previous calls. She will introduce herself with her first name and let you know she is from SACHA. She will offer to explain our confidentiality policy.
- You can talk to her.
- Busy signal – Getting a busy signal when you call the line is rare, but can happen when call volume is high. If you get a busy signal please call back! You deserve to talk to someone.



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What to talk about?

- You can talk about anything to do with sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment...
- You can talk about how sexual violence has impacted your life.
- You can talk about the ways that you cope with your experience of sexual assault or brainstorm new coping strategies with the volunteer.
- You can talk about consent, boundaries, myths and lies that we're taught about sexual assault.
- You can talk about how to help a friend or family member who has been assaulted.
- You can talk about resources in our community for survivors.
- If you have been sexually assaulted, abused or harassed, you choose how much of your story you want to tell – none at all, just one part or more.
- You can talk about reporting to the police or going to the hospital if you want to.
- You can call if you have an icky feeling that something might have happened.
- You can talk about something that just happened or something from the past – even as far as childhood.
- You can talk about something you heard or read that upset you.
- You can talk about other forms of violence you've experienced and how it relates to sexual violence – racism, homophobia, ageism, ableism, domestic violence, poverty and many other forms of violence.
- You can express your feelings – talk, laugh, cry, rage.
- You can be silent together if that is what you need.
- It's important to know that whatever you talk about you will be listened to and believed.



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What the Support Line Volunteer can do:

- Listen and believe you.
- Let you know that it is not your fault.
- Brainstorm ideas for getting through tough times.
- Give you information about your rights.
- Respond knowledgeably to any concerns you may have about your experience and your ways of coping during and after the event(s).
- Honour and respect your decisions.
- Give you information about the process to seek medical or legal assistance.
- Suggest ways to get more help – resources.
- Keep what you say confidential – ask the volunteer if you have any concerns about confidentiality.