

# ADVICE TO PARTNERS AND FRIENDS OF SURVIVORS OF CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS

## HOW TO HELP THOSE YOU CARE ABOUT

1. Encourage them to talk to you about how they are feeling about the incident.
2. Tell them how you feel; that you are sorry they have been hurt, etc.
3. It is okay to remind them that their confusing feelings are normal.
4. Do not attempt to reassure them that everything is okay. **IT IS NOT!**
5. Do not attempt to impose your explanation on why this has happened to them.
6. Do not tell them that you know how they feel. **YOU DON'T!** Often such attempts are really aimed at relieving your own anxiety about how you feel about the incident.
7. **BE WILLING TO SAY NOTHING. JUST BEING THERE IS OFTEN THE BIGGEST HELP.**
8. **DO NOT** be afraid to encourage them to get post-trauma counseling from a specially trained mental health professional.
9. Do not be afraid to ask how someone is doing. This provides the opportunity for them to tell you as much or as little as needed.
10. Remember that as a person who cares for the survivor of a traumatic event, you are a CO-SURVIVOR. You must also expect that you will experience post-trauma consequences.