

WHAT IS AN ADVOCATE?

An advocate is a person who talks with you and gives you options so that you can make the best choices. Advocates are trained crisis counselors who are knowledgeable about health care, victims' rights, the criminal justice system, and the resources available. They can answer questions about your options and how things work. They also understand that you may not want to make a decision right now. Advocates will not pressure you towards one choice or another. You will make your own decisions.

ADVOCATES WANT TO HELP.

People become advocates because they want to help other people. Oftentimes, a person who experiences a crisis can use the help of someone who is caring, compassionate and knowledgeable. An advocate can be that "someone."

YOU WILL MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS.

Any decision you make now belongs to you. Your advocate will not pressure you to choose one option over another. Advocates will give you your options and help you to sort through them, but they will not make decisions for you. For example, if you decide that you do not want to make a police report, the advocate will support that decision. If you change your mind and choose to make a police report in the future, the advocate will support you, help you to make the necessary contacts, and be present with you when you make the report, if you so choose.

IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT.

The advocate knows that a rape, relationship violence and stalking are never the fault of the victim. Even if you place some of the blame on yourself right now, the advocate will never say or believe that it was your fault. Never.

ANY INFORMATION YOU SHARE WITH AN ADVOCATE IS CONFIDENTIAL.

Confidentiality is the foundation of our work. We will not discuss any information you give us with anyone, unless you ask us to do so and give us permission in writing. Even if someone says that s/he just wants to know how you are doing, we tell him/her that we cannot affirm or deny whether you are working with us. Simply put - we will not tell anyone - not the police, not your family, not your friends - that you are working with us, unless you ask us to.

Limits: For your protection and the protection of others, the law places limits on confidentiality. If you state that you seriously intend to harm yourself or another person, we are mandated by law to report such intent. We also must report if: There is suspicion of child or elder abuse or neglect; you are pregnant and using illegal drugs; and/or if you were abused by a psychologist or psychiatrist.

ADVOCATES WILL BELIEVE YOU

Unlike the police or medical professionals, it is NOT the role of the advocate to be "unbiased." *It is the advocate's job to believe you*, to support you, and to help you get connected to the resources that you need.

AN ADVOCATE IS DIFFERENT THAN A FRIEND.

Lots of people need a friend when they are hurting, and friends can assist in a person's journey towards recovery. However, an advocate is different than a friend in many ways. Sometimes people turn to a friend for advice, but an advocate will never tell you what to do. Instead, the advocate will help you to understand the choices that you have, and what the consequences of those choices may be. Some friendships last a lifetime, but an advocate's job is time-limited. It is the advocate's role to support you through your immediate crisis and to make sure that you're connected with the resources you need. The advocate's knowledge of resources will help you to make the best choice for yourself.

ADVOCATES WILL NEVER JUDGE YOU OR YOUR DECISIONS.

The right decision for one person may not be the right decision for the next. An advocate understands that there are as many "right" ways to do things as there are people. Even if you feel you have made some "bad" decisions, you can trust the advocate not to blame or judge you. Even if you decide you don't want to "do anything" now, the advocate will support that decision. No matter what you've done or decide to do in the future, the advocate will respect you and the decisions you make.

**A SPECIAL NOTE TO
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
STUDENTS.**

Aurora Center advocates are located at the University of Minnesota. Advocates are able to work with you to arrange safe on-campus housing, work with your professors if you are having challenges in school due to your victimization, and give you information regarding your rights to pursue university action against your perpetrator if s/he is a University of Minnesota Student. Advocates also have information on resources offered by the University of Minnesota for its students and employees, including support groups and on-campus counseling.

***The Aurora Center
for Advocacy & Education***

University of Minnesota
24 Hour Crisis Line: 612-626-9111
Business Line: 612-626-2929
TTY Line: 612-626-4279
407 Boynton Health Services
www.umn.edu/aurora.htm

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

SEXUAL ASSAULT RECOVERY :

Rape and Sexual Abuse Center

Minneapolis: 612-825-4357

Sexual Violence Center

Minneapolis: 612-871-5111

Phyllis Wheatley Community Center

North Minneapolis: 612-374-4342

**FOR HELP WITH AN UNHEALTHY OR
ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP:**

Tubman Family Alliance

Minneapolis: 612-825-0000

Lake Elmo: 651-770-0777

Domestic Abuse Project:

Minneapolis: 612-673-3526

Project Peace

Brooklyn Center: 763-536-1850

Sojourner Project

Hopkins: 952-933-7422

Home Free

Brooklyn Park: 763-559-4945

Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

St. Paul: 651-645-2824

FOR HELP WITH OTHER PERSONAL ISSUES

Chrysalis Center for Women

Minneapolis: 612-871-0118

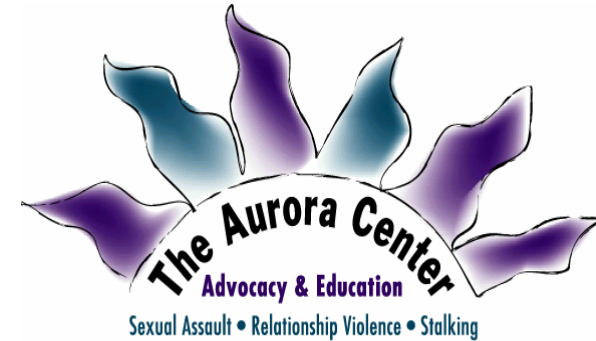
Outfront MN (GLBT Resource)

Minneapolis: 822-0127

Crisis Connection

(24 hour): 612-379-6363

ADVOCATES: HOW THEY CAN HELP



*Information about what
advocates do and
how they can help you to
make the decisions
that are best for you*