

- Knowing when and how to refer someone in need or in trouble. One never knows when you may be encountered by one who is experiencing difficulties that is putting themselves or others at risk. No one is totally able to personally help or provide the correct assistance. Being able to recognize one needs assistance and know how to help and who will be able to assist the person is valuable.

Referring someone in need or trouble to the right resources is crucial. Here are some guidelines to help you recognize when and how to make a referral:

When to Refer:

1. **Immediate Danger:** If someone is in immediate danger or poses a threat to themselves or others, call emergency services right away.
2. **Mental Health Concerns:** If someone talks about feeling hopeless, withdrawn, or displays signs of severe anxiety or depression, they may need professional help.
3. **Substance Abuse:** Notice if someone is struggling with substance abuse. Signs may include drastic behavior changes, neglecting responsibilities, or physical symptoms.
4. **Domestic Abuse:** If someone confides in you about being in an abusive relationship, it's important to connect them with support services.
5. **Financial or Housing Instability:** When someone is facing severe financial problems or homelessness, they may need social services or community aid.

How to Refer:

1. **Listen and Show Empathy:** Listen without judgment and express your concern. Let them know you care.
2. **Be Direct:** Gently suggest that they might benefit from talking to a professional. Explain how a specialist can provide the help they need.
3. **Provide Information:** Give them contact details for relevant services, like hotlines, support groups, or local clinics.
4. **Offer Assistance:** If possible, offer to help them make the call or go with them to their appointment.
5. **Follow-Up:** Check in with them later to see how they're doing and if they were able to get help.

Resources:

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (USA):** 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)

- **SAMHSA’s National Helpline (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration):** 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357)
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233)
- **Homeless Shelter Directory:** A website providing listings of homeless shelters
- **Service organizations** across the U.S. VFW, Am Legion, Amvets, DAV, YMCA, Salvation Army, Red Cross,
- **Spiritual needs:**
- Religions – who to contact for different religions in your area
 - Visit with various church leaders
 - Attend local Ministers’ Meetings
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Offering support and understanding can make a huge difference in someone's life. It's not about having all the answers but about guiding them to those who do.

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