

De-Escalation Communication

Helpful versus unhelpful phrases

Using the right words can help someone feel heard and calm, while using the wrong words can increase distress. Remember to use simple language and speak with empathy, care, and positivity.

Helpful Phrases



I'm sorry that you've had...

Tell me about...

Please help me understand how this makes you feel...

Please let me know...

Is there anything I can do...

Unhelpful Phrases

- "I don't see why this is a big deal."
- "Don't you remember that..."
- Medical jargon and acronyms.
- "Calm down" or "Relax."
- "I understand."
- "I know how you feel."

This microlearning is part of the Provincial Violence Prevention Curriculum eLearning course developed by SWITCH BC, with union and employer partners.

Learn more at switchbc.ca/programs/violence-prevention

