

Part. III

As a Responsible Employee, what should I say to a student who reports to me?

Sample: Conversation with Student Who Makes A Disclosure

What if someone is about to disclose, but I have another obligation to tend to?

Be honest with the person. If you get the sense that someone is about to disclose to you and you have an obligation to be somewhere else or you are otherwise unable to provide the person with your full attention or have an impending deadline, let the student know. It is very obvious if you are distracted, watching the clock, fidgeting, etc. and while you may be well-intentioned, you are doing far more damage by not being present at a time they need you most. You can say something like:



I get the sense that you are about to share something very important with me. I want to be fully present for you, and in this moment I know I cannot give you that as I need to (pick my child up from school, give an exam, make it to my next meeting, etc.). Is there a time later today that we could talk? And if not, can I connect you with someone on campus whom you can speak with more immediately?"

They may say they would rather wait and talk to you when you are available over the next couple of days. You want to honor their wishes, and when sexual violence is involved, time can be a factor, particularly for medical services. If possible, it's important to do your best to speak with them that same day, or at minimum, let them know of their options, including the right to receive a forensic exam.

—Adapted from Culture of Respect