

# **USEFUL INFORMATION FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHEN INTERACTING WITH CRIME VICTIMS**

If you are a victim of a crime or violence and will be involved in a criminal process as a result, you may need to prepare yourself accordingly. Legal proceedings can be stressful and challenging. This document provides some advice to help you get ready.

## **TIPS FOR INTERACTING WITH ADULTS**

- First and foremost, remember that certain psychological, physical, and behavioural reactions (such as fear, anxiety, body aches, changes in eating patterns, difficulties in concentration, and communication issues) are to be expected given the experienced situation. When interacting with the victim, accept and normalize these reactions.
- Encourage the expression of emotions and feelings.
- Stay available to listen and avoid judgments.
- Respect the person's space and maintain regular contact to check on their well-being and needs.
- Be a positive reinforcement: praise the person for their courage and progress in coping.

## **TIPS FOR INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Be patient with their reactions and their recovery time.
- Be flexible in response to their needs.
- Assist the child or young person in maintaining a routine and healthy habits.
- Establish consistent rules - consistency is crucial in creating a sense of security.
- Stay attentive and sensitive to potential negative and retraumatizing stimuli - whether in conversations, exposure to events or situations, or through television or social media content.
- Provide support networks with other adults and access to specialized support services.

## SUPPORT AVAILABLE FROM APAV

The Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV) provides specialized services for various violent situations, offering support to all individuals affected by a crime. At APAV, you can find practical, emotional, psychological, legal, and social support, all of which is free and confidential, for as long as you need it – whether it's a one-time intervention or long-term assistance.

The support provided by APAV may include psychological intervention, clarification of legal issues, assistance with formulating requests or other documents, facilitation of communication with other entities and services, such as judicial authorities or embassies, as well as accompanying victims during the legal proceedings they need to participate in.

To access this support, you can call the Victim Support Helpline toll-free at 116 006 or visit one of APAV's local support services, whose contact information and locations can be found online: [apav.pt/contactos](http://apav.pt/contactos).

