

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS 24-HOUR EMERGENCY HOT-LINE

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) initiated a 24-hour emergency hot-line for anyone needing immediate response to a backlash incident, hate crime or bias incidents within the state of Michigan. This hot-line is intended to accommodate those individuals who may not feel comfortable contacting law enforcement for one reason or another.

MDCR encourages people to call "911," or local law enforcement in life threatening situations.

MDCR EMERGENCY HOT-LINE NUMBER

1- 800 - 482-3604

INSTRUCTIONS TO CALLERS

Calls are limited to emergency matters only. Routine calls or requests for such information as, forms, telephone numbers, hours of operation, location of office, will be asked to call back during normal business hours.

Callers will be asked –

- *Is this an emergency?*
- *What is your name?*
- *What is your telephone number?*

Someone from the MDCR's Crisis Response Team will contact caller at the number provided shortly.

* From 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, 1-800-482-3604 is also the statewide toll free number to contact MDCR. Callers during business hours will be directed to the nearest MDCR office.

October 27, 2005

HOW TO HELP THOSE YOU CARE ABOUT

- *Encourage the victim to talk to you about how he or she is feeling.*
- *Do not assume that men can handle this kind of trauma better than women.*
- *Tell the victim how you feel, that you are sorry they have been hurt.*
- *Remind the individual that his or her confusing emotions are normal.*
- *Do not attempt to impose your explanation on why this event has occurred.*
- *Do not attempt to reassure the victim that everything will be all right. Everything is not all right.*
- *Do not tell the victim that you know how she or he feels. You do not. Often such attempts are really aimed at relieving your own anxiety about how you feel about what has happened.*
- *Be willing to say nothing. Just being there may be enough.*
- *Tell your friends or family how you are feeling. Even if you are not a victim of a bias crime/incident, remember that people who care about victims often become vicarious victims.*
- *Report to friends or family any unusual physical symptoms that might be interfering with your daily routine.*
- *Do not be afraid to encourage an individual to ask for help, including counseling, if necessary. Do not be afraid to ask for help yourself, even if you are not directly involved.*
- *Try not to project your own feelings on those around you. Each individual experiences victimization and its consequences differently. Be understanding of the pace at which a person heals.*
- *Do not be afraid to ask how someone is doing. Do not ask for details of the event. If the victim wants to talk, listen. The best thing to do is to let the individual know that you are there and that you care. Trying to make things better is not necessary.*