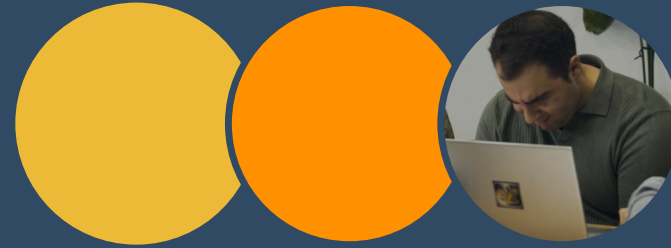


# Working together to prevent everyday harm

## Information Guide



# Introduction



Everyone experiences everyday harm. People with disability experience everyday harm often. Examples of everyday harm include ignoring another person, talking badly about them behind their back, or not acting on their choices and preferences. There are many other examples. Sometimes people think everyday harm is not worth mentioning because it happens often. But everyday harm is serious. **We can take steps to prevent and address it.**

# What is everyday harm?

**Everyday harm is the negative impact on a person when someone does or does not do something.**

These things happen in ordinary daily life. The everyday actions and inactions that cause everyday harm can be intentional or unintentional. Even when people do not mean to cause this harm, it still affects people.

Everyday harm can hurt someone's:

- emotions
- mental health
- physical health
- growth and learning
- relationships
- reputation

# Why does everyday harm matter?



**Everyday harm might seem small, but it matters because the damage to the person builds up.**

It does not have to be this way. By learning about everyday harm, we can prevent and address it.

# What steps can we take to prevent and address everyday harm?

We can take steps to prevent and address everyday harm. We can:

- Notice harm
- Acknowledge harm
- Respond to harm
- Repair harm
- Make positive changes to try to prevent harm from happening again.



# Notice everyday harm

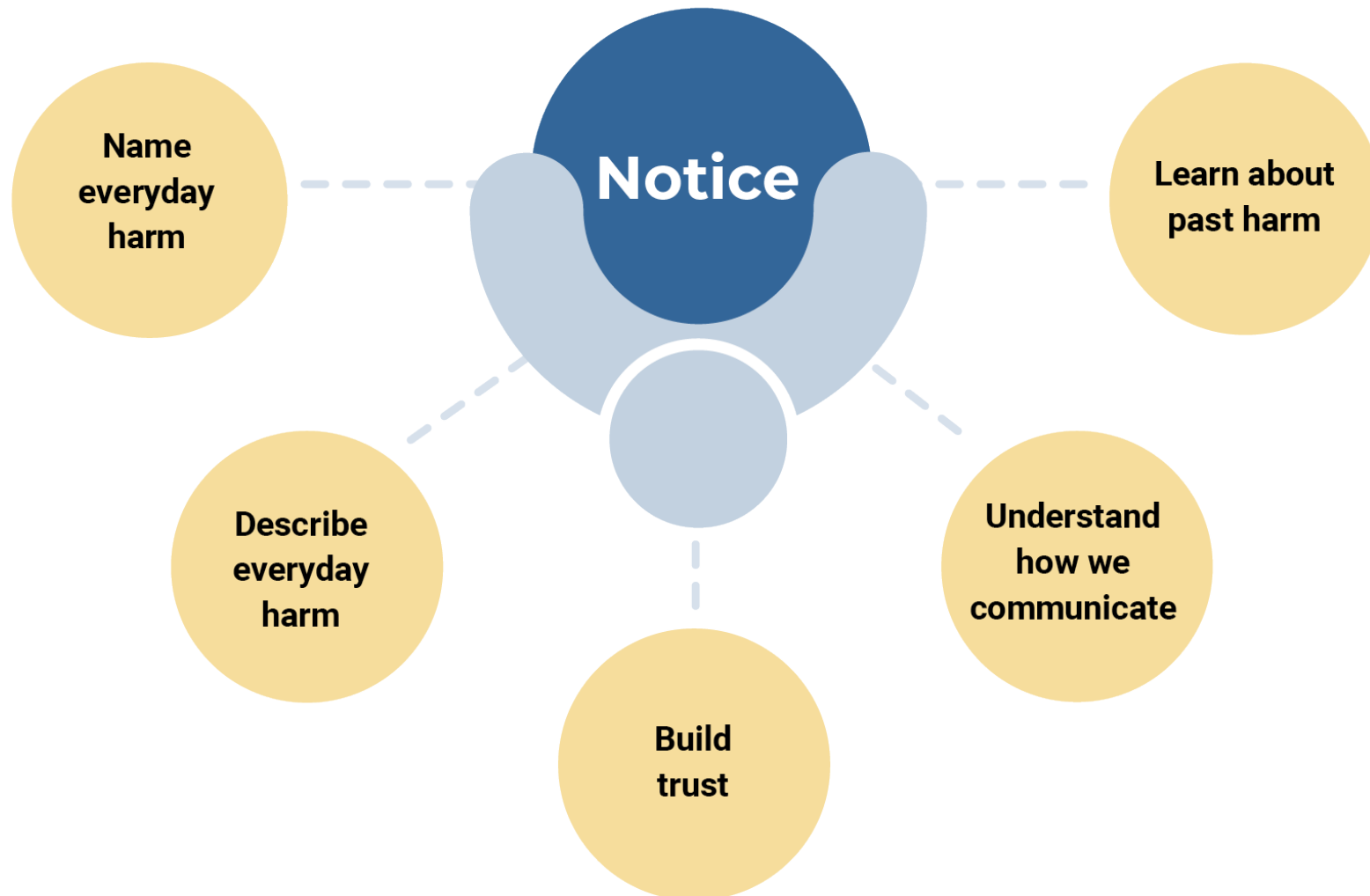
## Noticing everyday harm helps us address it.

We can do things to help us notice harm. Learning to name everyday harm helps us notice it. Naming means having ways to point out everyday harm when we feel it happening in our head, heart or gut.

We can learn to name everyday harm by communicating about it together or by watching videos. We can practise naming and describing everyday harm.

We can take time to develop trust with the people we interact with. This trust helps us sense when something is not right. We can notice when a place does not have a good vibe. We can learn about each other's communication preferences. This helps us understand how people express when they are harmed. We can learn about each other's past experiences of harm to help us notice when it happens again. We can notice where and when people feel comfortable, or if they do not.

# Notice everyday harm



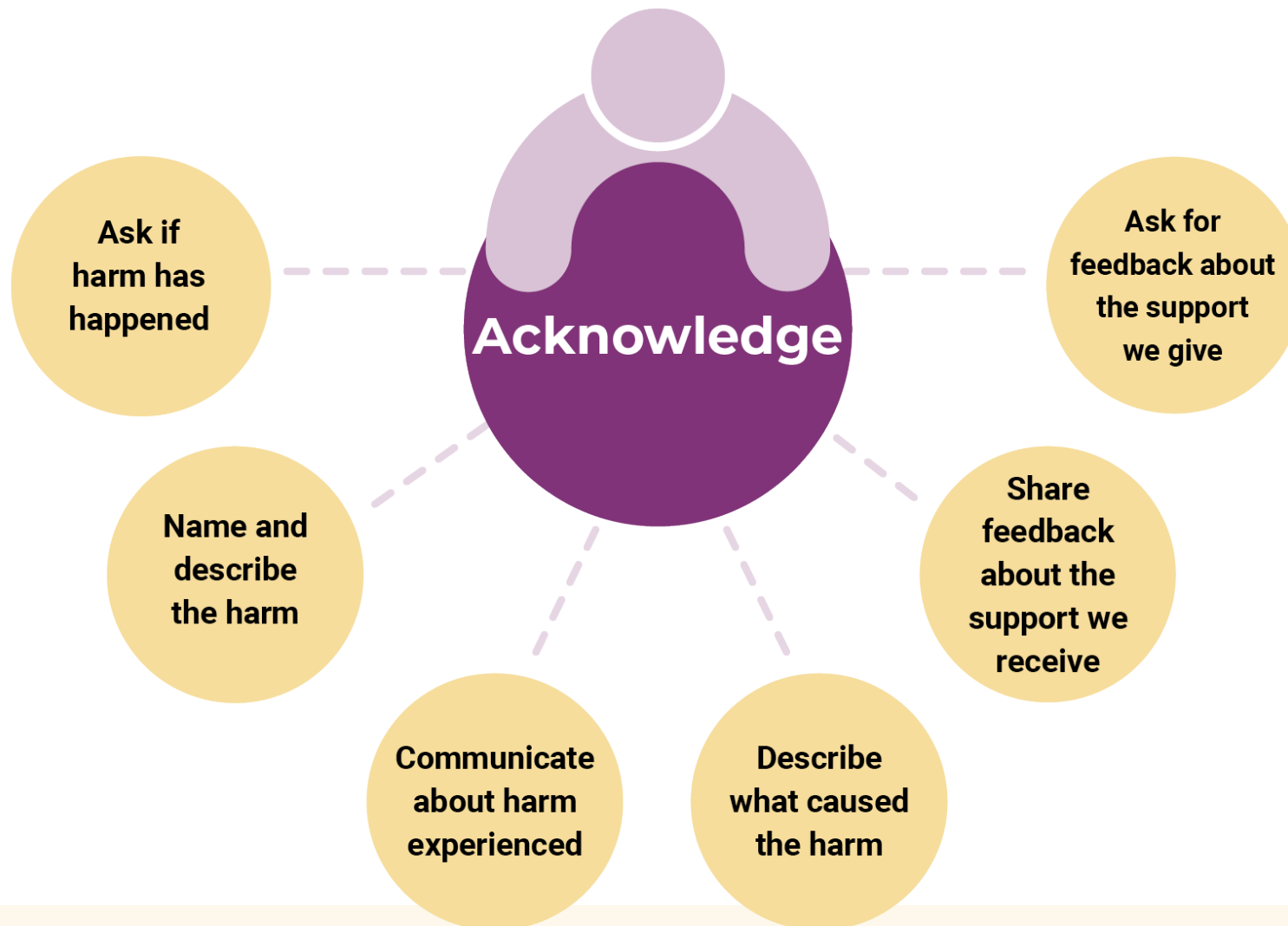
# Acknowledge everyday harm

## Sometimes we think everyday harm has happened.

We have lots of ways to check in with each other or someone we trust. We can ask them if harm has happened. We can name and describe the harm. We can communicate about harm we experienced. We can describe what caused the harm.

We can make time for safe and easy ways to share experiences about the support we receive. This makes it easier if we do need to talk about harm. When are used to giving feedback and getting feedback it is not so hard to talk about something more difficult.

# Acknowledge everyday harm



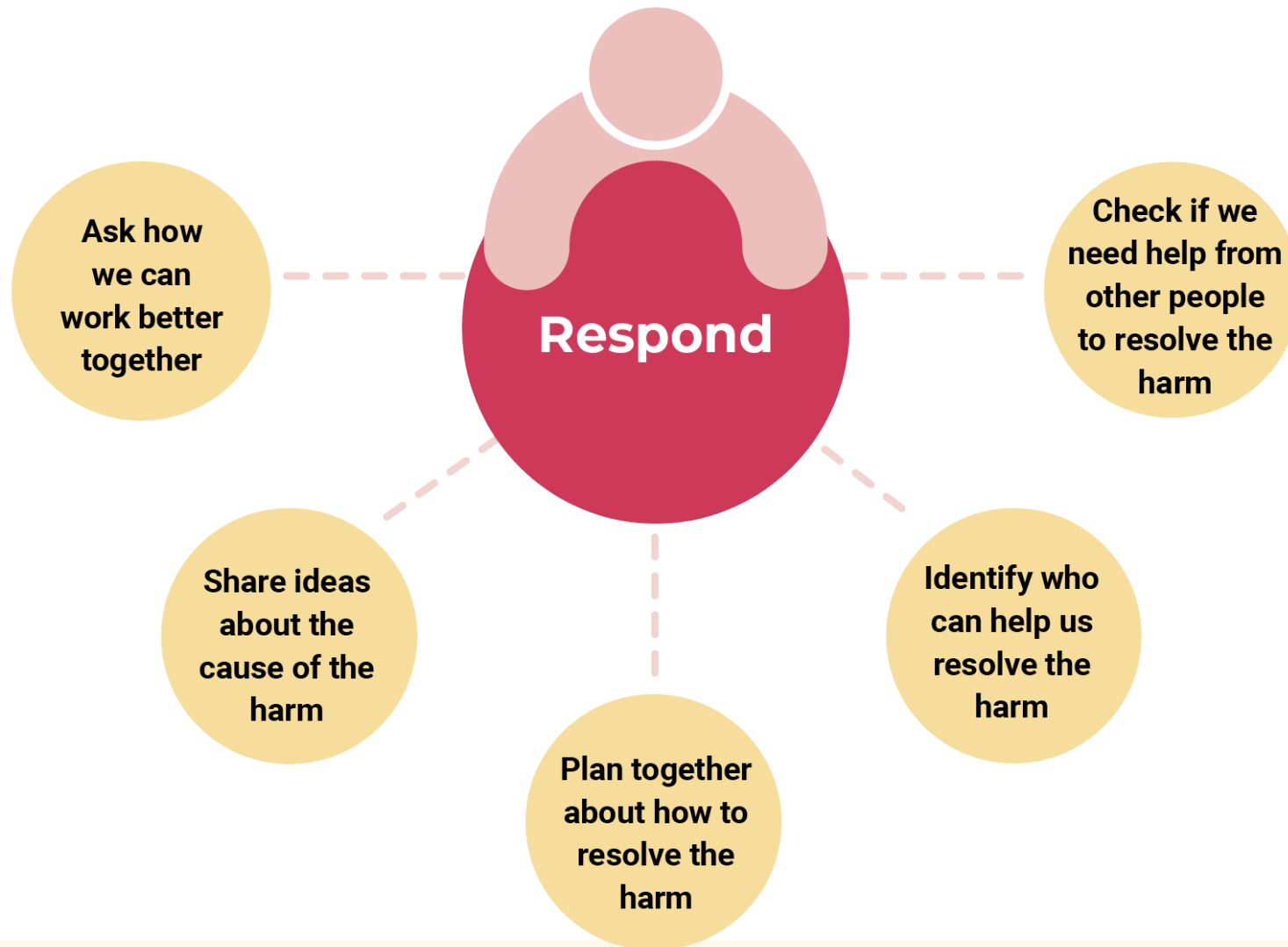
# Respond to everyday harm

## We can share and solve the problem together to respond to harm.

We can ask how we can work better together. We can think about what is working well and what is not working well. We can share ideas about the cause of the harm, our own actions, other people's actions, and the situation where the harm occurred.

We can plan together about how to resolve the harmful situation. We can identify who can help us resolve the harm. We can check if we need help from other people to resolve the harm. This might be a manager, family member, friend, a professional (e.g. psychologist), or another support person.

# Respond to everyday harm



# Repair everyday harm

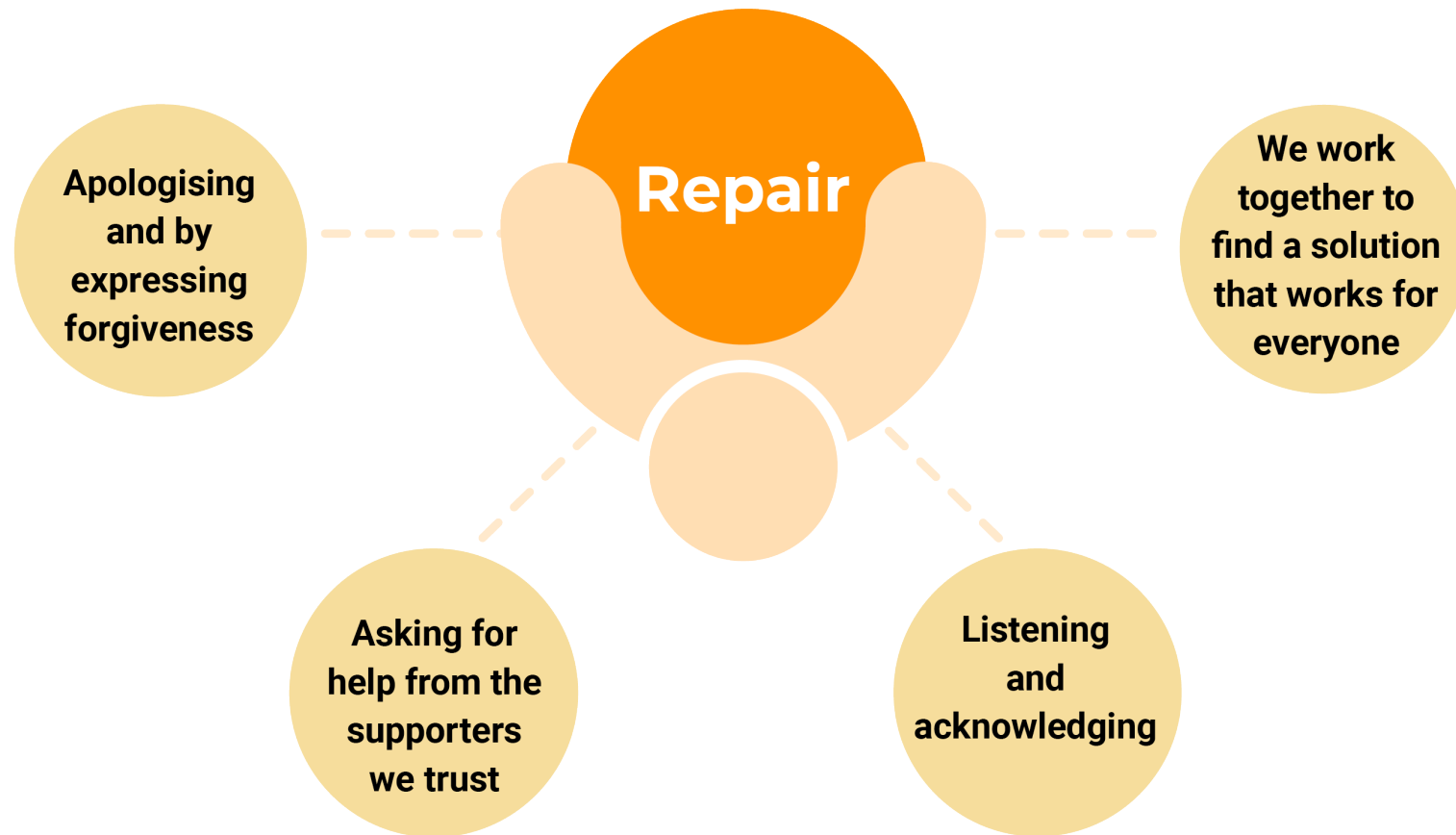
**After we respond to harm, we often need to repair it. Sometimes we can repair harm together, and sometimes we need help from other people.**

We can repair harm together by apologising and by expressing forgiveness. If we need help to repair harm, we can ask for help from our supporters we trust. They might be

a support service, professional, friends or family. They can have processes to help us repair harm.

When we repair harm, our experiences are listened to and acknowledged. Everybody gets to communicate their experiences and make decisions about solutions. We work together to find a solution that everybody is happy with.

# Repair everyday harm

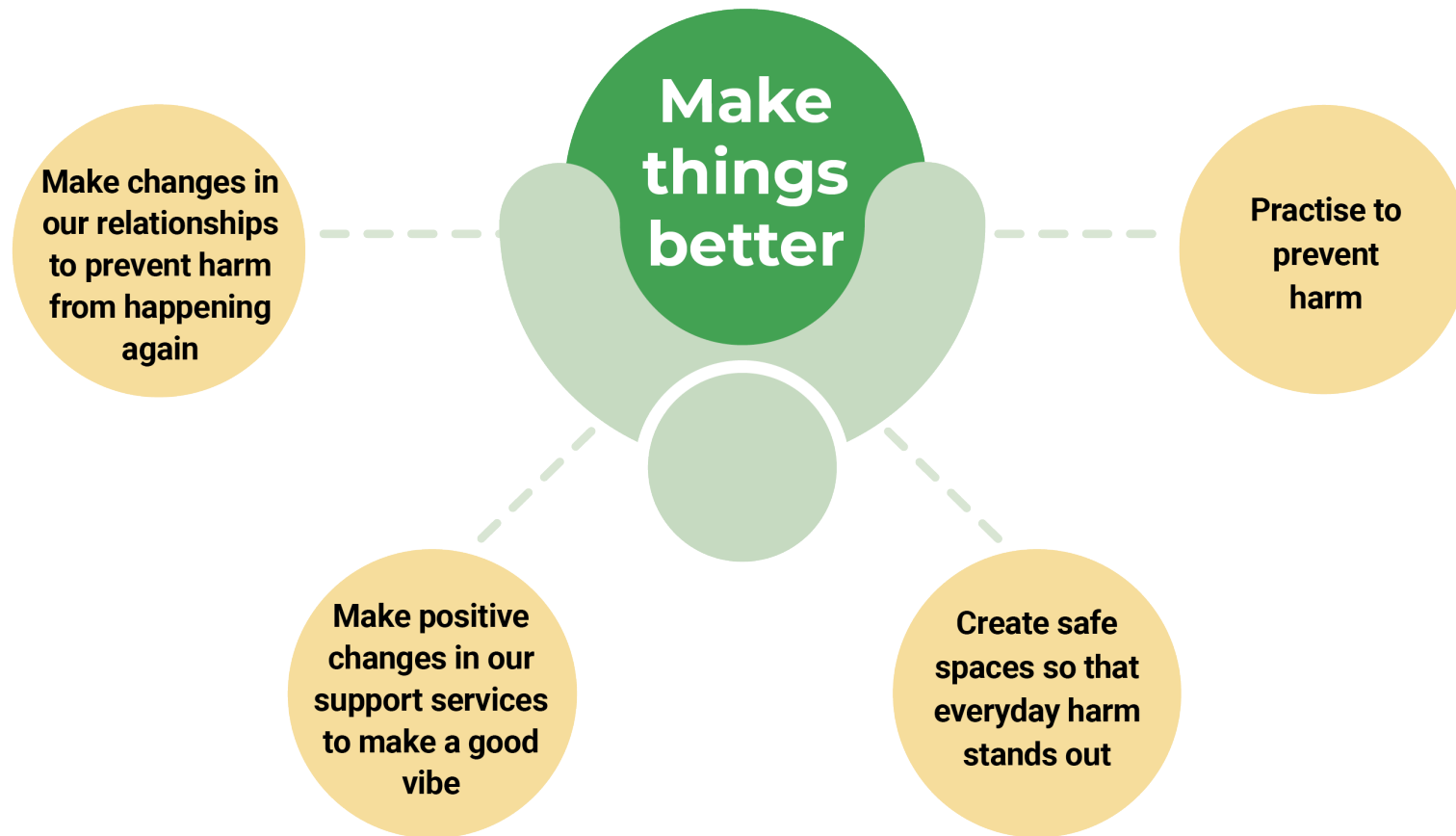


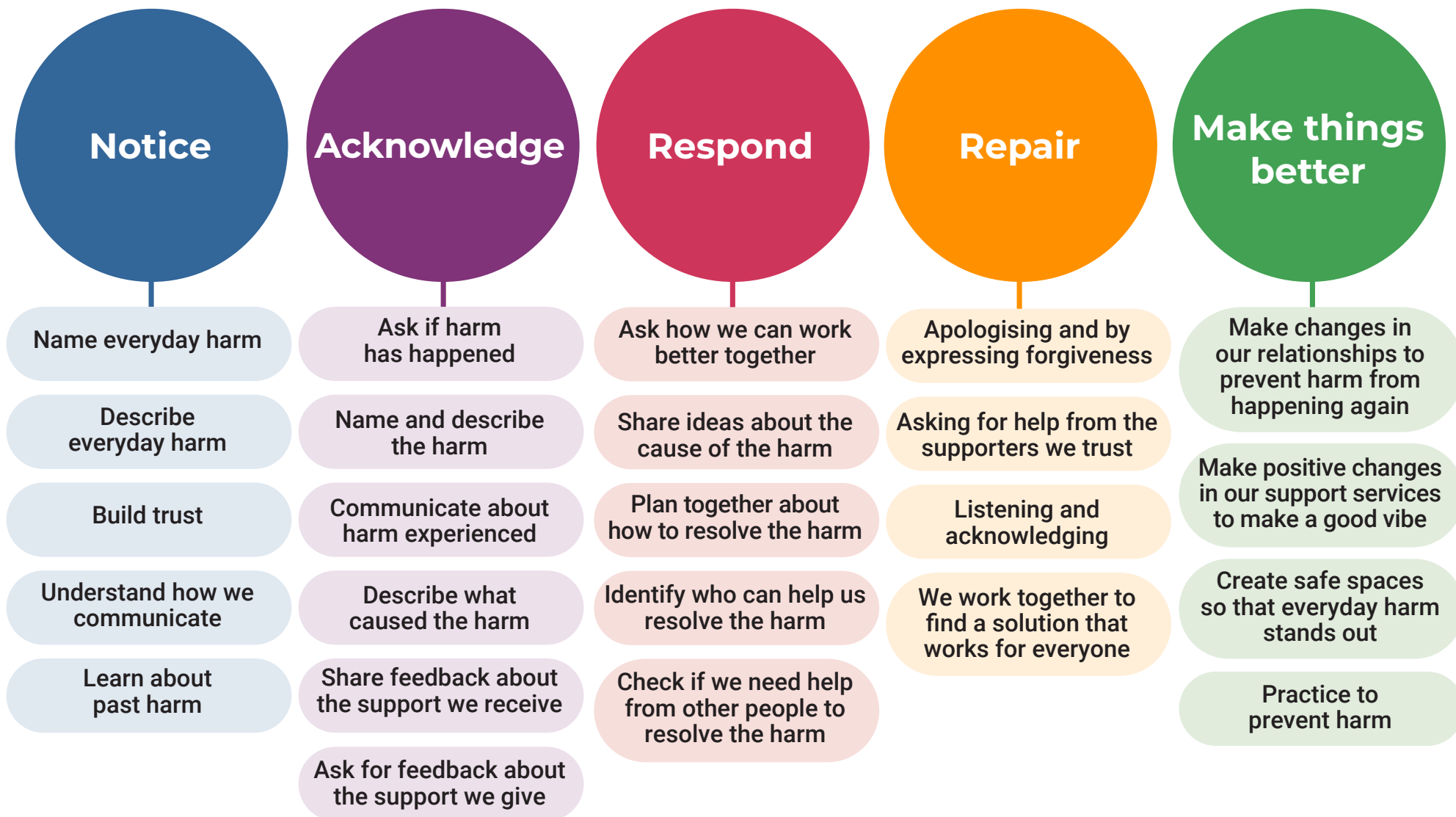
# Make positive changes for the future

We can learn from repair to make things better for the future.

We can make changes in our relationships to prevent harm from happening again. Our support services have ways to make positive changes that we can use. When our services make positive changes, this helps other people too. It makes a good vibe.

# Make positive changes for the future





Taking these steps helps make safe spaces. A safe space means there is a good vibe in a place. When we create safe spaces, everyday harm stands out. This means we can address it better. The more we practise taking these steps, the easier it is to prevent and address everyday harm.

# What helps us take steps to prevent and address everyday harm?

**Some situations make it easier to take steps to prevent and address everyday harm together.**

It is easier to take everyday steps when we have time and resources to:

- Share ideas about good ways of working together to prevent everyday harm
- Share ideas about how to improve support
- Practise how to check in and listen to each other with respect

- Learn to be trainers to help our peers, support workers and families learn about everyday harm.

It helps us take everyday steps when we can choose or employ support workers who understand, prevent and address everyday harm in our day-to-day work together. It helps us take everyday steps when we can rely on managers who understand how to prevent and address everyday harm in our organisations.

# What helps us take steps to prevent and address everyday harm?

Together we can make cultures that help people to feel safe to communicate about everyday harm. We can make rules so there are ways for people to safely communicate about everyday harm.

Together, we can make it usual good practice to notice and address everyday harm. Some ways we can do this are to:

- track when everyday harm happens. This helps us understand how to prevent and address everyday harm and improve the quality of support
- ask people with disability, staff, families and visitors about everyday harm they notice
- ask people with disability and staff about how to change everyday harm
- involve people in deciding how to organise changes that prevent and address everyday harm.
- make ways to tell people how their ideas about change to everyday harm have been acted on.

# We can all prevent and address everyday harm

There are five ways we can prevent and address everyday harm.



## Be known and know others by building trust to prevent everyday harm



**Person**

I practice sharing about my support needs and feelings.  
I let people know how I like to communicate.



**Worker**

I make time and opportunities to get to know a person.  
I practise asking for and receiving feedback  
I am attentive to a person's ways of communicating.



**Organisation**

We have rules and culture to encourage trust building.  
We make safe spaces and regular times for feedback and sharing.  
We make feedback processes accessible to all people.

## Express yourself to prevent everyday harm



**Person**

I have time and opportunities to practise expressing how we can prevent and address everyday harm.

I practise giving feedback about the support I need.



**Worker**

I make opportunities for others to express how we can prevent and address everyday harm.

I make time and opportunities to express how we can prevent and address everyday harm.



**Organisation**

We make opportunities for everyone in the organisation to express how we can prevent and address everyday harm.

We create a culture where people feel safe to express themselves.

## Be listened to about everyday harm



**Person**

I have time and opportunities to practise being listened to about everyday harm.



**Worker**

I make and use opportunities to listen about everyday harm.  
I acknowledge what a person says and believe their perspective.



**Organisation**

We make time and opportunities for listening at all levels of the organisation.  
Staff and managers participate in training on listening well.  
We acknowledge we have heard what people say.

## Understand and notice everyday harm



**Person**

I take opportunities to learn what everyday harm is.  
I practise noticing and naming everyday harm.  
I check in with my support workers to discuss when I or someone else has experienced everyday harm.



**Worker**

I take opportunities to learn and share what everyday harm is.  
I practise noticing, naming and discussing harm with people and other staff.  
I check in with a person when everyday harm might have happened.



**Organisation**

We acknowledge each other when harm happens a lot and is not ok.  
We have rules and culture so people and support workers learn about everyday harm.  
We prepare people workers so they are ready to address it when it happens.

## Repair when everyday harm happens



**Person**

I have ways to check in with workers I trust.  
I feel able to share with someone when I see harm.  
I have ways to get help to problem solve from other people or staff.  
I am involved in deciding what steps to take to repair harm.



**Worker**

I check in with people when harm has happened.  
I speak up when I see everyday harm.  
I get help from other people (inside and outside the organisation) to repair harm.  
I reflect with the person about how we can work better together.



**Organisation**

We have options for people and support workers to follow when everyday harm happens.  
We set a culture that expects repair to happen.  
We facilitate repair when it is difficult for people and support workers to do it themselves.

# Conclusion

Everyday harm is common and it is serious. Using the steps in this guide can help prevent and address everyday harm to make people's lives better.



[www.everydayharm.org.au](http://www.everydayharm.org.au)

This guide was developed by the Flinders University and UNSW Sydney Everyday Harms research team. For more information, please contact Sally Robinson, [sally.robinson@flinders.edu.au](mailto:sally.robinson@flinders.edu.au)

Cresciani, R., Robinson, S., Fisher, K.R., Watson, E., Smyth, C., Tun, S., Ikaheimo, H. (2026)  
*Information guide for working together to prevent everyday harm.* Flinders University, South Australia.