

# Bystander Intervention

Be an intervener! Stop these incidents before they occur, and talk to your friends about it so that they will intervene as well! (from the University of Wisconsin La Crosse)

The **Bystander Intervention Model** predicts that people are more likely to help others under certain conditions.

## 1. Notices the Incident

Bystanders first must notice the incident taking place. Obviously, if they don't take note of the situation there is no reason to help.

## 2. Interpret incident as emergency

Bystanders also need to evaluate the situation and determine whether it is an emergency—or at least one in which someone needs assistance. Again, if people do not interpret a situation as one in which someone needs assistance, then there is no need to provide help.

## 3. Assume Responsibility

Another decision bystanders make is whether they should assume responsibility for giving help. One repeated finding in research studies on helping is that a bystander is less likely to help if there are other bystanders present. When other bystanders are present responsibility for helping is diffused. If a lone bystander is present he or she is more likely to assume responsibility.

## 4. Attempts to Help (See Tips for Intervening and Bystander Playbook below)

Whether this is to help the person leave the situation, confront a behavior, diffuse a situation, or call for other support/security.

**The best way bystanders can assist in creating an empowering climate free of interpersonal violence is to diffuse the problem behaviors before they escalate.**

- Educate yourself about interpersonal violence AND share this info with friends
- Confront friends who make excuses for other peoples abusive behavior
- Speak up against racist, sexist, and homophobic jokes or remarks

## Tips for Intervening

In a situation potentially involving sexual assault, relationship violence, or stalking:

- Approach everyone as a friend
- Do not be antagonistic
- Avoid using violence
- Be honest and direct whenever possible

- Recruit help if necessary
- Keep yourself safe
- If things get out of hand or become too serious, contact the police

## **The Bystander Intervention Playbook**

*From the University of Vermont*

- **Defensive Split** – Step in and separate two people. Let them know your concerns and reasons for intervening. Be a friend and let them know you are acting in their best interest. Make sure each person makes it home safely
- **Pick and Roll** – Use a distraction to redirect the focus somewhere else: “Hey, I need to talk to you.” or “Hey, this party is lame. Let’s go somewhere else.”
- **The Option** – Evaluate the situation and people involved to determine your best move. You could directly intervene yourself, or alert friends of each person to come in and help. If the person reacts badly, try a different approach.
- **Full Court Press** – Recruit the help of friends of both people to step in as a group.
- **Fumblerski** – Divert the attention of one person away from the other person. Have someone standing by to redirect the other person’s focus (see Pick and Roll). Commit a party foul (i.e. spilling your drink) if you need to.

**\*Please remember that any situation that threatens physical harm to yourself or another student should be assessed carefully. Contact [Safety and Security](#) if needed to assist to defuse the situation.**