

HANDOUT ...**Bystander Intervention Strategies**

People who cause harm are outnumbered by those of us who are opposed to violence. Bystanders may know that harm happens, see a potential assault in progress, or be present when an assault is occurring. At any of these points, bystanders have the opportunity to intervene and stop violence from happening or help someone who has just been harmed.

We have all been bystanders in our lives, and we will all be in situations where we are bystanders in the future. The choice, then, becomes whether we are going to be active bystanders who speak up and say something, or whether we stand by and say nothing.

As opposed to being the bystander who stands by and does nothing, we want to create a culture of bystanders who are actively engaged in the prevention of violence.

Originally Adapted from Virginia Tech Women's Center

"I" statements • "We're Friends, Right?"

Three parts: 1. State your feelings, 2. Name the behavior, 3. State how you want the person to respond. This focuses on your feelings rather than criticizing the other person.

Example: "I feel _____ when you _____. Please don't do that anymore."

Reframes the intervention as caring and non-critical.

Example: "Hey Chad, as a friend I've gotta tell you that I feel really uncomfortable with you saying you'd get a girl drunk to have sex with her. That's not cool. Don't do it."

Silent Stare

Remember, you don't have to speak to communicate. Sometimes a disapproving look can be far more powerful than words.

Educate about Consequences • Offer Options

When an individual is harmed, they are not the only one impacted. Harm impacts everyone close to them and creates a ripple effect throughout the entire community. The person who caused harm can face serious consequences. Let them know that there is never a reason to resort to violence.

Group Intervention

There is safety and power in numbers.

This strategy is best used with someone who has a clear pattern of inappropriate behavior where the group can present many examples as evidence of the problem.

Bring it Home • Value Women

This strategy uses empathy to prevent someone from distancing themselves from the impacts of their harmful actions, and prevents them from dehumanizing the person they are hurting.

Example: "I hope no one ever talks about you like that."

Prevents someone from dehumanizing their targets.

*Example: "What if someone said your girlfriend deserved to be r*ped or called your mother a wh*re?"*

Distraction

Snaps someone out of their "sexist comfort zone."

Example: Ask a man harassing a woman on the street for directions or the time.

Allows a potential target to move away and/or to have other friends intervene.

Example: Spill your drink on the person or interrupt and start a conversation with the person.