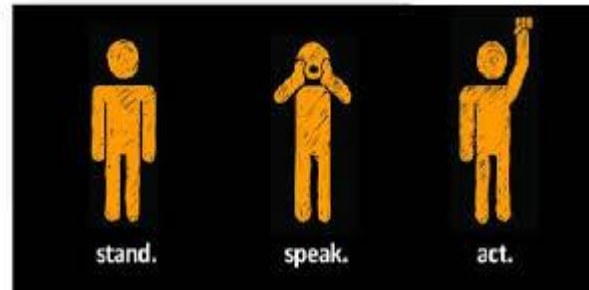


# Bystander Intervention Guide



To prevent gender-based violence, it is important that people are approached as potential witnesses or bystanders to behaviors related to sexual or dating violence. If you witness these behaviors, there are certain ways you can step up to prevent a risky situation from getting out of control.

**In order to intervene, first someone has to:**

## *1. Notice the incident*

Bystanders first must notice the incident taking place. It's important to become attune to what situations may be risky; i.e., if you're at a party, and you see someone stumbling as they're being led into a different room, this is a risky situation.

## *2. Interpret the incident as emergency*

By "emergency," we mean a situation wherein there is risk of sexual or domestic violence occurring in the near future.

## *3. Assume responsibility for intervening*

It has been found that often, people believe that someone else will help in a situation where there are many people around. However, it is important to realize that others may also be thinking the same thing. If you're unsure if you should do something, ask a friend what they think -- it might be the case that they've been thinking the same thing.

## *4. Have the bystander intervention skills to help*

There are a number of different techniques that someone can use to intervene in a risky situation, some of which we've listed below.

## Bystander Intervention Techniques (the 4 Ds):

Please remember that your safety is of the utmost importance. When a situation that threatens physical harm to yourself or another student, ask someone for help or contact Campus Police (Ext. 7000)

1. **Direct:** Step in and address the situation directly. This might look like saying, "That's not cool. Please stop." or "Hey, leave them alone." This technique tends to work better when the person that you're trying to stop is someone that knows and trusts you. It does not work well when drugs or alcohol are being used because someone's ability to have a conversation with you about what is going on may be impaired, and they are more likely to become defensive. Get someone to help you if you see something – enlist a friend, RA, bartender, or host to help step in.
2. **Distract:** Distract either person in the situation to intervene. This might look like saying, "Hey, aren't you in my Spanish class?" or "Who wants to go get pizza?" This technique is especially useful when drugs or alcohol are being used because people under the influence are more easily distracted than those that are sober.
3. **Delegate:** Find others who can help you to intervene in the situation. This might look like asking a friend to distract one person in the situation while you distract the other ("splitting" or "defensive split"), asking someone to go sit with them and talk, or going and starting a dance party right in the middle of their conversation. If you didn't know either person in the situation, you could also ask around to see if someone else does and check in with them. See if they can go talk to their friend, text their friend to check in, or intervene.
4. **Delay:** For many reasons, you may not be able to do something right in the moment. For example, if you're feeling unsafe or if you're unsure whether or not someone in the situation is feeling unsafe, you may just want to check in with the person. In this case, you can combine a distraction technique by asking the person to use the bathroom with you or go get a drink with you to separate them from the person that they are talking with. Then, this might look like asking them, "Are you okay?" or "How can I help you get out of this situation?" This could also look like texting the person, either in the situation or after you see them leave and asking, "Are you okay?" or "Do you need help?"

**Bystander intervention resources:**

Step Up: <http://www.stepupprogram.org>