

## Who Is A Bystander?

A bystander is not directly involved in a situation that is potentially dangerous or harmful but are witnesses who have the ability to intervene in a manner that is safe and comfortable for them.

## What Is Bystander Intervention And What Should You Do?

Bystander intervention is when a bystander witnesses a potentially harmful or dangerous situation and they have the ability to respond. Often times, there are several bystanders who are present in a situation where someone needs intervention, but no one responds. This occurs for various reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Lack of desire to get involved;
- Lack of knowledge regarding how to intervene; and
- The inability to recognize warning signs (**red flags**) that the situation may be dangerous or harmful.

## Where Can Bystander Intervention Occur?

Bystander intervention can occur almost anywhere there is a person in a dangerous situation. The bystander should stay alert and look for signs that someone around them may need them to assist.

## When Should A Bystander Respond?

Bystanders should respond as soon as possible after identifying that an individual(s) may be in a potentially harmful or dangerous situation. Often, people think that a potentially harmful or dangerous situation occurs between strangers, but often times these situations actually arise between friends, acquaintances or even people who are dating.

## **RED FLAGS: Do Not Ignore the Warning Signs**

Bystanders should look for warning signs that consent to a sexual act has not been given **or** is not respected by an individual. These warning signs may include, but are not limited to an individual being subjected to:

- (1) Incapacitation due to excessive use of alcohol or drugs (slurred speech, bloodshot eyes, staggered walking, vomiting. etc.), being asleep or unconsciousness, or having an intellectual or other disability;
- (2) Intimidation;
- (3) Coercion;
- (4) Physical force;
- (5) Threats of physical force; or
- (6) Any other factor that would eliminate or impair an individual's ability to exercise his or her own free will to give their consent.

Examples of other situations:

- Bullying;
- Threats of physical violence against others;
- Threats of suicide;
- Inappropriate or sexually offensive comments or gestures; and
- Unwelcome physical touching.

## When There Are Red Flags

A bystander should always determine if it is safe to help. If a bystander feels that it is not safe to help the individual in a potentially harmful or dangerous situation, they should call for additional help as soon as possible. **If the situation is an emergency, call 911 or ACC Campus Police at 281-756-3700 immediately.**

## How a Bystander Can Intervene

A bystander should always respond in the safest manner possible. Examples include, but are not limited to the following.

- **Assist the individual:**
  - Simply asking the individual in a non-confrontational, kind manner if you can assist them sometimes diffuses a situation.
  - Making sure that someone who has had too many drinks at a party gets home safely;
  - Making sure that no one follows an intoxicated individual into another room;
  - Asking someone who is acting inappropriately to stop;
  - Creating a distraction or diffusing the situation and/or
  - Removing the person from the potentially harmful or dangerous situation.
- **Call for help:**
  - If bystanders feel that it is not safe to help the individual in potentially harmful or dangerous situation, they should call for help. **If the situation is an emergency, call 911 or ACC Campus Police at 281-756-3700 immediately.** If necessary the bystander can call a friend, acquaintance or stranger to assist.
- **Tell someone:**
  - Report incidents of sexual violence to the Title IX Coordinator by going to [ACC's Title IX webpage](#) or by calling 281-756-3517.
  - **If the situation is an emergency, call 911 or ACC Campus Police at 281-756-3700 immediately.**

## Barriers to Intervention

While there are many factors as to why people may choose not to intervene, including but not limited to: age, gender, race/ethnicity, time, location, biases, culture, religion, group size, past experiences, safety concerns, and fear, we may sometimes also experience internal dialogues, such as the following, that may prevent us from choosing to take action:

- “My friend will be mad at me.”
- “Someone else will do something.”
- “It’s not my business.”
- “No-one else thinks it’s a problem so it’s not a big deal.”
- “I am afraid of what could happen to me if I intervene.”
- “What if I am wrong?”

## Motivation for Intervention

When we recognize a situation as a problem, some internal dialogue that may motivate us to choose to take action is listed below:

- “I am afraid of what will happen if I don’t do anything.”
- “I’ll feel better knowing I did something.”
- “I would want someone to help me or my loved one if I was in that situation.”
- “I care about this person, and/ or my community.”
- “This is wrong and I need to do something about it.”

**If the situation is an emergency, call 911 or ACC Campus Police at 281-756-3700 immediately.**